

St Mary's  
Book  
of Reports  
2018



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## VICAR'S REPORT

At the APCM last year, I spoke about four areas of church life that we would be focussing on, using four headings: Invite, Belong; Believe; Serve.

We have found these to be a helpful way for us to think about the areas of church life that need ongoing attention, as well as being a useful reminder that faith is often a journey which progresses from a first invitation, through a growing sense of belonging, associated with deeper belief and expressed in service.

This report returns to those four headings, sharing some of the things that have happened in the last 12 months. You can read more detail about many of the initiatives that are mentioned in this report elsewhere in this booklet.

### Invite

As a church community, we have a clear and ongoing commitment to growth.

We know that a key element in growing the number of people who are part of the church is encouraging everyone in the congregation to be invitational - which means helping everyone to share their faith with others, and supporting them to invite people to try church out. We made this a major focus this year, including:

- Running 'Talking the Good News', a 4 week course on how to share your faith.
- Setting up a new Apologetics series, in which speakers are invited to help us think through the big issues of faith that we will be challenged on if we share our faith. So far we have looked at the challenges of suffering and the interface between faith and science. Our next speaker, in June, will lead a session on life after death.
- A preaching series on Mission.
- Inviting Mark Greene to lead our Church Day Away and following up with a preaching series on Fruitfulness on the Frontline, together with resources for Small Groups.



We will continue to support each other to be more confident in sharing faith, as we know what a courageous step it is to talk openly about God and how critical it is if more people are to come to believe.

Although it is difficult to know how effective these initiatives has been in growing the size of the church, we have continued to welcome new people to the church

community and the overall size of the community has continued to grow, as this table shows.

| Year * | Number of people in the church community |
|--------|--|
| 2014   | 161                                      |
| 2015   | 190                                      |
| 2016   | 271                                      |
| 2017   | 335                                      |

\* These figures only began to be recorded in 2014

More broadly, we have tried to open up the church building more widely to the local community and have been delighted to see it used for musicals, meetings, photographic exhibitions and a monthly village youth group. All of these are part of developing an invitational and hospitable culture.

### **Belong**

We know however how hard it can be for someone who tries church out to feel that they belong - and we know this gets harder as the church grows in size. With that in mind we are now running regular welcome lunches for those who have recently started coming to church, as well as continuing to encourage as many people as possible to belong to a small group - and you can read more about these groups elsewhere in this booklet.

We also want to make sure that the range of social activities, where we can get to know each other, remains diverse. We are delighted that a new catering team has just started up, and they will be running regular after church lunches over the next 12 months, for anyone to come along to.

One very clear trend is that more people are coming to church, but are coming less often. This explains the data in the table below, which, with some ups and downs, has been hovering around 140-150 people for the last three years - while the size of the church community has increased by 56%.

| Year | Average Sunday attendance |
|------|---------------------------|
| 2013 | 117                       |
| 2014 | 160                       |
| 2015 | 135                       |
| 2016 | 151                       |
| 2017 | 139                       |

There are a range of reasons for this, many of which are not specific to us and apply to the church nationally. These include busier weekends, greater demands on people to work at the weekend, a congregation that includes lots of families, many of whom have children doing a wide range of weekend activities and a growing range of church activities through the week, so that Sunday church is not the only way to be part of the church.

In the midst of these calls on peoples time, we continue to encourage everyone to attend regularly and consistently, as Sunday services remain the key way to grow in faith and in fellowship.

We have worked to signpost people to the full range of services that are offered across the benefice. It has been very good to see attendance at Christ Church continuing to grow, as some people have chosen to worship with the more traditional and quieter services offered there. It is one of the great benefits of being part of a church family with two church buildings. We will continue to invite and encourage everyone to attend the service(s) which are most helpful to their ongoing journey with God.

We also want to support those who are finding it harder to get to church through ill-health, and the Connect team (see more below) are increasingly looking out for housebound members of the congregation so they can receive visits and maintain their belonging to the church community.

## **Believe**

Church, of course, is more than a social club. The author Evelyn Underhill once wrote to the then Archbishop of Canterbury. She said God is the interesting thing about religion, and people are hungry for God. A full church on Sunday, great activities for children and teenagers, practical support for needy people - none of these are worth anything if they're not about God. Religion isn't the interesting thing about religion - God is the interesting thing.

With that in mind we continue to place a strong emphasis on helping everyone grow in their trust in God, their knowledge of the Scriptures, the depth of their prayer life and their sense of themselves as wholehearted disciples of Jesus Christ.

Our Sunday worship is a key focus of prayer, worship and teaching, and we have continued to work to make this as engaging and life-giving as possible for people of all ages. This includes the establishment of the new monthly informal choir and regular preaching series on specific topics, including in the last 12 months, on Paul's letter to the Philippians, The Economy of Grace and Fruitfulness on the Frontline.



At the heart of our vision are our children, young

people and families, so we continue to focus on the quality and range of activities and groups for children and young people. Sunday Club continues to offer 5 groups every week and you can read more about this ministry in Caroline Turvey's report.

Beyond Sundays, Small Groups are an essential place for people to discuss their faith. See more on them in Huthrie's report.



A new initiative this year has been the Weald School of Theology, which offers the opportunity to explore Christian Theology in more depth. By running this as a Deanery initiative and inviting local churches, we are also beginning to offer some of the resources we have been blessed with more widely. We will continue to do this with other courses and events over the next 12 months.

For the teenagers, our first ever residential weekend at St Bartz was a massive success, giving participants an opportunity to spend time together and to explore their faith in a supportive atmosphere. We will certainly repeat and develop these opportunities.

The Week of Accompanied Prayer and Apologetics sessions are also designed to support people to grow in faith.

Over the last 12 months the new Connect prayer team, led by Claire Cooke, has developed and we now have a group who are available after every 10:45 service, as well as at other times, to pray with and for anyone seeking that support. We would love to see it becoming more and more normal for everyone in church to seek this kind of prayer. As part of developing this team we ran a day of training, led by Rev Sarah Chapman, the Diocesan Advisor on Healing and Wholeness. A significant number of the prayer team then went on to take part in a more in depth course led by Faye and Wes Hinsley. We will continue to develop this ministry over the next year.

