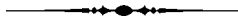


St. Mary's Church, Goudhurst



ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

SUNDAY 19th APRIL, 2015

following the
Morning Service

in
THE CHURCH



REPORTS

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VICAR'S REPORT TO THE APCM

2014 was another year of rich blessings, new friendships and encounters with God at St Mary's.

At our APCM last year we laid out one main priority for the whole church - To get to know God and each other better. After a year of significant growth, we wanted to make sure that we were well rooted in God, and that we knew each other better as a church community.

With that in mind we gave time and energy to deepening our prayer and worship life, with monthly introductions to a different way of praying, a day retreat with Brian Draper and culminating in 24 hours of non-stop prayer in February.

In addition we had a range of other priorities which we have worked on across the year. These included working on the style and content of our services, with interviews, testimonies and increased interaction in the Family Service, the opportunity for more variety on the 3rd Sunday of the month and an emphasis on choral music on the 4th Sunday of the month. In addition we held special 'one off' services for major festivals, and with Graham Kendrick and Sacred Heart Catholic Church.

Seven small groups have been meeting throughout the year, deepening in friendship, praying for one another and learning about God. Following Alpha this spring, we will be setting 3 new groups, including a teaching course.

A wide range of social activities and events were organised, giving the opportunity for people to get to know each other. These included picnics, the Barn Dance, a beach trip, a cricket match, termly Sunday Club parties and walks as well as lots of opportunities for informal get togethers.

In addition there were numerous highlights in another full and rich year for the church community. These include big services at the major festivals, The Flower Festival in May, a big group going to the Big Church Day Out, a hugely successful Alpha course, a Scratch Choir putting Stainer's crucifixion together in an afternoon, as well as numerous moments when individuals experienced the presence of God and were changed and transformed by the encounter.

And, of course, we continued with the core mission and ministry of a parish church, baptising young and old, celebrating with those committing to married life and supporting those who have lost loved ones. We have been involved in people's lives at moments of great happiness and deep desperation, and we have met together in small groups and large numbers to pray and to worship.

This has all enriched the quality of our community life and has deepened our faith in God, both individually and corporately.

A detailed review of our progress on all our priorities from the last APCM is available at the back of church for anyone wanting to find out more.

This has all been possible through the generous service - often without any thanks - by many, many people who have given their time, skills and love.

Looking to the future, it has become clear that we will need to continue evolving if we want to be open to further growth in numbers and in depth of faith. Research shows clearly that churches rarely grow beyond 100-120 people unless they work proactively to make this possible. The PCC is clear that we do want to be open to further growth, as God brings it to us, and we have been working with Diocesan advisors and in prayer to decide how this can best be achieved.

A first practical step was to expand the capacity of the Church Administrator role. In February Rosemary Southon retired, after many years of generous service to the church and Becky Addis was employed to a significantly changed role, with more hours. I am very grateful to Rosemary for all her work, and am delighted to have someone as excellent as Becky to take on the new role.

Beyond this, we have set two major priorities for the next 12 months.

The first is for the whole church community, and is summarised by the theme:

God's calling

Much as we did with the emphasis on prayer last year, we will offer resources and encouragement for everyone to listen on God and to explore what it is that they are called to. The bible is clear that everyone is given specific gifts and talents and is called to use these in particular ways for the building of God's kingdom (Isa 43:1 "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine.") We want to make sure everyone has the chance to explore what their particular calling might be.

This might lead one person to take up a new area of service within or outside the church; it might mean another making a change in their home or work life; it might mean someone else investing more deeply in their existing roles at home, work or in church; for some people it might mean something dramatically different and for others a renewed or deeper commitment to what they are already doing. We want to enable everyone to grow in faith and to discover the particular vocation that God has called them to, so that everyone can 'bear much fruit and become disciples' to God's glory' (John 15:8).

The second priority is for us to set up new teams to have responsibility for significant areas of the church's life. We already have teams that look after the practical areas of church life - including finance and the church building - and we want to expand these to include core areas of our mission and ministry. Three new teams will be set up:

1. Preaching, teaching and discipleship - To include responsibility for preaching, teaching courses, Alpha, small group content, retreats and prayer.
2. Community and belonging - To include responsibility for welcome, enabling people to connect with the church community, social events, systems of pastoral care within the church community and practical service to people in the local community.
3. Children, young people & families - To include responsibility for Sunday Club, the youth group, contact with schools and pre-schools and Parenting Courses. This team will be developed out of the team that currently leads Sunday Club.

We want to set up these teams for two reasons. First, to open up the leadership of the church to a wider group of people. Church belongs to all of us - not just the Vicar, the PCC or the Church Wardens - and we want to increase the number of people with significant responsibility for the core mission and ministry of the church.

