

Annual Parochial Church Meeting



ST MARY'S REDBOURN

Sunday 20th September 2020

10.30 am

St Mary's Churchyard

SIDESPERSIONS 2020

Tracey Alade
Sue Ashton **
Julie Beaman *
Janet Biggs
Isobel and Damian Cranmer
Daniel Eghobamien
Louise Emmins
Celia and David Forbes *
Janet Godley
Ralph Goold
Brian Hayward
Margaret Jewell * / **
Janet Lang **
Alan and Edna Lindfield
Natalie Marsh
Sue and Jim May
Penny McAdam * / **
Dick Morgan
Ann Palmer
Judith Sandell *
Alan + ** and Angie Simkins
Susan Stacey
Sue Taylor
Simon Taylor
Margaret Tillyer
Jill Whitehouse + **
Mollie Williams + **
Allyson and Rod Woodhouse

* Sidespersons who have agreed to act as reserves.

** Sidepersons for Baptism services.

The + sign signifies that what follows is in addition to a regular monthly duty as a sidesperson

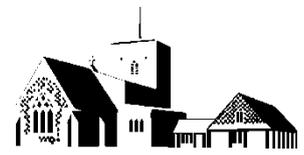
David Mitchell and Paul Vernon

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Colossians 3. 17 *And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.*

THE PARISH CHURCH of ST. MARY, REDBOURN



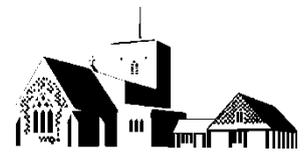
**THE ANNUAL MEETING OF PARISHIONERS
to be held on Sunday 20th September 2020, at 10.30 am
in the Churchyard of St Mary's Church**

AGENDA

Opening Prayer

- 1 Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting held on 24th April 2019**
- 2 Election of 2 Parochial Churchwardens**
- 3 Election of up to 2 Deputy Wardens**
- 4 Chairman's Closing Remarks**

THE PARISH CHURCH of ST. MARY, REDBOURN



MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF PARISHIONERS HELD ON WEDNESDAY 24th APRIL 2019

Present: The Vicar, The Curate, one retired member of the clergy and 41 Parishioners.

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

1) Minutes of the Meeting held 25th April 2018

The Minutes of the meeting were read, approved as drawn, and signed by the Lay Co-Chairman as a true record.

Proposed by: Brian Hayward Seconded by: Wendy Cruickshank Passed: Nem Con

2) Election of Churchwardens and Deputy Churchwardens

Churchwardens

Nominee	Proposed by	Seconded by
David Mitchell	Rosemary Woodhouse	Stephen Gell
Paul Vernon	Sue May	Celia Forbes

Deputy Churchwardens

Nominee	Proposed by	Seconded by
Stephen Gell	Rosemary Woodhouse	Alan Simkins
Alan Simkins	Ailsa Hulme	Penny McAdam

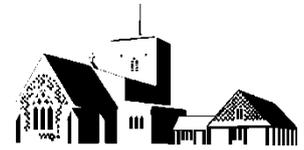
The above were elected Nem Con.

4) Vote of Thanks

The Vicar thanked all the Churchwardens and Deputy Churchwardens for their excellent teamwork during the past year. He is looking forward to continuing the good relationship and mutual support in the coming year.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.25 pm.

THE PARISH CHURCH of ST. MARY, REDBOURN

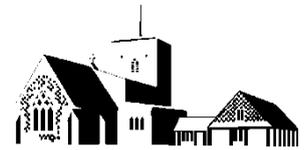


THE ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING to be held on Sunday 20th September 2020, at 10.30 am in the Churchyard of St Mary's Church

AGENDA

- 1 Apologies for Absence**
- 2 Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting held on 24th April 2019**
- 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 2019**
 - 7 A Report on the Fabric, Goods and Ornaments**
 - 8 A Report of the Ministry and Witness of the Church throughout 2019**
- 9 Election of up to 6 Representatives to the Parochial Church Council**
- 10 Election of 4 Representatives to Wheathampstead Deanery Synod**
- 11 Appointment of Sidespeople**
- 12 Appointment of an Independent Examiner to St Mary's Church**
- 13 Any Other Business**
- 14 Chairman's Closing Remarks**

THE PARISH CHURCH of ST. MARY, REDBOURN



MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 24th APRIL 2019 IN THE TRANSEPT HALL OF ST MARY'S CHURCH

Present: The Vicar, The Curate, one retired member of the Clergy and 41 Parishioners

The meeting opened at 8.25 p.m. and was chaired by Keith McAdam, Lay Co-Chairman

Apologies for Absence: Barbara Corbett, Martin & Anne Howe, Jan Lang, Jan Nelder, Alan & Janet Godfrey, Catharine & Simon Pusey, Stephen Gell, Jean Munro, Sue & Ian Ashton, Claire Gibbs, John Davie, Clorinda Goodman, Jane Taylor

Booklets containing the Minutes of the previous APCM, the carious reports and the Accounts for 2018, were available for perusal before the meeting, either by e-mail wherever possible or by hard copy in Church.

1) **Minutes of the Meeting held 25th April 2018**

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

Adoption of the minutes

Proposed by: Ailsa Hulme

Seconded by: Kay Vernon

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 maintenance of the roll. There was a drop in numbers on the roll This year, as there was a full revision, with a number being removed by leaving the area, by death or no longer needing to be members (some wishing to use the church for their weddings). There have been a significant number who should have joined but did not meet the deadline. This will be remedied so that the roll is fully meaningful.

3) **PCC Secretary's Report**

The report was within the booklet and accepted nem con.

4) **Deanery Synod Report**

Report also contained within the booklet. Thanks are due to the Redbourn representatives on the Deanery Synod.

5) **Treasurer's Report**

The full set of Accounts for 2018 was circulated in a separate booklet prior to the meeting. The Treasurer gave a verbal report which set out the key points to note regarding the accounts and our overall financial health with some further explanation of the financial position during the year in relation to the audited accounts.

Ruth Hughes, our financial examiner, reported that we need to move into a profit situation, and urges everyone to do all they can to raise St Mary's income levels. This will be addressed in the coming year.

Rob Jones, our Treasurer and Ruth Hughes were thanked for all the hard work they put in to both maintain the accounts during the year, and to produce the final figures for publication.

Adoption of the Accounts for 2018

Proposed by: David Mitchell

Seconded by: Saxon Aldred

Passed: Nem Con

6) **Report on the Fabric, Goods and Ornaments**

The Churchwardens' Report was contained within the booklet. This, and all other reports in the booklet were accepted en bloc by the meeting.

7) **A Report on the Ministry and Witness of the Church throughout 2018 given by the Vicar, The Revd 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 2018.

I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind—just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you—so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ

1 Corinthians 1. 4-7

As we look back on 2018, I hope we can join with Paul in saying “I always thank my God for you...” St Mary's is a church that has been blessed and enriched in ‘every way’. Blessed by the resources we have in terms of people, building and finances. Blessed by the many prayerful, committed, loving, caring people who are part of the church family. Blessed by the generous and wide-ranging ministry and activities that make up this thriving, active, busy place for, and to, God's glory.

In the Summer of 2018 we finalised and adopted our new Mission Action Plan which is proving to be a helpful tool in these areas – guiding our strategic thinking as well as channelling our energies on some new initiatives. I should stress that it doesn't, of course, attempt to describe or mention every activity – there are lots of very precious pieces of faithful ministry taking place at St Mary's that are beyond the scope of that document. The Mission Action Plan this time took rather longer to shape and evolve but I think, in many ways, it is the better for the longer gestation period and prayerful consideration. There is much there to challenge and excite us over the next four years.

One of the aspirations on the Mission Action Plan was to continue to pay particular attention to our spiritual life and our continued breadth of provision in Lent, including valuable sharing with Churches Together, has been one response along with our much valued Spotlight groups, Advent addresses and a Quiet Day and an inspiring four day pilgrimage to the North East exploring the lessons and lives of the Northern Saints which offered great spiritual riches, strong fellowship and some great memories to cherish.

It is the inspirational Helen Keller, who was both deaf and blind, who said “The best and most beautiful things in this world cannot be seen or even heard, but must be felt with the heart.”

With that in mind, our day to day attentiveness to our spiritual life finds its primary expression in the worshipping life of our church, and we are often reminded that we are blessed to be a church that is open – open to visitors, open to each other and open to God. The daily rhythm of Morning and Evening Prayer is well supported and provides a prayerful backbeat for the rest of the work each day. Our Sunday services continue to offer a conscious diversity in terms of pattern and style. I am concerned that our much loved 8am Prayer Book Communion has seen a slow but sustained drop in numbers over the last few years. It would be good to arrest that trend and for others to discover the prayerful and gentle way it offers to start a Sunday morning with God. Our 9.30 am service continues to be very buoyant and I want to pay tribute to the many people who help that to be the case – before as well as on a Sunday – so that we are always attempting to offer the best of what we can in worship. I’m thinking of our church cleaners, sacristans and flower ladies, for the welcome of sidespeople, the music of Jonathan and our choir – noting with joy the burgeoning Junior Choir as well as the pleasure in seeing some new adult singers, our serving team which now includes three new teenagers, the valued work with our Sunday morning children’s ministry and those who serve our Sunday refreshments and staff the weekly Traidcraft stall. In all these ways and more we are offering a vibrancy that is appreciated by us and noticed by those who visit.