## **Serve**

One of the major developments over the last year has been the growing impact of the Connect team, led by Ali Williams. They now offer visits to housebound members of the congregation and those in hospital, run the Community Cupboard and Food Train, which regularly deliver food to local individuals and families and provide practical support to people from the local community who are struggling in a wide variety of ways. A new 'Connect Clothing' is just up and running, offering high quality



pre-loved clothing at very reasonable prices. Connect's impact has been very significant in the local community.

In addition, the Fruitfulness on the Frontline materials encouraged everyone to consider how they serve God on their 'frontlines' - at work, in the local community and within their families and a number of people have responded in creative ways.

Within the regular life of the church we now have 120 people involved in at least one area of church life.



Our ministry to children and young people remains strong, and in addition to Sunday Club we now offer some kind of significant weekly input to children from 0 to 15; babies and toddlers are supported through Cafe Toddlers, Caroline goes to the pre-school each week, she and I are involved with the primary school every week, including through Trinity lights a lunch time group for children, which Caroline runs, and Breathe, a morning prayer time for Staff which I lead.

Now with Blend successfully up and running, we are also engaging with young people in school years 7 to 11. Our vision of being the key support for local families and their children is coming into being. Other one off events such as the half term film club and termly parties have also been very successful.

## **Other**

In addition to these specific areas of development, we have also worked on the underlying foundations of church life.

This includes developing the leadership structures of the church. As part of this the Staff team (Ali Williams, Caroline Turvey, Becky Addis and I) are working more closely together to run the day to day activities, a wider Leadership Team including Simon Taurins and Barney Mayhew - as PCC Chair - consider the strategic direction of the church, while the PCC continues to have overall oversight and authority over all areas of mission, ministry and resources.

At this point last year there were some concerns about our finances. As you will hear at the APCM, thanks to the generosity of the church community, these have passed and we are back to a healthy financial position which allows us to plan confidently for the next stages of growth in the life of the church.

Finally, a huge amount of work has gone into the church building - which you can read about in detail elsewhere. Much of this has been in the background, especially in preparing for the works which need to be done in response to the 5-yearly inspection of the building - called the Quinquennial - which took place late last year.

This report, already 2000 words long, hardly scratches the surface of the depth and range of faith, relationship, prayer, worship, love, fellowship and service which makes up the life of St Mary's. I am aware every day that we are blessed beyond measure by the Lord who created us, who walks with us and who is alive in our hearts. I pray that we will continue to use those blessings to his glory, and to bring his Kingdom closer.

God bless

Revd Hugh

## **ALPHA COURSE**

In recent years GK Church has, with great success, run one big Alpha Course each year in a village hall (beginning in Kilndown and then due to increased demand moving to Goudhurst). However in 2017 it was decided that the size of the single annual course could not be sustained and that in order to reach out to new people who have not attended an Alpha Course before we would have to change how we offer the course.

In 2017 we therefore moved to a smaller course format which is run in people's homes at a time to suit both those running the courses and those who can attend. This proved to be a success and we have continued in this vein in 2018.

At the moment we have two Alpha Courses running concurrently, one during the day and one in the evening. These are both going well with guests opening up and exploring their faiths and relationship with the Lord in different ways. Both courses will come to an end during the summer term.

We will continue to advertise the Alpha Course and make a note of people who are interested or who we would like to invite and when there is sufficient demand we will set up further courses to meet the needs of those interested in attending.

In order to run these courses we are of course reliant on people coming forward to volunteer in different roles - as leaders and helpers and to support with aspects from providing food to a prayer network. We pray that people will continue to be forthcoming with their time and generosity and we would particularly benefit from someone offering to run the prayer network in relation to the courses.

After Easter we will also be running a Youth Alpha Course in the Pioneers Sunday Club. This is for ages 11-18 and has also been advertised at Blend as we would welcome teenagers who do not normally attend church or the Sunday Clubs to come along and give Alpha a try.

Kat Ogden

## **BELLRINGING**

Unfortunately there is very little to report. Most of our experienced ringers have experienced long term illness during the year and although we have adults and juniors learning it has been difficult for them to progress. For weddings and special events its been a case of asking people outside the village to help us out. Please enquire if you would be interested in learning, or come along on a practice evening - during April and most of May this will be on Thursdays and then we will be reverting to our usual day of Wednesday.

Rosemary Southon

## **BENEFICE OFFICE**

Life in the Benefice Office became even busier, and more fun, this year with the arrival of Caroline. There's never a dull moment when we're both in the office but, as well as having fun, we are working really hard as our church community continues to grow. My hours have changed slightly so I now work Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday mornings, 9:00 to 1:00. My working week starts with prayer in St. Mary's with Ali and Caroline on a Monday morning – the perfect way to set us all up for the week ahead. Every other Tuesday morning we also have our staff meeting (so that's Hugh, Caroline, Ali and me) – we all come out of those meetings with rather long to do lists! Work wise I continue to look after the Sunday rotas, the weekly email and pew sheet, the administration of weddings and baptisms, the payment of invoices as well as the bookkeeping side of the accounts (I always look forward to John McCaig popping into the office to discuss Gift Aid – as well as the latest Scandi drama that we're both watching!), and lots more. My job has become a lot easier since we signed up to a new online database system – Church Suite – so rotas can now be produced with a few clicks! The new database will come in extremely useful as I tackle the new GDPR legislation over the next couple of months – please look out for a letter from me on that one. As always, I'm keen to hear from anyone who might like to get involved with serving on a Sunday morning, particularly anyone who could commit to being a sidesperson once a month. And to those of you who are already on rotas, thank you for serving in this way, and for responding to my requests for help – you certainly make my life a lot easier. I love serving the community of St. Mary's as the Benefice Administrator and feel so thankful to God that I can.

Becky Addis

## **CAFE TODDLERS**

Cafe Toddlers is 5!

Every Friday morning during term, about 20-25 mums, dads, grannies and nannies come to church with their children. It is a very happy time and everyone seems to enjoy the cakes, craft and conversation.

For most of these people, it is the only time they come to church. The mums quite often remark on how much the little ones like coming to church on a Friday. We hope that it gives them very good associations with church long term. We had a great creative Christmas Cake Decorating and Wine Tasting for the mums, with a talk/interview beforehand about the things of faith. A big Easter highlight was Jane Wickham bringing in two lambs – the children were very excited!