Secondly, we believe that there are people within the church community with significant God-given gifts, and we want to make sure that their gifts are recognised and used for God's glory.

The membership and leadership of these groups will be carefully discerned, and commissioned by the PCC, to whom they will be accountable.

The PCC has talked and prayed into these priorities, and are confident that God is leading us in this new direction. We look forward to sharing our plans with you in the months to come.

God bless

Rev Hugh Nelson

ALPHA

Planning for this year's Alpha began back in May 2014 with a core team of 5 led by Hugh. Regular meetings were held over the following months to discuss every aspect of the preparation, organisation and logistics of the course and how we could make improvements from the previous year. With this more structured and planned approach we hoped, prayed for and anticipated a greater number of guests than in 2014. Amongst some of the changes was a move of venue from Kilndown to Goudhurst in an attempt to be more accessible for some, a change from the weekly Nicky Gumbel DVD to recently recorded 'live' talks with a variety of speakers from Holy Trinity Brompton, and a more sustained publicity 'campaign'. This incorporated one or two large publicity boards on display in the village, regular reference to Alpha in church with encouragement for the congregation to invite friends or neighbours to take part, as well as a whole village invitation card house drop which was combined with the village Christmas card delivery. Once the Alpha feedback forms are returned we may have an idea of which, if any, of these advertising mediums were the most successful, but in any event the numbers swelled from the 18 we had in 2014 to a starting number on the first night of 55, which has settled at a regular turn out of about 45 guests. Crucial to Alpha's success is the team of 21 committed group leaders and helpers who have looked after seven groups in total. However it isn't just the leaders and helpers who help to create the right atmosphere for the course to succeed. The support from the two villages in respect of help in various forms has been phenomenal, with Angela Pakenham-Walsh heading up a totally dedicated and professional kitchen team of 20 regular and 10 occasional cooks, producing a top quality meal every week for an average of 70 people. Part of the same dedicated team stay on to wash up and clear the kitchen which is a mammoth task particularly without a dishwasher. Heath Stores have done an amazing job of supplying a vast array of drinks on a sale or return basis along with many other of the weekly essentials, James Cooke has overseen the technical requirements, and beautiful flower arrangements were provided every week by a few dedicated ladies. A truly great church community effort.

Success of the course - impossible to measure in detailed terms, but as an indication, post Alpha we have set up three new small groups to add to the seven

already in existence, to help accommodate those people who attended Alpha, and indeed the whole community, who would like to continue to pursue their faith. In addition it is impossible to measure the friendships that have been forged over the duration of the course, but wonderful to think the church has been the direct catalyst for this.

Ali Williams

BELLRINGING

Although various ones of us have been ill or on holiday, we have on the whole managed to keep ringing throughout the year. There have been no new members but quite a few youngsters began to join us on Sunday mornings. As they were under age for the big bells, the hand bells put in an appearance and for a few weeks the congregation were serenaded from the ramp as they arrived in the 5 minutes before the service began. It was a very good effort for mainly under 10 year olds. We now have 2 regular young boys who chime the 5 minute bell. Anybody is welcome to come up and see us ringing and if you arrive on a Wednesday evening between 7.30pm and 9.00pm you will probably be shown the bell chamber and how it all works - very interesting.

Rosemary Southon

BENEFICE OFFICE

There have been changes in the Benefice Office over the last 12 months. Rosemary Southon decided after 6 years in post as Benefice Administrator that it was time to retire. We are all incredibly grateful to Rosemary for her many years of faithful service in this post, and Rosemary was warmly thanked at the 10.45 service. The administrative side of the church has certainly grown with the increasing congregation size and activities going on in St. Mary's, so a re-think of the role was considered by the PCC. The job was advertised for 15 hours a week, with the focus on finding someone to take on a key role in the planning and communication of the church, as well as the administration. In January I was appointed, and I started work at the beginning of February. I can be found in my office at the end of The Vicarage on Mondays 12 – 3, Tuesdays 9 – 3 and Thursdays 9 - 3, and two months into the job I am absolutely loving it. The job involves a lot of administration in terms of rotas, weddings, baptisms and funerals, but I'm also looking at how we can improve our communication within the church community to make sure that everyone knows what's going on and with the wider community of Goudhurst, Kilndown and the surrounding villages so that everyone knows they are welcome at our services and any other activities that we are offering as a church. All suggestions welcome!

Becky Addis

CAFE TODDLERS

Cafe Toddlers is 2, along with many of its customers! It is very exciting to see how it has grown!

Each 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. Before Christmas we had a Christmas Wreathmaking evening with garden designer and artist Charlotte Molesworth and most of the mums came along and had a great time. We had drinks and canapés, a demonstration from Charlotte and a brief interview-style time about the things of faith. Suzanne Rowse gave her testimony and it was very powerful.