I was spending time last night with a young wedding couple (they do seem to be getting younger!) and they have been visiting St Mary’s on and off over the last few months in preparation for their wedding here in August and it was heartening to hear, unprompted, how welcome they have been made to feel. But we can’t rest on laurels and that is something we can always work at and do even better.

That same important welcome has been demonstrated by the growing team at St Mary’s who help at our Baptism services and I want to thank Mollie and the team for their time and commitment to this.

Our 6.30 pm services offer an enviable variety of styles and themes, and I am grateful to our two Lay Leaders of Worship, David Forbes and Sue May, who have given considerable time, creativity and care to this alongside others.

Which brings me on to the Wider Ministry Team and much of what I have been describing so far would be impossible were I to be the only minister serving you but that isn’t the case. As always, I want to say a heartfelt thank you not just from me but on behalf of all of us to Tim, who is an excellent, thoughtful and valued colleague day by day, to +Robin, Lois, Kay and Christine for their gifts in leading worship and preaching and for being willing to share them with us. In similar fashion we rejoice that St Mary’s seems to be fertile ground for others to dare to respond to God’s call and we are so blessed in Rachel and Ailsa as they train for ordained ministry and reader ministry respectively for their gifts and growing confidence.

2018 proved to be another busy year for occasional offices with 25 baptisms, 42 funerals or memorial services, 10 burials, 20 interments of cremated remains, and 6 weddings taking place as part of the ministry offered by the Church here. 1 candidate was presented for Confirmation in January and 8 children were admitted to First Communion on Advent Sunday.

Inevitably, amongst such a large number of funerals conducted last year we said farewell and entrusted to the eternal care of Almighty God some very dear and precious souls from our church family, including some after shocking illnesses and several very suddenly. We remember and give thanks for Vic French, Bob Burden, Betty Henry, Mary Gill, Mary-Jane Boffey, Liz Wood, Ken Lacey, Peter Fisher, Tom Archer, Michael Rimmer and Gerry Green. They are greatly missed and fondly remembered.

Liz Wood was, of course, our Parish Safeguarding as well as being involved in many other parts of church life and with The Friends. I am profoundly grateful to Janet Lang who has taken on the important role of Safeguarding for us and ensured that all is in order and up to date, even after such tragedy. Whilst talking about legal responsibilities, a lot of time and effort was expended in the early part of the year ensuring that we were compliant with the incoming GDPR regulations and I'd like to record my sincere thanks to Jim May and the small working party that looked into this for us.

Our ministry with young people doesn't just take place on Sunday mornings and I want to pay tribute to the excellent team who share in the ministry of Teddy Tots on a Friday morning, Messy Conversations and other things that reach out and support our younger families. It is so heartening to see this bearing such fruit in terms of questions being explored, in baptisms and confirmations, some wider church attendance and great pastoral support and friendships growing.

The summer holiday club 'Treasure Seekers' was another sell-out with 72 children enjoying a fun-filled week of worship, crafts games and activities. Some of the proceeds went towards the costs of the annual sailing weekend at Fellowship Afloat as a thank you to the Young Leaders and the weekend in September was enjoyed by a bumper group of almost 30 children sailing, climbing and other activities. The minibus is always so much quieter on the way home! Tim and the team have worked hard to provide weekly activities for the Gospellers in term time rather than twice a month, and this recent change has borne considerable fruit, although the numbers inevitably vary.

Our Charity of the Year in 2018 was Dementia UK and we were pleased to raise £12,900 for them through various fundraising activities to support individuals and families affected by dementia, with a particular focus on their Admiral Nurses scheme in the Hertfordshire area. We were also able to make a donation of £600 for the charity Music for My Mind, recently founded by Keith McAdam, offering music therapy for dementia sufferers. This focus in 2018 on dementia has been supported by a very successful Golf Day, a choir concert and a sponsored walk. We are aware that Dementia is a 'live issue' for a number of people associated with St Mary's and it is also good that a few members have become involved in visiting at St Matthew's and that we were able to host a panel discussion to deepen our understanding of the issues. We continue to support DENS Food Bank by collecting tinned foods and dry goods regularly, and once again this was supplemented by a generous collection of goods by the Primary School at Harvest. I'd like to record our sincere thanks to members of the CFC for their hard work and dedication in leading our efforts when it comes to our charitable giving.

This year has seen ongoing progress in the upkeep and maintenance of the churchyard through the committed involvement of volunteers involved in the mowing rota, the ongoing hard work of several people who care for some specific flower beds and areas, and the regular and sustained visits from the local probation service. We're very grateful to you for sharing in what is a beautiful churchyard but also a considerable responsibility.

A Quinquennial Inspection of the church building was carried out back in the autumn of 2016 and highlighted several areas of external building work which required some attention. These works were carried out last year in April and May. During 2018 there have also been some minor but important repairs to the pathways to the Transept Hall, new bell ropes were fitted in the tower, (perhaps a case of money for new rope!) the church guide was updated and reprinted and a new hymnbook was introduced in September, kindly paid for by several generous donations. We are enjoying the wider repertoire of hymns and I don't think I'm imagining it – I do think our congregational singing has improved as a result of the change. The Friends of St Mary's continues to be an invaluable support to the church in raising money for the upkeep and maintenance of the church and churchyard and this year their events included a really fun Harvest Supper and another classic car show. We're very grateful for their support and generosity.

Care of the church fabric leads us onto care of the church in terms of people and I want to pay tribute to the work of the Pastoral Visitors. Since their commissioning, the team of twelve have been quietly supporting a number of people with pastoral care, home visits and communion. Pastoral care is never 'top down' and sharing in the care of each other is, to my mind, a sign of a healthy and loving church. This is much in evidence in the care demonstrated amongst members of our Mothers' Union which continues to be a great joy and blessing in the life of St Mary's.

More recently a small number at St Mary's have undertaken some specific training and formed a Bereavement Visiting Team, coordinated by Catherine Pusey, to offer follow-up to families and individuals in our community after a bereavement. This is in the early stages but no doubt will be an important, if somewhat 'hidden', ministry.

There is clearly something of a pastoral ministry at work in Coffee on the Common and I want to pay tribute to Sue May and the excellent band of baristas, cake cutters and conversation-makers who contribute to this very special piece of outward facing ministry in our community. It is one thing to start a project like this but to maintain momentum and to sustain, develop and evolve it is quite another matter. So well done to all involved as we approach a tenth birthday!

Speaking of anniversaries, the way in which we commemorated the centenary of the end of the First World War will live on in the memory for a long time. To see so many people, young and old, in uniform or not, gathering at St Mary's for worship and then parading across the Common was powerful and a fitting way to honour the sacrifice of the fallen. The Redbourn Living Advent Calendar was another strong highlight of the past twelve months and it was great to see such a wide range of people engaging in it and sharing the joy it brought as we built community together. The coverage on social media and the national press, and the Bishop of St Albans' Christmas sermon bears that out. A small community came together to watch the England World Cup games in the Upper Room and whilst we eventually bowed out at the semi-final stage it was good fun and another way of bringing people together.

It is such a privilege to lead this church, as it has been for over 12 years now, and what heartens me is the way in which we are so united. There have been some challenges over the years, with the deaths of many great stalwarts of the church, the disappointments of some activities and events that haven't gone quite as well as hoped and anticipated and the issues and situations that have been thrown our way from time to time. But not many and even in those I can say thank you to God because I have seen God's grace, God's strength, God's provision, and even God's blessing, in those times of trial and uncertainty.

As a country and as a church we face some quite significant uncertainty. Brexit has brought some deep-seated divisions and injustices to the fore and I get a sense that tempers are a little frayed and fuses a little shorter out there. How we model being a community of love, of faith and of care together will be all the more important.

We face some challenges in terms of finance and how we reach out to those not currently attracted by traditional forms of church, with a diminishing basic understanding of the Christian faith, and with numerous competing 'activities' and 'interests' over the weekend. There are changing patterns of 'family' and family-life, a rise in the use and 'power' of social media and understandings of 'norm'. But we as a church need not be fearful of such changes, because God is unchanging and God is constant, but the church does need to respond and react to such changes, and can't sit back and assume 'church', as we know it, will continue in the same way. Suddenly when we're faced with the bigger picture, with a change, something new, something unexpected, then we can struggle.

For us here at St Mary's, we're entering a new chapter, and we don't really know what the future will hold in terms of new housing, motorway junctions, the High Street and so on. But I do know some certainties for the rest of 2019. God is present and will be present, we need not be concerned, or worried, or uncertain, because we are all in the safe hands of almighty God.