Victoria Dawes, Sue Donkin, Caroline Turvey and Mandy Alison are a brilliant team and Lizzie Nelson and Becky Addis come along each week to help us clear up at the end. There are a variety of other kitchen helpers who do one or two Fridays a term. What we really need is some more help on the craft table, so if you could run craft occasionally, please let me know on 01580 212766. We can reimburse you for any materials. Or do make a cake for us!

It would be great if other members of the church congregation popped in sometimes to encourage us and chat to the mums. Please come along and have a cup of coffee and see what we are up to. Or send up a prayer for us as we reach out to our community.

Henrietta Mayhew

## **COFFEE & QUESTIONS**

We have had another happy year at Coffee & Questions.

We used to meet in Kilndown, but this last term have been at the Star & Eagle. We do a variety of things, all aimed at helping us grow in our knowledge and love of God. We have often been led in Bible Studies by Jane Ashton, who used to be lay chaplain at Benenden School. She's just become High Sherriff of Kent and so will be rather busy for the next year, but we are looking forward to her visiting us when we can. The plan is to joint the 10am Communion services once a term. They looked rather surprised to see us last time we went!

And big thanks to Caroline Davis who has very kindly baked some delicious cakes for everyone.

Henrietta Mayhew

## CONNECT

The Connect Ministry has quietly been gathering strength over the past 12 months and is now becoming more effective in providing practical support in a number of different ways.

Requests for visiting have been sporadic, but we hope that by trying to have a keener awareness of who might appreciate a call or someone to drop by without being intrusive will help everyone feel looked out for and loved.

The Church Freezer which provides home cooked meals to help people in a variety of ways such as recovering from illness, operations or childbirth, and other similar situations continues to be well stocked and has been a great help to many people this year. In addition to the freezer food, since November 2017 some of our church family have also been providing more regular hot meals to help people who find themselves in challenging situations via a system called the 'Meal Train'. Feedback from the recipients leave us in no doubt that this act of service by the church, which so far has provided over 70 individual meals, has been an absolute blessing and a great source of help and comfort for people in difficult situations.

The Community Cupboard is now established, and since September 2017 has handed out over 150 parcels of food to households who are struggling to make ends meet for many different reasons. The cupboard is stocked by food, toiletry and household cleaning donations made to St Mary's, Christchurch and the Sacred Heart. In addition we subscribe to a scheme called Fareshare, which once a week enables us to collect from Tesco any leftover bakery and some other fresh items which have reached their best before date. This means we can sometimes top up our parcels with bread, pastries, eggs and fresh fruit and vegetables. At Christmas and Easter extremely generous donations were made to the Community Cupboard by Ready Call which boosted the parcels with lots of fresh items as well as some extra special treats, which were gratefully received.

The Connect Clothing Project got underway in October 2017 with a call for donations of clothing for all ages in excellent/very good condition. The project is essentially a pop up clothing store providing really good quality clothing at very reasonable prices that are accessible to everyone, whatever the brand. However, the clothing project is much more than just a pop up shop. The clothes are carefully prepared, individually labelled and prayed over. Every label carries a short verse from the Bible too, so the Word is carried out of the sale into homes. Our hope is that we encounter people, build relationships, and nurture an interest in all the Church has to offer. Within a short space of time from the launch in October, we had enough 'stock' for our first sale which took place during the February half term film afternoon in St Mary's. We kept this quite low key and as a trial sale to enable us to find our feet as far as preparation, setting up, timings etc. Nevertheless, the sale was a success financially as well as facilitating another way to engage with our

village communities. At the time of writing we have two small sales scheduled for mid-April to take place at Café Toddler and Blend – but the full stock will be on sale at the village Fete in June, come and have a look!

We can also gift clothing in conjunction with the Community Cupboard, and we have provided some baby clothes as a gift from GK Church to a family in the village with a new baby as a simple gesture of kindness.

None of the Connect pastoral care and outreach could take place without the generosity of everyone who gives of their time and more, to support Connect in so many different ways – thank you.

Ali Williams

## **FLOWER ARRANGERS**

During Lent in 2017, plans were made, a Committee drawn together and meetings attended to discuss the “Nature’s Harvest Flower Festival” to coincide with St. Mary’s Harvest services from Friday 15th to Sunday 17th September.

Twenty flower arrangers, including three new ladies who were very much welcomed, chose a Biblical reference on harvest and produced well over 50 arrangements, which filled St. Mary’s with their amazing talent and heavenly scent. The visitors feasted their eyes, visually, and then feasted on the spreads of superb cakes, so generously made by the Kitchen team. The whole event ran very smoothly thanks to the efficient volunteer stewards.

Much of the flowers and greenery came from our gardens, the hedgerows and orchards, which is a theme that we will be trying to repeat in our flower arrangements this year, to try and make the most of Nature’s Harvest.

At Christmas, the birds had feasted on the holly berries, but there were some beautiful arrangements all round the Church, which with judicious watering, lasted well into January.

We received very generous donations towards lilies for the Easter arrangements, beautifully set off with Forsythia, pussy willow and lots of daffodils, with Ivy and greenery from gardens and hedges.

We will be having a relatively quiet year in 2018, with no Flower Festival, but we much look forward to joining together at the various Christian festivals Thankfully, the weekly rota is full, although there will no doubt be last minute wedding alterations. If anyone would like to come and help us and join our group, you would be most welcome, please just ring 01580 211610.

Angela Pakenham-Walsh

## **FRIENDS OF ST MARY'S**

Last year was a very busy year for the Friends ....

We started off with our Quiz Night & AGM in March, we are hoping to make this an annual event. We had 60 "quizzers" in teams of 6-8 and won by John McCaig's team. The evening was thoroughly enjoyed by all and started the years fundraising making a profit of £740.00.

Our next event was the Village Fete. We decided to concentrate on the Tower this year and let the Sunday Club children run the Human Fruit Machine on our behalf. We opened the tower, sold bags, tea towels and held a paper aeroplane competition raising £255.00.

Last summer, a visitor sang in the Church on an open Tower day. He loved the acoustics and promptly offered his London based choir, Feverpitch, for the fundraising concert in aid of the Friends of St Mary's. The concert took place during the Autumn Flower Festival. It was a wonderful evening of a cappella singing, themed as "Fear no more the heat of the sun" and was set against the backdrop of the beautiful flower arrangements in our Church. The event, attended by over 100 people, made just over £2000 through ticket sales & the bar.

In October Victoria Hislop visited us in October for a "Literary Tea". Over 100 guests came and watched as Victoria was interviewed by Gemma Humphries about her book Cartes Postales. This was followed by vast quantities of delicious sandwiches and cakes. Victoria then signed books at the end of the afternoon, helping us to raise £973.00.

At the end of November we held our Christmas Fair. The Primary School Choir sang for us and Nick & Barbara Seymour entertained us with their Street Organ. It was a lovely evening, a wonderful way to start the run up to Christmas raising £2274.00.

Jill Dunstall once again organised the Christmas Carol Parties that together raised £771.00

Last summer we raised £1876.00 opening the Church Tower, £500.00 more than the previous year. We are still looking for volunteers to help.

We have now begun our fundraising for this year and are holding our AGM and Quiz night on Saturday 28th April (postponed from Saturday 3rd March due to the snow).

In between these events we carried out our Spring and Autumn Church tidy up & won an award from the Parish Council for all our work maintaining the Church yard.

Last year we paid £790.00 for the new bench on the south side, £2680.00 on new floodlighting and £311.00 on renovations to the Bathurst Tomb.

Sadly, Bryan Mason resigned from the Committee after many years of service to the Friends, both as Treasurer and a Committee member. Andy Freeman has joined our Committee.

Andrea Kirkby  
Secretary - Friends of St Mary's

## **FUND RAISING**

At St Mary's we aim to support our Youth Work through fund raising activities that both bring the community together and entertain as many as possible. Whilst we run a November Quiz and field a big team at the Fete each year, 2017 also saw the church bedecked for the "Nature's Harvest" Flower Festival at the end of September. As with much of our fund raising nothing would have happened had it not been for the drive and energy of Angela Pakenham-Walsh who made sure no idea went unexplored, no oasis went dry, no blooms went unwatered and no donations tray unfilled. Individual thanks are covered elsewhere but we must mention Neville Gallagher for sorting the money and Terrence for both keeping APW going and managing to negotiate a sizable donation from Barclays Bank – much to their surprise.

Angela's team of arrangers had a month off before changing into cooks tasked with feeding the teams at the November Quiz. Their feast and James Wickham's flowing Bar overcame the contestants' traditional unease about the validity of most of the questions. As always most of the Vinton family did a fantastic job of running the quiz and preventing any angry contestants getting too close to the compere.

St Mary's chairs the village Fete every four years – a role that offers almost unsurmountable admin headaches tempered by the slight financial reward of getting to run the BBQ. The sun shone, cars parked, Morris danced, dogs were shown, ropes were tugged, eggs were thrown and all was recorded for televisual prosperity. However the day wouldn't have worked nearly as well had it not been for Jill Dunstall's Tea Team, the burger flipping Nelsons and Taurins, bottling Wickhams, golfing Stewarts, rat beating Dawes, dog wrangling Halls, child bouncing Lloyds, ticket touting Ogdens, money crunching Lodges and the massed jamming Sunday Clubbers.

All in all the Quiz, Fete and our share of the Flower Festival generated over £9,000 and a fair amount of fun.

Richard Vinton



## **Goudhurst and Kildown Church of England Primary School Headteacher's Report to St. Mary's A.P.C.M-Spring 2018 April 2017-March 2018**

Standards at the school have remained high and this has been confirmed by a recent Canterbury Diocese Section 48 Inspection, which judged the school once again to be 'Outstanding'. The inspection judgements are split into three areas: Distinctive Christian Character, Collective Worship and Leadership and Management. The inspection also focussed on the quality of teaching and learning in RE and particular thanks must go to Mrs Omer who leads this area of the curriculum and indeed for her strong leadership and participation during the whole SIAMS Inspection process. I am very proud of the hard work and high quality teaching provided by all staff that has enabled this fantastic overall judgement. Strengths of the school were identified as:

- The commitment and vision of the headteacher, is confidently supported by her staff and governors. This results in highly effective leadership and management of Goudhurst and Kildown as a distinctive and inclusive church school.
- The learning environment, both inside and outside the school building, makes a significant contribution to the spiritual development of pupils.
- The behaviour of all learners is exceptional. All relationships are underpinned by a mutual respect for each individual, reflecting the Christian character and values of the school.
- A range of collective worship leaders, together with a variety of locations for worship, clearly and explicitly supports pupils' spiritual and moral development.

Year 3-6 attended a church service at Christ Church in Kildown on 28<sup>th</sup> June 2017. Years 4-6 then walked back to Goudhurst from Kildown following the Millennium Trail. Whilst Year 3 learnt all about the history of the church and surrounding area. Particular thanks must go to David Denton for giving up his time to share his knowledge with Mrs Omer and Year 3.

31 Year 6 pupils moved to a variety of secondary schools last summer. We celebrated the achievements of each at our leavers' service and gave everyone a Good News Bible, paid for by the PCC – Thank you.

We continue to be committed to delivering Forest School and Outdoor Learning and this year we have been lucky enough to be able to enhance our provision of outdoor activities. We have built an outdoor classroom "The Hide" (courtesy of a successful grant award from Tesco) and we have also completely renovated our pond area; particular thanks must go to Richard Balfour Lynne of the Goudhurst Inn for his generous contribution towards this project. We have also introduced Creative Play at break and lunch-times. Children gain enormous benefit from having loose parts to play with as they create richer environments, and promote and support imaginative play. The ethos of loose play is that children learn best when they play. **"Play is freely chosen, personally directed and intrinsically motivated."** (Play Wales). Initial signs are that playtimes have indeed become more engaging for the children. Children have been playing together in mixed age groups, structures are being created (both on the ground and in trees) and there have been far fewer arguments, bumps and scrapes. We are extremely grateful to Joe Meyer who continues to allow us to use his woodland, in Ladham Lane. If you have a couple of hours to spare each week and would like to get involved in any of our school activities, please do not hesitate to contact the school office on 01580 211365 for more information.