Again, echoing the words of Paul (Ephesians 1. 3-4, 9-10):

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. He has made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth

Paul is passionate about the bigger picture. He says we are 'blessed in the heavenly realms'. Even when we're unsure down here on earth, we can know that we've been 'chosen before the creation of the world'. We may feel concerned, we may feel insignificant, we may feel a bit out of our depth, we may feel like we don't know what will happen, but God remains God, and God remains constant, and God still blesses us and knows us and goes with us. So, let's value the past but not cling to it, let's lift our eyes and lift our hearts, and look ahead.

I hope that in this report, you have been able to see the same things that give me every reason to be thankful for this past year and to be optimistic for all that lies ahead.

Augustine of Hippo reminds us that

"He who does not have the church as his mother, does not have God as his father."

I am grateful for both and that we share in these things together.

8) Election of up to 6 Representatives to the Parochial Church Council

Nominee	Proposed by	Seconded by
Lesley Poulton	Celia Forbes	Paul Vernon
Stephen Gell	Paul Vernon	David Forbes
David Walker	Stephen Gell	Sue May
Rachel Snow	Celia Forbes	David Forbes
Brian Hayward	David Forbes	Celia Forbes

Election of the above named en bloc was

Proposed by: Julia Jeffs Seconded by: Jim May Passed: Nem Con

9) Election of 1 Representative to the Wheathampstead Deanery Synod

John Davie was proposed by: David Forbes Seconded by: Celia Forbes Passed: Nem Con

10) Appointment of Sidespersons

The List was included in the booklet.

Adoption proposed by: Paul Vernon Seconded by: David Mitchell Passed: Nem Con

11) Appointment of Independent Examiner

Ruth Hughes greed to be our Independent Examiner for a further year. She was thanked for all the help she gives to our Treasurer, for the considerable work she puts in to provide us with the Final Accounts, and for all the advice she offers throughout the year.

Approved: Nem Con

12) Any Other Business

No further business was raised.

13) Chairman's Closing Remarks

The Lay Co-Chairman recorded his thanks to all our Clergy, those retired and to the wider ministry team, to Readers, and those in training. Thanks are due also to our musicians and choirs. New initiatives have been set up in the recent years, many with children and all sorts of Pastoral and Bereavement visiting. Will and his family (including Sweep) were thanked for their unstinting service, along with Tim and his family. Special mention was made of Will's contribution to the Diocese – as an exceptionally talented batsman in the Diocese cricket team, and for finding time in his busy schedule to fit in the study for a Master's Degree in Applied Theology.

There being no further business, the meeting closed with the Grace at 9.40 pm, followed by refreshments.

ELECTORAL ROLL REPORT – SEPTEMBER 2020

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

- In April 2019, there were 201 persons on the Electoral Roll.
- There are now 203 persons on the Electoral Roll.

Of these 203 people, 29 live outside the parish. Last year, 29 lived outside the parish.

Jim May – Electoral Roll Officer

LAY CO-CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FOR 2019

The covid19 pandemic has changed life as we have known it in Redbourn. First identified in Wuhan, capital of Hubei Province in China in December 2019, this new Corona virus SARS COV2 has swept around the world, and on the scheduled date of the APCM, 29th April 2020 has caused more than 3 million cases, reported across 185 countries, resulting in more than 220,000 deaths. This terrifying epidemic has caused respiratory illness in all ages but particularly severely in people over 70yrs old with underlying health conditions, with a higher mortality in males.

The lockdown in Britain in March 2020 quickly led to closure of all churches, including St Mary's Redbourn before Easter. What a challenge to St Mary's to conduct Holy Week activities outside the church building! Did you see the brilliant giant rainbow on the vicarage fence in the churchyard and then the large red Cross blocking the door to the church during Easter week Thank you Virginia Corbett and your team; and Kay and Paul Vernon for the display of a contemporary thought-provoking version of the Stations of the Cross on the trees up and down the driveway.

On Good Friday a huge stone imposingly blocked the entire door of the church and the Cross was now transformed into a blue Cross (celebrating the NHS too?) positioned with two smaller crosses in a lovely Easter Garden, outside the church this year. The excitement of seeing the giant stone rolled away on Easter morning and the grave clothes visible inside the lit porch, was a wonderfully dramatic representation of the core witness of our faith. These are some of the dramatic examples of the amazing creativity and energy that has been expressed to cope with the outbreak in Redbourn. Will Gibbs has led from the front, ably supported by his family, the Ministerial team and many individuals who have stepped up to ensure that virtual services and worship are imaginative, reassuring and even include 'live' music, the choir and orchestra synchronized skillfully by Paul and Tom Vernon. The St Mary's website, very ably managed by Kate Ford, gives links to excellent resources for adults and children and provides evidence for wide church attendance and interest from outside the regular worshipping community.

Within Redbourn there has been a huge response to the needs of the community and those advised to remain shielded under self-imposed distancing. Coordinated by the Redbourn Care Group including several of the St Mary's family, this has been a rallying call for young families to get involved and they have, most impressively. Several of our church family and friends have battled with the virus and its scary symptoms, some admitted to hospital and we wish them a full recovery, a few have succumbed, and we send heartfelt condolences and thoughts for their families and friends.

The PCC and its Standing Committee are statutory bodies representing St Mary's Church, meeting alternately every month throughout the year. Chaired by the Vicar and supported by the Secretary to the PCC, Celia Forbes, they provide an oversight and record of the many activities at St Mary's.

Our 2017-21 Mission Action Plan (MAP) continues to provide a five-year vision for our faith community. It remains an active document, which will need reassessing in the light of the lessons learned in this Covid19 pandemic and particularly in the context of the far-reaching implications for the expansive developments in Hemel Hempstead. Our strategic plan continues to focus 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.

Our beautiful church has served the Redbourn community for over 900 years and it needs constant oversight and necessary repairs, both for the church and the Transept. Maintaining a beautiful churchyard is a demanding job, led by David Swift, Chris Wright and the churchyard team, including the local Probation service. We recognise the dedicated service of the Churchwardens, Paul Vernon and David Mitchell, backed up by Stephen Gell and Alan Simkins, and the Friends of St Mary's led by Wendy Bloisi, in their roles of maintaining our treasured resources. Mike Wood has graciously stepped into the breach as Treasurer in addition to chairing the Stewardship Committee, with Jim May managing the Planned Giving and Ancillary Buildings. The Charitable Finance Committee led by Stephen Boffey focused their fund-raising support last year on Youth Talk in St Albans. Will hitch-hiking adventure in which he visited places whose names started with all the letters of the alphabet, A to Z in sequence, boosted a generous fund-raising initiative that caught the imagination of the community.

Advent and Lent programmes at St Mary's have been thought provoking, imaginative and well attended; a tribute to the energy and vision of Will Gibbs and his team. Baptisms, weddings and funerals remain a major responsibility and opportunity for our Parish Church. Almost everyone who attends St Mary's soon gets involved in some of the wide variety of activities that serve the wider community in Redbourn; including Coffee on the Common, Mothers' Union, Caring Cooks, the Day Centre, Holiday Club, and more. Teddy Tots has welcomed many new faces to St Mary's – babies, toddlers, parents, grandparents and carers. The newly instituted Quaver Kids engages enthusiastic 5 to 6-year olds, who relish the continuity from Teddy Tots when they start at school. Spotlight Groups bring people together midweek to share and support their day-to-day faith journeys. Rachel Snow's questionnaire survey affirmed that the many groups that people affiliate with in St Mary's are meeting ongoing needs.

After his 3 memorable years as curate at St Mary's, we bid farewell to Tim Vickers and Sophy, Jem and Laurie, as he moved to a team ministry position, with particular responsibility for St James, Bushey. Special thanks to our talented Wider Ministry Team including Kay Vernon, Christine Farrington, Bishop Robin and Lois Smith, through whom we have a remarkable group of gifted and imaginative leaders of our faith community. Ailsa Hulme is evidently flourishing in her Reader training and Rachel Snow, our ordained over the past three years, moves to Letchworth as she prepares to be ordained and serve her curacy there. Our Lay Leaders of Worship, Sue May and David Forbes, augment a strong team. The choir, led by Jonathan Goodchild, is thriving and has risen to the challenges of a virtual choir during the Covid-19 lockdown.

We acknowledge and thank Will (and Claire, Olivia and Darcy, as a family) on behalf of the St Mary's family for his leadership and ministry in the Parish, with special appreciation for the online services during the Covid-19 lockdown. Will continues to serve on the General Synod and is also fitting in a part time Masters from Manchester University in Applied Theology (Gospel and Contemporary Culture). His leadership embraces strong community involvement including the Redbourn Schools and active participation in Redbourn's famous Care Group.