Academic standards continue to remain high; indeed we are fortunate to have an experienced and committed teaching staff that work incredibly hard every day to ensure that the children in our school receive the very best Education possible. We started the new academic year with a full complement of staff and in addition, this year we have welcomed Mr Gray and Miss Wilkins to our teaching team.

This year one of our school improvement priorities is to increase the proportion of pupils who achieve 'Greater Depth in Maths' across both Keystage 1 and 2. In September, we introduced a new innovative maths Scheme, Inspire Maths; maths planning and activities follow a specific Singaporean pedagogical programme. I would like to thank the Kilndown Educational Trust who awarded us a grant towards this cost.

In addition to the statutory curriculum, we try to provide our children with a wide range of extra curricular experiences to help enrich their learning. We continue to offer a wide range of clubs to all our children and our annual Arts Festival is proving ever more popular; this year we even saw an entry from the staff! Particular thanks must go to Ms Lane and Mrs Morris for organising the event and the Arts Council for presenting to us on the evening. The children and staff in KS2 put on a wonderful performance of 'The Amazing Adventures of Super Stan' at the end of the summer term. Year 5 completed their two night residential trip to Swattenden during the middle of September and once again Year 6 enjoyed their

final residential trip to Hardelot, France. All the children had an opportunity to practice their French and combined learning about French culture and outdoor adventurous activities. Year R, 1 and 2 have received weekly whole class djembe drumming lessons and Year 5 are enjoying learning how to play the trumpet. In addition, some children are learning to play the guitar, piano, recorder, and some are having singing lessons. Year 5 also took part in a magnificent production of the Tempest as part of the Royal Shakespeare School Festival at the Trinity Theatre Tunbridge Wells. Their performance was described as being “Magical, Mysterious and Marvellous.” All the children spoke confidently and clearly, indeed their vocal energy and their timing was excellent. I was a very proud Headteacher.

It has been another year of great sporting success. We secured 1<sup>st</sup> place for the 9<sup>th</sup> time in the Julie Rose Athletics in July 2017; will be lucky enough to win it for a 10<sup>th</sup> time this year? Other events entered included the Rawlinson Run, the Orchard Run, Basketball, Hockey, Netball, Football, Swimming Gala, Cross Country Festival, Tag Rugby and The Kent Junior Schools Cross Country Championships where we competed against hundreds of children taking part from all over Kent. Our daily ‘mile run’ continues to be ever popular and we certainly believe that this daily exercise is having a positive impact on the children’s fitness and concentration skills. Indeed in recognition for our commitment to the development of high quality PE, Sport and competition across the school and into the community, we were awarded a Gold School Games Kitemark. This is an improvement on last year when we were awarded the Silver Kitemark! We are one of the only schools in our area to achieve this.

Every year the children contribute either by their actions or by raising money for worthy causes. This year is no exception and included Demelza, Sports Relief and Jeans for Genes to name but a few. Well done and a BIG thank you to everyone. The children have also been learning about the work of Starfish Malawi and we have now established a link school in Malawi.

We recognise the importance and value our strong links with St. Mary’s Church. The School/Church Link Group has already met a number of times this year and the meetings have been most productive. Reverend Hugh and Caroline Turvey continue to lead our Wednesday Collective Worship Services; Breathe sessions for staff and parents continue to be appreciated and Trinity Lights held every week is ever more popular- Thank you.

We continue to offer a cooked lunch once a fortnight to members of the Village Community. The older children meet and greet our visitors and serve them a delicious roast lunch.

Our Harvest Festival took place on Wednesday 20th September in St. Mary’s Church; the children performed beautifully and filled the church with their music, poems and prayers! It was a delight to see so many parents and members of

the community coming together at the service to help us celebrate. We held a Community Harvest Shared Lunch in the school on Wednesday 27th September. The school laid a wreath, as usual, on Remembrance Day as part of the Sunday Service after joining the procession through the High Street; some of our children were invited to read at the service. This year Year 6 participated in one of Canterbury Cathedral School Days. The children took part in a number of workshops and a highlight this year - two of our pupils were invited to lead Collective Worship during the day.

Bishop Trevor commented, "Demi and Sam gave an extraordinary and flawless performance."



Our Choir regularly perform at village events – late night shopping, family services and once again this year they represented the school in the Young Voices Choir February 2018 at the O2.

KS1 performed a wonderful Nativity Play entitled 'Manger Mouse' on 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> December which were very well attended by parents. The dress rehearsal on 12<sup>th</sup> December was watched by KS2 alongside members of the community who had first enjoyed a delicious lunch. On Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> December, we had our end of term Carol Service that was again very well attended and a lovely end to a very busy term.

This year we held our Christingle Service in St. Mary's Church on Friday 26<sup>th</sup> January. The Year 6 pupils led the service very confidently; every child was given a glow stick to hold whilst the year 6 pupils were given a real candle. When the candles were lit and the lights turned out, silence filled the church and there was a sense of awe and wonder in the air. Our annual Ash Wednesday service, led by Reverend Hugh was also held in St. Mary's Church on 7<sup>th</sup> February. Moments such as these really help to deepen the children's spiritual development.

Finally, on Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> March we held our Easter Service in St. Mary's Church. Many parents and family members joined us and this year each class prepared and presented a section of the Easter Story, which was delightful. This coupled with the beautiful singing by all the children, which filled the air, made it a wonderful way to conclude yet another busy and successful term.

Please visit our school website to keep up to date with all the latest school news and events:

[www.goudhurst-kilndown.kent.sch.uk](http://www.goudhurst-kilndown.kent.sch.uk)

Lindsay Roberts  
Headteacher

## **GOUDHURST VILLAGE PRE-SCHOOL 2017 – 2018**

Goudhurst Village Pre-school enjoyed continued success during this timeframe and was accredited a 'Good In All Areas' Ofsted rating in the spring of 2017. Their vegetable and flower garden won the Goudhurst in Bloom Gold Award and was featured in the local newspapers. The latest project – a Woodland Fun Area – has now also been completed, which allows the children to enjoy a true sense of freedom: playing on balance beams, building dens, fairy gardens and bugs houses, having outside group activity time on the carved mushroom stumps of the 'story circle', concocting delights in the mud kitchen, climbing trees, getting muddy and using their imaginations in the 'wild'.

Jayne Russell, an extremely well respected local child minder who achieved great things for the local Primary school during her long tenure as Chair of the PTFA and who has also recently taken over Ready Call, joined as Co Chair in September 2017 and brings not only her Level 3 qualifications on board but also considerable financial and fundraising experience.

An apprentice was employed in the Autumn of last year who is currently undertaking training, the manager is studying for a level 5 management course, the deputy who is already an Early Years Professional is studying for a degree and an assistant won the National Apprentice Award for Early Years training.

Through fundraising by hosting events such as a Horse Race Night, a sponsored Easter Bunny Bounce and an annual Halloween Party in addition to local donations, the Woodland Area is now up and running, the staff have logoed uniforms and iPads and the children have logoed high viz jackets for outings and waterproof onsies for outside play.

Parents are reserving places over a year or more in advance. Current attendees are 48, leavers at the end of the Summer Term are 20 but there is a healthy register of 32 for the Autumn with 5 parents yet to confirm.

Alison Clarke – Co Chair

### **LEND WITH CARE**

We continue to support this charity. Entrepreneurs in various countries submit their business plans to local agents in their country and this is forwarded to Lend with Care who put it on their web page (a very simplified description). We are then able to decide who we would like to support and with how much. Each month we then receive repayments. From the beginning of 2017 we have supported 13 new projects but this amounts to more people when families and employees are added in. Thanks to a very generous donation at the end of the year we were able to fully support 3 projects. Please look at the display board at the back of St Mary's to gain more information about the countries and projects that we are currently supporting.

Rosemary Southon and Norma Neale

### **CHORAL MUSIC AT ST. MARY'S, GOUDHURST 2018**

St. Mary's choir continues to uphold the tradition of singing two Sung Eucharist services on the second and fourth Sundays of the month at St. Mary's. With the increasingly large congregations, the choir are now preparing and singing two anthems, while the congregation take communion. The number of hymns sung have been cut from four to three, but are still fairly traditional.

The second Sunday's music is taken by Wes Hinsley, partly on the organ and partly with the band, when available. Wes and Angela have been encouraging a less formal choir – not robed – on this Sunday to tempt singers who would like to join the choir, but without a weekly commitment. This seems to be working fairly well, but we could always do with more!

On the first and third Sundays of each month, the choir sing Sung Eucharist at Christ Church Kildown, which has a very steady and loyal congregation; we much look forward to the time when two anthems are needed during communion! And in the meantime, we enjoy singing four hymns with them.

David Denton has very kindly been taking choir practice at 10am on each Saturday morning, in the absence of a permanent Director of Music and Organist. Luckily

we have the considerable talents of Michael Tester and John Williams who play for us on the fourth Sunday We have a second and much needed Bass who joined us a year ago, Jonathan Martin, and Nick and Barbara sing with us as much as they can.

We have tried hard to keep up the Augmented choir on the fourth Sundays, and they too, are very loyal and come whenever they can, from as far afield as Hastings and Tenterden. This means we can then sing some demanding pieces and try out some descants.

Jeffrey will be returned to direct the augmented choir for the Service of the Last Hour, at 2pm on Good Friday. This service has some of the most hauntingly beautiful and poignant Church music and liturgy.

We know that there are good voices and singers in the congregations at both Churches and would ask that they really consider giving of their talents and joining our very friendly and welcoming choir. Whatever the commitment, even if it is only one Sunday a month or so, it would be very much appreciated by the choir; it is fun and there is a great sense of camaraderie and joyful worship in the new choir vestry!

Angela Pakenham-Walsh

## **PARISH MAGAZINE**

Magazine numbers still seem to be falling as annual subscriptions are not renewed. A few years ago 640 copies were printed each month. This is now at 460. I suppose with copies available on line at the Church website, for some the need is no longer there.

The Trade Directory continues to flourish. We are most grateful to James Cooke for looking after this since December 2012. James has now passed this task to Ursula Ellwood who is doing so well having taken over just as all the new advertisements were due for 2018. The Trade Directory is so important as the income from advertising enables us to keep the cover price of the Magazine down.

In the past a number of organisations have submitted full page items (effectively posters) for special events and these have been printed. However, a number of other organisations have decided they would like this coverage each month. It has become necessary to ask these groups to submit their items in two formats such that everyone has the chance to get their information in, even when space is very limited. Although it is possible to increase the number of pages we soon hit the limit for posting at second class to those subscribers wishing to receive their copies by post. This has worked quite well with shorter items when space is in great demand.

The success of our Magazine is down to the tireless effort of many people who give their time freely to ensure you get your copy. Special thanks goes to Anne and Joe

Meyer (assistant editors dealing with items left at the Newsagent), Ursula Ellwood (Trade Directory and advertising), Richard Vinton (What's On - centrefold), Pam Stubbs and Hilary Bird and their delivery teams (distribution in Goudhurst and Kilndown), our advertisers in the Trade Directory, and, of course, to all who contribute items of news or pictures for publication in the Magazine.

David Denton  
Editor/Printer

### **P.C.C.**

The P.C.C. have met 9 times during the past year, and a Mini A.P.C.M. was held in January when Hugh reported on our progress to date and invited questions and discussion.

At our P.C.C. meeting in January one of the items discussed was the appointment of a Lay Minister, and also how to address our £10,000 shortfall.

In February the P.C.C. approved the appointment of Caroline Turvey as our Lay Minister, who was able to commence on 24<sup>th</sup> April.

The pattern of our services was discussed at our March meeting.

In May, following the A.P.C.M. P.C.C. Officers were elected and the role of the P.C.C. discussed.

A Strategy Planning meeting was held in June for Caroline to outline her ideas for the Blend Project.

In July Hugh reported on the life of our church at present and asked the P.C.C. for their thoughts. Concern was expressed that several long standing members of our church no longer attended St. Mary's, but we were fortunate to have Christ Church for traditional services.

Hugh also reported that Sonja Drew would like to join St. Mary's as Lay Reader.

Angela P.W. reported on her progress with the forthcoming Flower Festival.