Keith McAdam – Lay Co-Chair

SAFEGUARDING REPORT

Period covered: 1 Jan. 2019 - 31 Dec. 2019

Numbers of DBS Checks Completed: 24

Safeguarding Policy Approved and reviewed by PCC: 8 May 2019

Safeguarding Action Plan reviewed and approved by PCC: 17 July 2019

Policy on recruitment of ex-offenders approved by PCC: Nov. 2019

Number of Safeguarding Alerts referred to Social Services: 1 in Oct. 2019

During 2019 the Parish Dashboard was adopted by St. Mary's PCC. It provides an excellent means of monitoring compliance with all the required governance of safeguarding practice. It is used throughout the Diocese.

It uses a traffic light system of indicators and by Autumn 2019 good progress had been made in most areas e.g. Safer recruitment training, policy approval, DBS checks and risk assessments.

A presentation of the Dashboard was made to the PCC in November 2019. We stressed the importance of online or classroom- based training on Safeguarding, for all PCC members; in addition to those volunteers in key roles with children or vulnerable adults.

Since July 2019 all PCC members are required to complete the Basic Awareness module known as CO, available online.

All volunteers for the 2019 Holiday Club were fully covered by DBS checks.

St. Mary's is also now registered with Thirtyone Eight to request Basic DBS checks, where the role does not require either a standard or enhanced check.

Janet Lang – Parish Safeguarding Officer

PCC SECRETARY'S REPORT 2019

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 five times during the year and the Standing Committee three times

Those serving on the Council are:-

The Chairman	The Vicar, The Revd Will Gibbs
Lay Co-Chairman	Keith McAdam
Churchwardens	Paul Vernon and David Mitchell
Deputy Churchwardens	Stephen Gell and Alan Simkins
Licensed Reader	Kay Vernon
Deanery Synod	Julie Henman, Jill Whitehouse, Jim May and Mike Wood
Deanery Lay Co-Chairman	Jim May

Plus Elected Members of the PCC

Record of members' attendances at meeting

	Full PCC	Standing Committee
The Vicar	5/5	3/3
The Curate (left July 2019)	2/2	1/1
Celia Forbes	5/5	3/3
David Forbes	4/5	
Stephen Gell	4/5	2/3
Ralph Goold	4/5	
Brian Hayward	5/5	
Julie Henman	2/5	
Julia Jeffs	4/5	
Ailsa Hulme	4/5	3/3
Jim May	4/4	2/3
Keith McAdam	3/5	2/3
David Mitchell	4/5	2/3
Lesley Poulton	5/5	
John Davie	3/5	
Michelle Parry Slater	4/5	
Alan Simkins	3/5	3/3
Rachel Snow	3/5	
Kay Vernon	4/5	
Paul Vernon	5/5	3/3
David Walker	4/5	
Jill Whitehouse	4/5	
Clive Williams	4/5	
Mike Wood	2/5	2/3

Offices held by members during the year 2019-20

Lay Co-Chairman	Keith McAdam
Treasurer	Mike Wood
Secretary	Celia Forbes

Chairpersons of Sub-Committees

Stewardship	Mike Wood
Ancillary Buildings	Jim May
Churchyard	David Swift (David Forbes liaising with PCC)
Charitable Finance	Stephen Boffey (Stephen Gell liaising with PCC)
Youth	Ailsa Hulme

Members attendances at meetings ranges from 61% to 87% and an average of 84% for Standing Committee Meetings.

The Mission Action Plan has continued throughout 2019, and some further bullet points have been actioned. The further plans for development on Rothamstead land, if approved, could affect our plans again.

Tim Vickers, our Curate for the last three years, left us in July to take up his post as Vicar in a Team Ministry in Bushey. We wish him, Sophie and their family every success in the new part of their lives.

Rachel Snow has continued her training for ordination, and Ailsa Hume her Readership training.

Kate Ford has continued to be our website manager and is doing a great deal to keep St Mary's website current and interesting. Wendy Cruickshank has continued in her secretarial role to Will and Tim. Wendy now shares her office with a part time tenant. Our printers have continued with their sterling work, everything being produced on time as always. Minutes of the PCC and Standing Committee continue to be displayed on the notice board in the church porch.

Finally, I must thank everyone on the PCC and the wider congregation for all they do to ensure that St Mary's runs without a hitch!

Addendum – 13th August 2020

In a normal year, our APCM would have been done and dusted in April. The onset of the Covid-19 virus has put paid to so many things that we have taken for granted over the years. Now, we still have the 2019-20 PCC in place, although meetings have been very limited but, nevertheless, Zoom meetings have been possible to a small degree and decisions have been made as necessary. Online services have been in place and very much appreciated, not just by our members, but by the extended community. Will, Paul, Stephen Boffey and Kate Ford have been instrumental in keeping all the technology running faultlessly. Open air 9.30 am Sunday services have been possible for the last few weeks. It has been good to see many members of the congregation taking part in these services, particularly during lockdown when we could not meet in person. Thank you everyone!

Celia Forbes – Secretary to the PCC

CHURCHWARDENS REPORT FOR 2019

After a few problems in the first few months of the year, the tower clock had a more in-depth service in May, since when it has been performing its horological duties well.

Minor repairs carried out over the course of the year include:

- re-seating of paving slabs around the base of the tower
- repair of guttering to the North side
- new downpipe from the tank in the ringing chamber to the boiler in the lower vestry

Regular maintenance and checks were carried out as usual, and where required steps taken to fix - the roof alarm, gutters, gulleys, two boilers, clock, fire extinguishers.

In November, the organ received a thorough overhaul, carried out by Keith Bance Organ Builders; the work included new keyboards and pedalboards, cleaning, re-voicing and re-tuning.

Our annual inspection by the Rural Dean, acting as the Archdeacon's Representative, took place in October. Nothing untoward to report.

Finally, there are so many people who contribute actively to the life of our church, and making sure it runs smoothly. Many of these activities are carried out behind the scenes. This year we'd like to particularly thank all those who work tirelessly, co-operatively and give generously of their time with so many aspects of the church administration, including managing the web site, secretarial work, finance and the stewardship scheme.

David Mitchell

Paul Vernon

WHEATHAMPSTEAD DEANERY SYNOD 2019

Wheathampstead Deanery Synod met three times in the year under the leadership of the Rural Dean, the Revd Richard Banham, Rector of St. Helen's, Wheathampstead, and the Lay Chairman, Mr. Jim May. It is made up of parish clergy and a number of lay representatives elected according to the size of the parish, as well as members of Diocesan Synod (who are also thereby members of Deanery Synod and their PCC).

Synod meetings take place in a different parish each time and the host parish has the opportunity to talk briefly about its life and work. One soon realises the individual nature of every one of our nine parishes and twelve churches. The deanery joins together for worship on Ascension Day each year and holds a Deanery Evensong in the autumn. Everyone is very welcome at these special occasions, and indeed at its regular meetings.

Our first meeting, on 25th March at All Saints, Harpenden, featured a thought-provoking and worrying presentation "*Don't bet on it*" by Bishop Alan. He told us, among other things, that the enormous increase in the prevalence and prominence of gambling since 2005 is leading to enormous harm. Charities estimate that 400 deaths have resulted over the last three years, with one or two suicides every week. The good news is that the Bishop's proposal for a Lords Enquiry into the effects of the 2005 Gambling Act has recently been one of only four selected from a huge number of similar issues put forward.

The Deanery Ascension Day service was held at Harpenden St Nicholas.

Our second meeting on 16th July at Mary's, Redbourn, focused on Vocations. Our guest speaker - the Reverend Charles Burch, our Diocesan Vocations Officer, spoke of the challenge we face. 61% of clergy are 50+. 100 – 120 will retire in the next 10 years. In response to this, the '50%+' challenge aims to maintain clergy posts by becoming a net exporter of ordinands, not a net importer, by recruiting younger ordinands (as well as older ones). The target is to go from 16 to 20 per annum. That's 1 per Deanery per year... every year.

The Deanery Choral Evensong was held in October at Harpenden St John.

Our third meeting on 14th November at St Leonard's, Flamstead, included a presentation from Phil Bryson, the Lay Ministry Officer for the Diocese and Annie McTighe from the Reaching New People team. They spoke about the various training options available for lay people, including training for Readers, Lay Leaders of Worship and Lay Pioneers. As we would expect Wheathampstead Deanery is at the top end of the league table for producing Readers and LLWs.

Jim May – Deanery Lay Chairman

ANCILLARY BUILDINGS SUB-COMMITTEE

It was a quiet year for the committee, to the extent that we did not need to meet more than once. The Old Church Hall has been rented out nearly all the year. The first tenant moved out at the beginning of January 2019, so our agents found us a new tenant, who took up residence from the middle of March. Minor repairs were carried out in the Vicarage Cottage and to the Church Office door. Our next challenge will be the re-roofing of the Transept.

Jim May – Chairman

STEWARDSHIP REPORT

As reported last year, we decided not to run a financial based appeal during 2018. People have very different situations and demands on their finances and we did not want to push too hard.

Our costs continue to increase, with the major commitment being our Parish Share. This totalled £129,845 which we paid in full once again. We have an excellent record of responding to this important contribution to the Diocese and that is due to the continued generosity of the congregation at St Mary's.

We decided to run a very focused Stewardship Campaign during February and March and the response was amazing. I am so grateful to everyone for engaging with the information provided and prayerfully considering your individual contribution. The idea was to provide information through sermons and leaflets over a three-week period. Church finances are a complicated subject and it is important that everyone understands how we raise income and how it is spent.

Week 1 included a leaflet, **Season for Giving** and a wonderful talk from Anthony Davis. This set the scene on income and expenditure.

For week 2 we invited David Nye from the Diocesan Board of Finance to talk about how the Parish Share is utilised for all our benefit. His excellent talk was supported by a leaflet setting out some **Truths and Myths regarding Parish Share** produced by the Diocesan Office.

The final week included a **Call to Action** leaflet that set out our current giving levels and where we need to get to. It was introduced from the pulpit through a superb rallying cry from our Vicar.

The response was increased our annualised giving by 15%, which was better than the committee could have hoped for. We also received some very generous one-off donations. A huge thank you to everyone involved in the campaign and to all the congregation for responding.

The rest of the year has been fairly quiet for the Committee. I took over as PCC Treasurer in May and this has taken up a lot of time. We will be looking to reinvigorate our efforts in 2020.

The introduction of a facility to give using a credit/debit card has already seen additional donations coming in. We applied for a terminal that was being provided free to 500 Churches by Visa. We were lucky enough to get in early and receive the kit that you may already have seen in the Church. This will be more visible shortly and allows anyone to "tap" a donation.

On behalf of the Stewardship Committee I thank you all for your continued generosity and support of our beautiful Church.

Michael Wood – Chairman

ST MARY'S TEXTILE GROUP

The ladies of the Textile Group have continued to meet twice each month to continue their work of making and mending items used in the Church. We have recruited two new ladies during the year which means that we have a pretty regular attendance of a dozen or so.

Work has continued throughout the year on the three new green altar frontals. This has been a very time-consuming task as the majority of the construction has been hand sewing.

It is hoped that the new altar frontals will be completed in 2020, after which ladies of the group will be pleased to embark on new projects, preferably with a little more machine sewing and less hand work.

Barbara Corbett – Group Coordinator

THE CHARITABLE FINANCE COMMITTEE – CFC

Our 2019 appeal was launched at the 9.30 Service on January 13th with a presentation by Roger Gibbs of Youth Talk St Albans, who provide confidential counselling for young people of the area. Over £1,000 had however already been raised at Carols and Beer the previous month.

During the early stages of our appeal we received welcome contributions from Teddy Tots, St Luke's School, the Coffee on the Common Pancake Party, the popular Photography Workshops run by Stephen Boffey in the Church transept and the Tea and Pimms offered by Virginia and Gerald Corbett at Holtsmere End Farm to coincide with the flowering of bluebells in a nearby wood. Many of those participating walked to and from this enjoyable event via a cross country route.

The delightfully English Vintage Tea, organised by Jan Lang in the beautiful garden of Cumberland Cottage on 8th June was in no way marred by the all to English weather. The total of £1,500 raised is a tribute both to the meticulous organisation of the event and to the generosity of the guests.

On Friday 12th July, Will set out on his A to Z Challenge with just £10 in his pocket. Over the following three days he succeeded in visiting, in order, places whose names begin with each of the letters of the alphabet. As he reported in his talk at the Harvest Supper, the Challenge brought a number of interesting encounters but also involved long treks along country lanes. The event clearly captured the imagination of donors who contributed a splendid £6,844 to our appeal.

Our 2019 appeal concluded on Sunday January 26th 2020 with a presentation to David Barker from Youth Talk St. Albans. St Mary's raised £16,280 in the course of the year and the CFC are most grateful to everyone who contributed in any way to achieving this excellent total.

Stephen Gell – Secretary of the CFC

ST MARY'S VISITORS

The team established in 2017 has continued to provide pastoral contact, conversation and care to a number varying from 20 to 23 people who live on their own, with a carer, or in a nursing home. There have been three deaths.

The team was badly depleted by the move to Bushey of Rev Tim, who was instrumental in starting up this venture and who had devoted much time and effort to ensuring its development. Immaculee and Richard Hedden also left us for Africa in mid-year. We now have a nominal team of nine - our leader Rev Will, Sue and Ian Ashton, Doris Cheetham, Mollie Williams, Jill Whitehouse, Albert Joly, Julie Beaman and Julie Henman, but due to limited availability of some members for very understandable reasons, we are in urgent need of bringing three or four new members on board. A new drive is afoot to attract suitable members. This would allow us to ensure more regular visiting of people at home, and enable us to attract and cope adequately with new clients.

We are constantly encouraged by the thanks we receive from those we serve, who really seem to value this support and ministry.

Ian Ashton – Secretary

BEREAVEMENT VISITING TEAM

The Bereavement Team was set up under the leadership of Rev Tim Vickers, supported by Rev Will Gibbs, in the spring of 2018. During 2019, illness and the pressure of other commitments, not to mention appointment to a new parish, have reduced our number from four volunteers and two clergy to two volunteers and one Vicar.

The aim of the Bereavement Team is to offer support to the families and friends of people whose funeral has been taken by Will or Tim or otherwise took place at St Mary's with their support.

The first contact is made a few weeks after the funeral by means of a card sent to the main contact person by Will. This offers them our continued sympathy and tells them that support is available if they wish to talk. The team members follow this up with a phone call two or three weeks later. We ask them how they are and provide the opportunity to talk about their loved one and their own situation. We offer to visit to continue the conversation if they think it would be helpful. If no visit or further contact is requested, we assure them of the support of St Mary's at all times and make it clear they can come back for help at any time if they are finding their grief difficult to cope with.

During 2019 Will sent cards to the main contact of 27 bereaved families with a connection to St Mary's. Most of these were followed up with a phone call but a couple of people were only available by email. Everyone we talked to said that they were grateful for the call and pleased to know that St Mary's was there if they needed it. A small number were grateful for the offer of a visit. In those cases, we made one or two visits, and kept up the contact with further phone calls to support them. Where appropriate we were also able to suggest other support opportunities for their individual circumstances.

We have been supported in this work by Will's knowledge, advice and instinct for the best way to help individuals. We meet as a team every few months to report past contacts and prepare for the next group of people who have been in touch regarding funerals of loved ones. In 2019 we met 4 times.

Whilst the work of the bereavement team is not onerous, the size of the team means that we are only one resignation away from unsustainability. It would be ideal to welcome and train with another member to the team to provide safety in numbers.

Catharine Pusey – Bereavement Team Coordinator

LAY LEADERS OF WORSHIP

Sue May and David Forbes are the only two remaining LLWS licensed to assist Will in whatever way they can in leading services in St Marys.

We have assisted in leading evening Services throughout the year, and occasionally giving a talk at 9.30. We both very much welcome the opportunity to lead these Services and hope that we can bring different perspectives and experiences to refresh the congregations who attend.

A conscious effort is being made by Will to bring greater variety to the 6.30 Sunday Evening Services, particularly when they are shared with our fellow Christians in Redbourn. This initiative seems to be borne out by the increased attendance at these services.

David Forbes – on behalf of the LLWs

CHURCHYARD SUB-COMMITTEE

Thanks to the continued tireless efforts of the churchyard Team and most particularly of David Swift and Chris Wright, the churchyard continues to give great pleasure and a place of sanctuary to all who visit the Church or just use the churchyard as a place to walk.

The assistance of the Community Payback team has also been invaluable and has meant that a large section of the churchyard which needed further clearing has now been achieved.

Unfortunately, we have been unable to continue to use the services of Men in Sheds to assist in repairs of our equipment, so we are back to using Deer Leap who have always been very helpful to us.

As always, this report ends with a cry for any who are not already doing so to assist with any mowing or clearing that they are able to assist with. It can be any time. Evenings or weekends or in the daytime. No offer of help is turned down.

David Forbes – PCC Liaison

THE MOTHERS' UNION

January 2019 St Mary's hosted the Annual Epiphany Ecumenical Carol Service when we were joined by members of the other Churches in the village alongside our Deanery MU members from Harpenden.

The AGM of 2019 welcomed 30 members. The new Treasurer, Clorinda Goodman, was appointed.

On March 2nd St Mary's was the host for the Diocesan Spring Sharing Day. The afternoon saw the commissioning of the Diocesan MU President, Board of Trustees and the Diocesan Chaplain. Speakers during the year included a Lenten talk by Revd Tim, David Brown on the Disappearing Bee, David Mitchell speaking on what it is like to be a judge and a representative from Citizens Advice.

Our Summer Outing in June was a lovely day trip to Windsor – with lunch at a restaurant on the side of the Thames.

The Wave of Prayer held in the Church was well attended and our Annual Supper in July was another enjoyable and happy occasion.

Two members moved away from Redbourn, Jean Nutting into residential care and Heather Reid to live in Cheshire. We enrolled three new members – Daphne Fisher, Pauline Ridgeway and Beryl Arnold.