In November the P.C.C. discussed St. Mary's Internal Re-ordering, dreams, possibilities and options, involving Bedgebury Chapel, the Choir Vestry and the North Aisle.

Our final meeting of the year at the end of November was used to discuss Bedgebury Chapel, the proposed School of Theology and Christmas Day Lunch.

This is just a brief outline of our meetings, reports from our various sub-committee groups will be found elsewhere in this Report Book.

Jill Dunstall – P.C.C. Secretary

## **PROPERTY AND FABRIC**

Our Committee have met on 6 occasions since April 2017, and, whilst there have been a number of projects under discussion, progress with some has been disappointingly slow.

### **1) Churchyard Wall.**

Despite our advice that the wall should not be re-built in its original position, we were over-ruled by the DAC and the Conservation Officer from TWBC, and Traditional Stone were appointed to carry out the repairs, the full cost of £18,128.74 (including Architects fees) being met by our Insurers. Sadly, it was only a matter of time before the wall was hit by an Articulated HGV lorry and on two further occasions more recently.

Fortunately, we have details of the transport firms involved and our Insurance Company have been advised.

Following a site meeting last Wednesday, April 4th. it was agreed that whilst Goudhurst Parish Council prepare an application to the Kent Highways Authority to potentially down-grade the main road through the village from A to B status, our Architects have been asked to prepare plans to re-build the wall in such a way that it is battered and sloping inwards at the most vulnerable section, thus out of reach of the largest lorries.

It seemed that this solution would be acceptable to the DAC and TWBC.

### **2) External Floodlights.**

These were eventually installed in September and the cost was shared between the PCC, Goudhurst PC and The Friends of St. Marys.

An adjustment to 1 or 2 of these floodlights to reduce glare into neighbouring properties is planned.

### **3) Monitor Screens.**

There has been a delay in agreeing the method of fixing the proposed screens to the Arcade Piers between the Nave and the South Aisle, and our Architects are in discussion with the DAC on this subject.

### **4) External Noticeboards.**

Planning permission has been approved for 2 new Noticeboards, one to replace the ageing noticeboard by the Star & Eagle and another to be erected at the Eastern end of the Churchyard. We are still waiting for final approval from the DAC, and when this arrives the order will be placed.

## **5) The Candelabra (or more correctly the Electrolier)**

At a recent meeting with the DAC, Archdeacon Stephen Taylor expressed his view that the Electrolier could be re-sited at the west end of the Nave, and possibly suspended from one of the massive tie beams rather than from the apex of the ceiling, which would make the job far simpler.

If this were done, the entire congregation sitting in the Nave would have an unobstructed view of the Screen.

## **6) Quinquennial Report.**

Jonathan Deeming made his inspection of St. Mary's in November 2017, and his substantial report was received early in January 2018.

A number of urgent items highlighted in his report have already been attended to, including replacing lead flashings in the roof valley between the Nave and the South Aisle following a theft last Autumn, clearing Pigeon Guano from the Viewing Platform at the top of the West Tower, installing wire mesh to prevent pigeons nesting underneath same and making safe the access to this area. Instructions for annual PAT tests have been placed together with the required 5 year Electrical Installation Report.

We are in touch with 2 major Building Companies, Hurstway and Riverside Construction, both of whom have a good deal of experience in the maintenance of Church Buildings, and we will be seeking quotations from them for the most urgent repairs over the coming months.

## **7) Brick Path through the Churchyard.**

Quotations have been obtained for re-laying the brick path, which has become quite hazardous, and discussions have taken place with the Parish Council, the DAC, our Architects and the Conservation Officers of the TWBC.

## **8) Bedgebury Chapel.**

Discussions continue regarding the possible refurbishment of this important area and our Architects have been asked to put forward some practical proposals.

## **9) Choir Vestry.**

New storage cupboards have been made and installed, and the joiner, John Farley, has been asked to repair the door leading into the Choir Vestry, the damaged Communion Rail and install new bookshelves to accommodate the Hymn Books.

Richard Hillier

## **SAFEGUARDING REPORT**

Over the last year I have carried out 13 DBS checks for those wishing to help out with Sunday Club, the Youth Group, Connect and Blend. There are also quite a large number of re checks currently being processed. According to Diocesan policy everyone has to be re checked every five years. All applications are now done online, which is a very simple process and makes life a lot easier for all.

I have recently made a minor amendment to our Safeguarding Guidance notes following a query. I am also in the process of writing a policy on how to deal with the children (in particular the teenagers) who may wish to talk privately with the Leader and what the best way forward would be should that situation arise.

There are still quite a few members of the Sunday Club, Youth Group and Connect Team that need to carry out the CL2 Safeguarding Training. This training is mandatory for all those involved with Sunday Club and the Youth Groups. The Diocese have asked if they could use St Mary's as a training centre. As we are the furthest Parish in the Diocese from Canterbury, this would be very welcome as travelling to and parking in Canterbury is not easy. The Diocese would then hold training courses at St Mary's for Parishes local to us.

Andrea Kirkby  
Safeguarding Officer - St Mary's Goudhurst

## **SMALL GROUPS**

Small Groups continue to grow and are a very important element of the Church. At present we have 10 Small Groups, five of which meet during the daytime and five in the evening with about 100 people in total going to one of the Groups. All of the Groups are different in feel but in every case they are helping explore and strengthen faith amongst their members and also fostering deep and lasting friendships and support networks.

During the past year two new Groups have started up – an evening Pub Group and a morning Group which followed on from last year's Alpha course. We are also hoping to set up another group following on from the Alpha courses which are currently running.

At the end of last year, we had a meeting for all the Small Group leaders to see how the Groups were getting on and to share ideas. The feedback was very positive and encouraging and highlighted just how key the Groups are to the life and growth of the Church.

Huthrie Copplestone  
Small Groups Co-ordinator

## **YOUTH AND CHILDREN**

This year there have been 4 main focuses for this ministry for which so many people have been a part of.

- School's work
- Sunday Clubs
- Youth Group
- Blend

Without the love, generosity of time, skills, abilities, willingness to get stuck in, a passion for Christ and sharing faith from so many people, none of this work is possible. To everyone who has been a part of this wonderful and deeply rewarding ministry, thank you. You are amazing!!!