Sadly, at the end of the year, our friend and loyal MU member, Draha Gell, passed away suddenly.

Attendances at our branch meetings were, on the whole, pretty good. We currently have 33 members.

We have a full and varied programme planned. Some excellent suggestions came from members, and where possible, we have tried to include them in our programme.

Our thanks to Will for taking our services and to Gill Chapman and Stephen Boffey for playing the organ. Also, many thanks to Stephen for all his help with formulating and printing our programme.

Rosemary Woodhouse – Branch Contact

BELLRINGING AT ST MARY'S CHURCH

Overall, it has been a good year with a reasonable standard of ringing. We have rung for every service as required and for all weddings.

People:

We have not welcomed any new members in 2019 so hoping that we will get a couple of learners this year. Unfortunately, Daphne felt that she could no longer continue with ringing due to the health difficulties she was experiencing. Both Pauline and Richard are regular service ringers now and Richard has also achieved his first quarter peal ringing the tenor behind.

We have maintained a good repertoire of methods at practice nights and Sunday and it is great that everyone is keen to try new methods

Malcolm continues to support Great Gaddesden, Mary and I are still helping at Flamstead.

I would like to say thanks to Mary for her great support as Secretary to Gemma for her work as treasurer and of course special thanks to Andrew who has been steeple keeper here for 16 years and has now decided to retire.

Andrew has really put a lot of effort into this role which is probably the most demanding of the elected offices. He is always available to arrange the annual service carried out by Taylors, to adjust ropes, check on stays, splice ropes and generally maintain our bells to the good standard that they are in. This will be a hard act to follow!! So, thank you Andrew – your excellent service is very much appreciated by me and all of us.

Thank you to Will for his continuing support to ringing at Redbourn – Will is always accommodating when we have requests for the bells, either by us or visitors.

The Ringing Year:

Redbourn retained the District (Apsley) Trophy in June however did not carry this through to the County (Kimpton) Cup – however we did get awarded 3rd position. Thanks to Pauline Mary H, Rebecca, Ben and Malcom for ringing so well.

Our outing this year was arranged once again by Mary Hughes. We visited towers in Hertfordshire and Essex and enjoyed a wonderful lunch at Gt Amwell. I asked Mary to include Hertingfordbury as we were due to ring in the Kimpton Cup there. This was duly done, but in the week before a rope broke. Hertingfordbury were going to cancel but a call to Andrew turned this round – he agreed to splice the rope and got it done in time for the competition band to practice. Cheers Andrew!! Many thanks to Mary for her organisation and also to everyone who supported the day. I think we must have ‘shown the ropes’ to more than 100 people that day.

In September we were once again invited to the Vicarage with the Gospellers for a BBQ. Thank you to Will and Clare for making this a very special and enjoyable afternoon / evening.

In December we went to the Holly Bush for our Christmas Meal. This was a very enjoyable evening. The service was great and so was the food. It was lovely having the schoolroom to ourselves. It was lovely that Will was able to join us this time. Also good to have Richard, Joe and Holly along for the first time.

We had 7 quarters rung at Redbourn this year – those of note:

2019 changes rung in April to celebrate Andrew's 80th birthday – Keith and Sarah joined Andrew to ring this.

Quarter to say goodbye to Tim Vickers in August.

A quarter rung to celebrate the life of Faith Farnham – Andrew, Keith and Sarah all rang 2 quarters to celebrate my 60th birthday – part of my challenge to ring with 60 different ringers for my birthday.

For 2020, I would invite you all to think about a plan to improve your ringing knowledge and ability – both in what you ring and also to get involved in conducting. I am sure there will be some more firsts achieved. It would be great if we could all find someone to introduce to ringing. As I am hopefully retiring from work in April it may be possible to offer tuition during the day to new learners which may help them improve more quickly.

Finally, thank you all for your continuing enthusiasm for ringing at Redbourn. It is an absolute honour and pleasure to run the ringing here – you all make it so easy.

Liz Middleton – Ringing Master

COFFEE ON THE COMMON

‘Coffee on the Common’ continues to thrive, in the Cricket Pavilion on weekday mornings from 9.15 to 12.30. We are grateful to the Cricket Club for allowing us to continue to use their premises, which gives us such a central location in the village.

At the end of this year we have 41 volunteers and have seen some coming and going among our number. I personally value everyone who is or has been part of our team and thank everyone for their involvement and commitment.

Sadly, we no longer offer our Wednesday lunches. Despite a healthy start, numbers dwindled until it was no longer viable to offer homemade soup for 1 or 2 people. I am glad that we tried it and may revisit it again in the future.

We have again offered opportunities to outside groups to use us as a venue, and have welcomed the pre-school, and a lady selling cards.

Another successful Pancake Party raised funds for St Mary’s CFC again this year – this may well become a fixture in our February calendar!

I am really glad to welcome back our young people from St Luke’s, who have been joining us again since September. Learning from our previous experience, they now come in pairs for a 6-week block, and working alongside our volunteers, and under the instruction of their teacher, they are blossoming in our friendly environment.

Following the success of last year’s Christmas ‘thank you’ Afternoon Tea, we held another this year, and it was attended by about 30 guests who all seemed to have a very jolly time. I am grateful to all who help to make this possible.

I have been approached by Olive Hickmott, who is planning to start up a walking group in the village in the new year. It is to be a beginners’ walk around the common, and she has asked if they could start and finish at the pavilion and encourage them to come in for coffee afterwards! I am very excited about this and look forward to its starting in January.

We are always on the lookout for new people to join our lovely team – please don’t hesitate to contact me if you feel the urge to join in! 😊

Sue May – Coordinator

SPOTLIGHT SMALL GROUPS

Spotlight continues to offer an opportunity to share, listen, support and encourage our faith journeys with one another in small groups, meeting in term time. Those attending are from St Mary's and the wider Redbourn community. The Tuesday morning group, led by Grace Sawyer, has been meeting at New Forge Place and included a mixture of people from the wider community. During the year this group has come to an end. | want to record my thanks to Grace who has been a faithful part of the Spotlight small group journey from the beginning, ten years ago in the St Luke's School community room. Other groups continue to meet on Tuesday and Thursday evenings.

Each group of between 6 and 13 people has its own identity and decides for itself what it will focus on. Thanks go to Kay & Paul Vernon who help facilitate an evening group. The other evening group, (Penny & Keith McAdam), has 10 signed up including several younger parents. During the year we sadly said 'goodbye' to Immaculee and Richard Heddon who are continuing their ministry in Kigali, Rwanda.

'Messy Conversations,' facilitated by Tim & Sophy Vickers, drew a number of parents and children on Saturday mornings. Since the Vickers family moved to Bushey the group still keeps in touch with one another.

In November Spotlight groups participated in leading our annual Spotlight service 'Invisible to Visible'. Ailsa Hulme, Reader in training, and in a Spotlight group, helped to create and lead the service.

The Annual Starlight event in the village hall was a little different this year. Through Kay & Paul Vernon's connection with Adrian and Bridget Plass the Searchlight Theatre Company included Redbourn in their 30th Anniversary tour around England. They presented 'Send in the Clowns' to an enthusiastic audience. For the first time we did not have a meal, just a pay bar. Proceeds went towards the cost of the company.

Penny McAdam – Spotlight Group Coordinator

YOUTH WORK at ST MARY'S

Sunday Activities

St Mary's encompasses children from 0-17 in its many groups and they are actively encouraged to take part in Worship and Service by the provision of age appropriate groups. The 1st Sunday in every month is an All Age Service where children contribute and feel involved helping with prayers and readings. During the other Sundays we have a range of groups which cater for the different ages who are taught and helped by a strong team of volunteers who nurture and nourish each individual child and are to be thanked for their care and knowledge. With safeguarding in mind all groups must have two adults present.

Mini Church is for babies until age four/five and meets in the Choir Vestry where they are encouraged to listen to a story read and acted by Joe the puppet and create various craft activities. Children are normally left in the capable hands of two adult leaders, but this is flexible, and parents can stay if they wish.

Junior Church caters for children from aged four to five up until around year four at school. This group follows the Lectionary and again has two adult leaders. We have an established team of volunteers who the children know and enjoy learning with. A varied and imaginative range of activities is available, and they average four in number

PALS take children from Year five and average ten. This is our largest group and has most of our Junior Choir which tends to shorten the session. The children are encouraged to discuss the Lectionary and to think about their faith and understanding of the bible.

This year we have seen a fall in children coming to the All Age Service some voicing concerns that their child will not sit through the Service as they like going to their group. This is something that the PCC have highlighted and with prayer and thought we are reviewing this next year.

In the future we are going to encourage the groups especially Mini and Junior Church to use one room which enables joint planning and ideas but also as the room is large flexibility when there is a need for the groups to split. We also plan to have some joint services with all the groups.

We wish to thank all those who plan and deliver interesting, thoughtful and enjoyable ideas but as always, we need more volunteers especially in PALS. We are truly blessed and privileged to have these people who prepare, help and support these groups promoting strong Christian values and nurturing our young people so thank you.

Other Activities

Teddy Tots and Quaver Kids and Gospellers – see separate report

Holiday Club- Pyramid Rocks

Seventy-two children attended the Holiday Club and we can honestly say the Church and grounds rocked. Joseph in Egypt definitely was a real hit with the children and who can forget us all moving to ‘Joseph and his God made the Pyramid Rock’, Again the Art work produced was amazing with a tableau of Joseph in his coloured coat with seven fat cows and seven thin cows stretched along the fence and was admired by congregation and villagers. We had children dressed as mummies, T shirts made in hieroglyphics and thoughtful ideas in our reflection section. The children found the week stimulating and enjoyed all the topics; discussion, prayer, singing, craft and physical activity. This year they were supported by some brilliant Young Leaders who showed great leadership skills. This year we joined with the Friends of St Mary’s who hosted a Gin Bar as well as the BBQ and we had a jazz band. We have a great group of people who give their time energy and skills, but we do need some more so we pray that people will come forward. It is wonderful to watch this group of children blossom and enjoy the week with us.

Christmas Holiday Club

Children attended a lovely Saturday holiday club led by Kay Vernon. As many families were away the weekend before Christmas, we had less children but did have the younger Reception Children and with the help of the Young Leaders they were the main part of the Nativity singing beautifully and not overawed. It was a lovely tableau.

Fellowship Afloat

Reverend Will Gibbs and Ailsa Hulme took a group of children to the Lightship in Essex. This has had some more improvements this year and gave more space for the children to spread out. The children had a wonderful weekend sailing, climbing and enjoying the thoughts and companionship of Young adults who gave insights into their faith which led to many questions.

Chellington

This was a weekend away in rural Bedfordshire in a beautiful Church on a hill which has been converted into a Family Centre. The weather was beautiful with some families camping outside and our thanks go to Penny McAdam and Sue May who organised a Creation Day comprising of a walk around the Harold Odell Country Park and then activities and a service. Over the weekend we had BBQs, singing and an Outdoor Service. Many thanks to Reverend Tim Vickers for organising it. All the families commented on it being a relaxing and joyous time. We hope to do this again in 2021.

We said goodbye to Rev Tim Vickers and his family. Sophie gave quiet help to parents in Teddy Tots and was an integral member of the Spotlight group. Tim gave so much time, help and knowledge to all the groups but especially Gospellers and Teddy Tots and we will miss his enthusiasm and prayerful contribution.

Our children are an important part of the St Mary's life contributing to Choir, Confirmation Classes, and attending groups and leadership. They constantly question us about our faith and how it fits in our world today.

I would also like to thank all those who give of their time to support and help the Youth of Church, they are the nurturers of our Christian values and we are very blessed to have them.

Ailsa Hulme – Children's and Youth Work Coordinator

TEDDY TOTS and QUAVER KIDS

Friday mornings continue to be full of fun, laughter, chatter, and of course the compulsory cake. **Teddy Tots** is a fun time for toddlers, but it also offers a supportive space for parents where deep needs can be shared, and tears safely shed. The morning runs from 10.30-12 every Friday throughout the year, even during school holidays (when everything else is closed) which is very much appreciated!

We have about 18 children each week with their parents, grandparents or carers. Adults and children find a warm and friendly welcome from the Teddy Tots team. Penny McAdam, Kay Vernon and Albert Joly remain from the original team. We sadly said goodbye to Tim Vickers and family, and also Mollie Williams who has been invaluable in the kitchen for many years. Her role has now been kindly taken over by Heather Stanley, and we have also welcomed Sarah Hill to the team. Kate Ford continues to oversee our social media presence and sends out regular newsletters. A special thank you to Ailsa Hulme who helped out while Penny was away in South Africa!

Our half hour story and song time (with musical instruments and Jo the puppet) is enjoyed by all. As the children are all slightly younger this year we have made the stories and craft simpler. We hope you enjoy the children's creative work on the Teddy Tots board in the transept! Although we aim to introduce the children to God's amazing love, we also include something meaningful for the adults, and many see this as their 'church' time. Sometimes this last half hour happens in the chancel area of the church. Every session ends with the Teddy Tots prayer helped along by Prayer Bear.

Many have told us that there is something special about Teddy Tots. Building relationships is important to us, both with the children and the parents. Our regular Family Breakfasts on a

Saturday morning once a term continue to provide an opportunity to meet the other members of the family and get to know them.

After a lot of prayer (!) October 2019 saw the exciting start of a new Thursday after school club called **Quaver Kids**. This is for our Teddy Tots ‘graduates’. We have 10 children aged 4-5 years. The club has a double focus: musical games and activities to encourage and develop confidence in singing and rhythm; and a focussed spiritual part which takes place around the altar in church. Finding out how special Jesus is and just how much he loves them is taught through interactive Bible stories, songs and prayer.

Our hope is that we can carry on walking alongside the children on their faith journeys which began at Teddy Tots and keep in touch with the families. The team is made up of Penny McAdam, Kay Vernon, Sarah Hill, Paul Vernon, with occasional help from Sue May. The children finish with a delicious tea cooked by Sandra Searle and Rosemary Woodhouse. One member of the club told his mum that he wanted to come to Quaver Kids “forever and ever and ever.”

Thank you to everyone who faithfully prays for the work of Teddy Tots and Quaver Kids.

Kay Vernon – on behalf of the Teddy Tots and Quaver Kids teams

GOSPELLERS

Gospellers meet on Sunday afternoons during term time, from 4-5.30pm. Numbers appear to have been holding steady over this period, but as ever, Gospellers is in competition with a multitude of other activities which young people take part in these days, as well as variable amounts of homework. We strive to put on an exciting Christian-focussed programme.

I want to pay tribute to Revd Tim, our Curate, who gave generously of his time and unstinting support to our teenagers and is greatly missed in this area of ministry following his move to take up a new post in Bushey in September 2019. In the Autumn term, and in light of Tim’s move, we shifted from a weekly pattern to meeting twice a month and activities included films, discussion, stone painting, a dog walk, baking, games and our ever-popular Christmas meal together. It is good to see how well our young people over quite a spread of ages get on together and our Gospellers sessions help to give them support and confidence in their faith.

Thanks to those leaders who have helped: Revd Tim, Clive Williams, Natasha Patel, David Forbes, Rachel Snow, Andy Ford.

Will Gibbs

ST MARY’S CHURCH CHOIR

The choir continues in good heart, and the total membership is now 36.

Catherine Robertson, a member of the choir for many years was sadly absent through health reasons for much of 2019. We continue to hold her in our prayers.

We were pleased to welcome Lesley Poulton to the adult choir, and Isaac Ford, Andria Aloysius, Faith and Gloria Osamagbe Eghobamien Alade, Tressina Izogie, Erin Smith and Rose Chinn to the junior choir.

The junior choir held a concert in September with various musical items culminating in a performance of *Jonah Man Jazz* by Michael Hurd. A substantial sum was raised for Youth Talk.

The worship band has been invigorated through the efforts of the excellent multi-tasking churchwarden Paul Vernon, who arranges and rehearses all the music for the band each month. The band provides a lively and high-quality accompaniment to the all-age service on the first Sunday of each month.

The choir continues its normal pattern of singing for the 9.30 Sunday service and for a Choral Evensong on the first Sunday of the month, along with other services at Christmas, Holy Week and Easter. We also sang carols at the Hollybush before Christmas.

Choir members have as usual played their full part with the church's music. David Fowler regularly typesets hymns and other music to make it easier to read; Kate Ford accompanied the evening All Souls service on the viola, and Kathy Goodchild wrote some new music, an anthem for the junior choir (Candlemas) and one for the full choir (Palm Sunday).

The junior choir sings on its own for the morning service on the first Sunday of the month. Now that a good core of the junior choir are at secondary school age, it is able to undertake a more ambitious programme of music.

I am very grateful to those who have stood in for me for service accompaniment and choir rehearsing: Damian Cranmer, Paul Vernon, Stephen Boffey and Lesley Poulton.

Damian Cranmer has continued his excellent blog on the music being sung at Choral Evensong. The current and previous blogs are available on the church website.

Jonathan Goodchild – Organist and Director of Music

ST. MARY'S TRANSEPT REPORT 2019

The Transept Hall and Upper Room continue to be used by regular weekly bookings and many one-off bookings, some of which have turned into further bookings throughout the year. The new style monthly calendar seems to be appreciated and is working well. The main point of contact with clients is through the Halls Booking email address (hall@stmarysredbourn.org) and this seems to be very satisfactory.

An inventory was taken of the kitchen contents and worn out items were replaced; also a couple of additional items were purchased. A thorough clean of the kitchen cupboards was carried out and I do think this should be done on a 3 monthly basis to ensure we meet Health and Safety Regulations / Standards, but it will need a small rota of volunteers to achieve this.

The fees are £10.00 per hour for regular bookings, church groups and charity groups, with all other bookings charged at £12.00 per hour. Invoicing is monthly, in arrears, for regular clients and in advance for one-off hirers and this is working well.