### **School's Work**

The link with Goudhurst and Kilndown primary School remains strong and we continue to lead weekly collective worships, weekly lunch time club – Trinity Lights, hold weekly Staff 'Breathe' sessions, build up the parent prayer group, be a regular presence in the school community and beyond.

The school uses the church for their special services: Easter, Christmas, Harvest etc. and we are encouraging families to attend the Sunday services – youth led services and outdoor church in particular.

Through building relationships with the children in school, especially in Trinity Lights where we meet an average of 15-20 children per week, they are more likely to attend our Sunday Clubs – we have seen several new children come along to our groups from the school over the past year and would like to encourage more parents to bring their children along.

The 'Let your light shine' stones in the village was an initiative to encourage the children and families from the whole community to get involved and think about doing good during lent.

We have recently been invited to lead weekly collective worship at Colliers Green School and look forward to developing this relationship. We also lead Chapel services at Bethany School and Cranbrook School.

### **Sunday Clubs**

It has been our main drive to strengthen the team of leaders, corporately and as small groups. Leaders are now beginning to plan corporately rather than individually and enabling each other as a group. This has led to leaders feeling more confident in their abilities, more creative in their planning and more efficient in getting things done. The aim is for each group to work together more closely in this way.

The numbers for each group have fluctuated over the course of the year, especially as children move across at the end of the academic year, but they have settled down with strong attendance in all groups but a drop-in attendance for Explorers. This is primarily as a result of not having a fixed place to lead the group from for the majority of the year. Older children are now working towards exams, attending external clubs or taking up weekend jobs. We are looking to solutions to enable this older contingent of the group to meet on another evening during the week

It has been apparent throughout the year that we need to encourage more people from our congregation to be part of our Sunday Club teams. Not only are the children being pulled in many directions, but our current leaders also have many commitments and in order for them to thrive and enable children in their faith, we need to share the load. The commitment to this vital ministry isn't on a weekly basis but we would love at least one more person for each group to join the team on a rota basis. I wonder whether we could consider inviting our oldest young people to take on young leader roles in our Sunday groups?

## **Youth ministry**

We have had enormous fun this year with the Friday youth group and have seen our young people attend regularly and be welcomed into many different homes for which we thank everyone for their generosity and hospitality. Youth group is a place where young people can have fun and deepen the relationships they have at church on a Sunday. The planned events have been specifically chosen to allow members of the congregation to get involved and therefore encourage inter-generational ministry. The more children see adults active in their faith, the more likely they are to do likewise.

The highlight for the year has to be St Bartz Weekend. A great place to hang out with each other, be taught about prayer and developing your own prayer life, to serve one another and to be challenged personally and as a group. St Bartz 2018 has already been booked for October and we would like to invite more people to get on board with leading this, especially catering for the masses!

We have also run two 'Youth-led' services in church where the young people plan and execute the entire service from start to finish – with help of course. A key to young people sticking with their faith into adulthood is to be given key responsibilities in their youth. For us as adults to enable them to discover and develop their own gifts in worship and leadership.

## **Blend**

Wednesday 24th Jan saw the launch of Blend, our pop-up youth café for children in years 7 to 10 at St Mary's. The church is transformed every Wednesday into a comfy, safe, warm and homely environment to give young people a space to be together, play games, eat, drink, do homework, build on existing friendships and

develop a sense of community as they journey through their teenage years.

We have seen volunteers emerge and come together from the whole village community to support this project. We were able to purchase new equipment thanks to the generous donation from the Youth Forum. Primarily, new (second hand) sofa, 2 blenders, toaster, new games, 5 bean bag chairs.

We are seeing around 30-35 young people attend each week. With so many schools represented by the children attending, this is the ideal place to teach children how to live alongside one another and 'blend' across the age range and also with trusted adults from the church and wider community.

We're looking forward to seeing other adults of all ages and social backgrounds come on board and to see how we can develop the relationships and enable young people from our village to build community for themselves.

Once the group has embedded into the community, the team will be looking at how we can share the gospel with the young people. More than two thirds of the children do not attend St Mary's and we would love to give them similar opportunities to explore faith as our church children, perhaps through the youth group events and our St Barts Weekend Away.

And a huge thank you to everyone who does so much to keep this church community thriving and flourishing.

|                                 |   |  |
|---------------------------------|---|--|
| Fund raisers                    | The Staff Team  | Photographers  |
| Flower arrangers                | PCC members   | The prayer team  |
| Organists                       | Everyone who gives financially                        | Invite people to church  |
| The Band                        | Those who keep the Community Cupboard topped up       | Everyone who prepares the church for services                      |
| The Choir                       |   | People who say 'yes' when asked to do something at the last minute |
| The informal choir              |   |  |
| The Blend team                  | People who just quietly get things done               |  |
| The Connect team                |   |  |
| People who pray quietly at home | Churches Together members                             | The Property and Fabric team                                       |
| Washer-uppers                   | The Alpha team  | Those who preach & teach   |
| Welcomers                       | The Lend with Care team                               | Card senders   |
| Sidespeople                     | School Governors                                      | The tower openers  |
| Sunday Club Leaders             | Pre-school Governors                                  | The School of Theology team  |
| Sunday Club Helpers             | Cooks & servers                                       | People who look after the graveyard & flowerbeds                   |
| Youth Group leaders             | Worship Leaders                                       |  |
| Small Group Leaders             | Treasurer   |  |
| The AV Team                     | Church Wardens  | Worship & service leaders  |
| Preachers                       | The Finance Team                                      | Those who provide the food for Sunday Club                         |
| Practical people                | People who prepare notice sheets and print them       | Social event organisers  |
| People who change light bulbs   |   |  |
| The Cafe Toddlers Team          | The Parish Magazine Team, including the delivery team |  |
| Cleaners                        |   | <i>Thank you !</i>   |
| Brass polishers                 | Cake-bakers   |  |
| Coffee makers & servers         | The Friends of St Mary's                              |  |
| Intercessors                    | People who take notes at meetings                     |  |
| Readers                         |   |  |







Goudhurst  
& Kilndown

[www.gkchurch.org.uk](http://www.gkchurch.org.uk)