Wendy Cruickshank – Bookings Clerk

Transept bookings can be made by email: hall@stmarysredbourn.org
or by calling the dedicated booking number: 07938 723 222

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 2018. Previously we have run a Dinner Dance and Barn Dance, unfortunately it has become increasingly difficult to recruit new members to our committee to enable these events to take place. This year we concentrated on the car show as our main fund raiser.

- July** Gin and Jazz was a new event held in the grounds of St Mary's and was a social occasion for the parents/guardians of children attending the summer club. A gin tasting bar was provided by The Hollybush and a supporting bar was provided by the Friends along with a BBQ. The event made a profit of £540.
- September** The Friends ran the bar at St Mary's Patronal Festival and made a profit of £105. This was the third year of Redbourn classics motor show in conjunction with the Redbourn Care Group. This was a community event and although classic vehicles were the focus, all charities in Redbourn were invited to have a stall for free. Pitches were also sold to commercial traders. The feedback from the event was very positive and the plan is to do it again in 2020. The total amount raised for the Friends of St Mary's was £6838
The Friends also ran a bottle stall at the event which raised £476.
- October** A Harvest supper was held in the village hall with talk from Will about his A-Z charity adventure. This proved to be a popular event made a profit of £301.
- December** St. Albans Round Table again invited us to collect during one evening of their 'Father Christmas' float tour of the village. The weather was challenging and a big thank you for those who helped with the collection and to Lee Sheppard as Father Christmas. We made a profit of £650

Projects:

We have spent money this year on structural repairs to the church building.

Future Projects:

We are conscious of the need to ensure we have funds to meet the up-coming quinquennial which we have agreed to support and also internal decoration of the church.

We plan to repeat the events from 2019 as they all proved successful and are also planning a quiz night at the Hollybush and a Murder Mystery evening.

We will be joint organising Redbourn Classics Motor show again in September 2020.

Personnel:

We have a vacancy for a Chairperson and additional members of the committee would be very welcome.

Summary:

The Trustees consider this a successful year. Regular subscriptions continue to provide a significant part of the income. The Friends are truly 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 for the village to enjoy.

Wendy Bloisi – Acting Co-Chair

THE CHURCHES TOGETHER IN REDBOURN 2019

The Committee for the Churches Together in Redbourn met in January and September 2019. Three Redbourn Churches represented on the committee are St Mary's Church, the Methodist Church and The Catholic Church of St John Fisher.

Committee Members: Revd. Will Gibbs (Chair), Fr. Michael Mannion, Doreen Cosier, Christine Clow (Treasurer), Samantha Statham, Maggy Swift, Sue May, Revd. Mmasape Zihle until August and Revd. Stuart Dyer from September, Angela Jordan from September, Grace Sawyer (Secretary). It is with regret that we record the death of Doreen Cosier earlier in the year, Doreen having been a member of the committee for many years.

Lent 2019

In Lent 2019 weekly meetings were held in the lounge of New Forge Place, following a series based on the book 'The things he did' by Stephen Cottrell.

Lent Charity Lunches in 2019 were at Redbourn Methodist Church each Friday.

On the five Thursday evenings there were meetings at St Mary's Church. The theme was 'Making Sense of the Passion'.

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

The Walk of Witness on Good Friday 2019 began at 11:30am outside the Catholic Church of St John Fisher, stopping at the Village Hall Car Park, the War Memorial, and finishing at the Methodist Church. At each of these, 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	Services for the beginning of the Week of Christian Aid And 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 Cards and Christmas Leaflets These gave details of services in participating churches and were distributed to all homes in the village. Details of CTR Street Prayer Cards were included. There was good response to all of these.

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

Grace Sawyer – Secretary

REDBOURN DAY CENTRE

2019 has been another enjoyable and busy year. We had 18 clients at the start but during the year Sylvia Turner, Lilian McGee, Audrey Russell and Derek White all moved into Care Homes. Jenny Heap and Anne Myring joined the group so at the end of the year we had 16 on the books.

Our valiant band of helpers continued to give their full support and we welcomed Roy Woods, Steph Honeyman, Celia Forbes and Maggy Swift to the teams. Sadly, Eileen Darvell passed away after a short illness.

The weekly programme is planned for variety and stimulation so interspersed with the quieter days of games and art we have invited guests to entertain. Beth, Doris Cheetham's talented granddaughter delighted everyone playing several musical instruments. Janet Collins played the piano encouraging a sing-a-long. The ukulele group, at the request of Olive Pike, came for her 90th birthday party. Besides this we went to Frolics in February in the Village Hall and later in the year we made our way to the Holly Bush to listen to the ever-popular Jazz Band. For creative stimulation we invited Heartwood Glass to give a workshop. This was very interesting, and we all made glass coasters which were later taken to be fired with pleasing results. The Infants Choir came one afternoon prior to the Xmas break. Occasionally we have themed days and this year we celebrated Chinese New Year, America Day and had a 'mixed bag' of poetry and music. The play-reading we tried was a success so may repeat this in the future. Other activities included making mince pies, the annual bring-and-buy sale and special effects for Halloween.

Maxine from Citizens Advice came in to chat and explain what help is available. Sue the practice nurse administered flu jabs and Leigh came in fortnightly to lead Extend exercises.

Again, we have been blessed with the celebration of three communion services and are grateful to Rev Will Gibbs for giving us this opportunity.

Our main outing was to Dunstable Downs where we had coffee and a short walk before going onto The Bridgewater Arms for lunch.

Shopping was as usual to Hemel Hempstead with lunch at Debenhams.

Christmas lunch at Aubrey Park Hotel was an enjoyable conclusion to the year.

We are grateful for the generous donations from the Care Group, Redbourn Singers and the Darvel family in memory of Eileen to mention a few.

On behalf of the Day Centre I should like to say thank you to all those who help in any way.

Margie Johnstone – Day Centre Coordinator

SOCIAL MEDIA AND WEBSITE REPORT 2019

In 2019 the St Mary's website received an average of **595** unique visitors per month. Our family of **Facebook** 'followers' grew from **481** to **552** during the year, and posts continued to reach far beyond just these followers, the most popular being seen by **1,400** people in a single day. Overall, we received excellent and consistent engagement with our posts, from a wide range of people far beyond just those in the congregation. Our Twitter account has **377** followers and all new website posts are automatically tweeted.

Kate Ford – Church Website Editor and Administrator

The Church website is: www.stmarysredbourn.org
St Mary's can be found on Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/StMarysRedbourn>
And we're on Twitter at: @stmarysredbourn

REDBOURN COMMON ROUND

2019 was another successful year for the production and circulation of the magazine. The number of copies printed each month was 1100, 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, Keith Stanley and John Ridgwell kindly took care of the printing between them. A team of around 50 people distributed the magazine. David Walker organized the distribution.

Jim May is Treasurer and he is responsible for the Classified Advertisements. Occasional one-off adverts were included in the pages of copy.

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 2019:

Editor	The Vicar
Treasurer	Jim May
Printing	Tony Bull, Keith Stanley and John Ridgwell
Collating and distribution	David Walker
Classified advertisements	Jim May
Co-ordinator	Grace Sawyer

Grace Sawyer – Common Round Coordinator

REDBOURN COMMON ROUND

FINANCIAL REPORT 2019

INCOME / EXPENDITURE STATEMENT 2019

		2019	2018
Funds Brought Forward	[A]	8,184.04	4,980.45
CREDITS			
Magazine Sales	Distributor and direct	5,608.00	5,879.10
	Postal	84.00	96.00
Post Subscribers Post/pack contribution		196.00	210.00
Advertisement Sales		5,185.90	4,214.90
External Services Provided		835.48	1,459.31
TOTAL INCOME	[B]	11,909.38	11,859.31
DEBITS			
Printing		4,740.08	4,639.73
Stationery		1,264.79	1,642.29
Sundry Production Expenses		187.01	360.00
Distribution Expenses		231.15	244.72
Machine Rental		1,814.32	1,768.98
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	[C]	8,237.35	8,655.72
NETT MOVEMENT IN FUNDS	[B] - [C]	3,672.03	3,113.59
TOTAL FUNDS	[E]= (A + B - C)	11,856.07	8,184.04
Transfer to PCC	[F]	(5,000.00)	-
FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	[G] = (E + F)	6,856.07	8,184.04
FUNDS SUMMARY			
Current Account		9,052.75	9,821.63
Debtors		338.60	326.18
Creditors		(2,535.28)	(1,963.77)
		6,856.07	8,184.04

Analysis of Debtors	Accruals for Services	£38.50
		£99.90
		£167.60
		£32.60

£338.60

Analysis of Creditors	Machine usage 2020	£1,710.22
	Subs received in advance	£253.00
	Stationary - David Walker	£100.27
	Postage - David Walker	£231.15
	Herts Full Stop	£71.64
	2020 Advertising	£169.00

£2,535.28

Jim May – Common Round Treasurer