Only a few of the families who come to Cafe Toddlers come to church on a Sunday and so we want to provide a bridge into church for those who are interested. Events such as the Wreathmaking can do this and we are hoping to put some events like this every so often.

Victoria Dawes, Sue Donkin, Suzanne Rowse and Liz Good and Mandy Alison have provided invaluable support - along with many others who provide cakes and come and help with the teas and coffees. Liz Good's crafts this term have been wonderful.

Please pray for God to bless our endeavours and for people to be warmed by the welcome they receive at Cafe Toddlers - and want to cross that bridge and find out more about the God we worship.

Henrietta Mayhew

CHILD PROTECTION

Over the last year I have DBS checked Clare Sanders, Rachel Barber, Will Addis, Katherine Drew. I have re checked Tracey Buckland, Tim Wormington and Angela Pakenham-Walsh. Several applications are still being processed.

We are now getting up to date with the recruitment process in line with the Diocese's procedures. All Leaders and Helpers need to go through an interview process, provide references and complete a DBS.

Unfortunately, I was unable to attend the Annual Child Protection Conference in November but will ensure either myself or Kevin attend later this year.

We have been using the Village Hall since the New Year for our Climbers and Scramblers groups which has worked very well.

Creche is now up and running and proving very popular in the Children's Chapel.

The Leaders and helper are now DBS checked as parents leave their children in the Creche whilst they attend the Church Service. However, as the ratios are a lot lower than for our other groups , 3 children to 1 leader/helper (for children under the age of 2) we are aware that we may need additional helpers in this area if the Creche continues to grow.

All the Sunday Club groups (except the Scramblers ages 4-7) have increased in size over the year. This is currently being reviewed by the leadership team as we may need to make changes to our groups if they become too large so we can continue to offer the same level of service.

*Andrea Kirkby
CPO/PDO – St Mary's Goudhurst*

CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES

Children, young people and families

Our work with children and young people continues to flourish, with a particular focus on the activities of Sunday Club. There are now 65 children registered with Sunday Club and an average of 45 attending each week.

We continue to work with four underlying goals:

- Every child wanting to come back, because Sunday Club is so good
- Every child meeting God and grown in faith
- Every child contributing and using their gifts in the whole church community
- Every Sunday Club helper supported and nurtured to feel confident in what they do

Between April and September we had four groups meeting each week and in September we set up a creche, so that parents can leave their pre-school children in the Children's Chapel and enjoy the worship in the main body of the church. The Explorers group have been involved with planning and leading Sunday morning worship, and we will do this again in the summer, and a number of our young people are regularly involved with music in church, including leading a Cafe Church style service and the music on Maundy Thursday.

Beyond Sunday mornings we have set up a fortnightly Youth Group for the young people in Explorers, which has been very successful. Kev Draper and I work closely with the Primary School, taking weekly Collective Worship as well as running extra groups, including a 'Tuesday Club' and an after school Club for Years 4,5 & 6, a Lent group for Year 5 and a group for Year 6 introducing them to communion. Kev is also currently working with the school to build a new prayer garden and Hugh is the Vice Chair of Governors.

Hugh and Kev regularly attend Little Squirrels Pre-School to tell bible stories,

and are also involved with Goudhurst Pre School. Hugh has taken assemblies and services at other local schools, including Bethany and Marlborough House.

Looking ahead, we are currently reviewing the vision and aims of Sunday Club, so that we can maintain the high standard of provision for the children and young people into the future, and continue to expand the number of children that are part of the church community.

We also ran a Parenting Teenagers Course in October 2014 based at the Primary School. 25 guests attended this 5 week course. The feedback was very positive and we hope to run similar course for parents of Primary aged children this autumn.

Hugh Nelson

CHOIR AND MUSIC

Choirs

The very supportive and reliable core of the choir has diminished a little more this year, but there have been some exciting developments, which have enabled us to provide a strong choral component to many services.

We have for the past two years been able to draw upon the support of additional singers to assist with our Choral Evensongs. This has developed significantly and we now have a larger body of such singers, who are willing to contribute more. In response, we have consciously designated some services (typically the fourth Sunday morning of each month, but this has been flexible) “enhanced music services”. As the name suggests, these services have had some more sophisticated musical content. In addition to enriching the musical contribution generally, this has also grown the quality of our presentation of some more traditional types of music. Many have felt that it was important to try to achieve this, parallel to the development of other types of worship music, and I think this development has been broadly welcomed.

There has been a tradition of singers from the school contributing to our services. With staff changes at the school there was anxiety that this would become more difficult to achieve. Over the last year, with support from the church, I have been going into the school once a week to work with a group of singers and to run a weekly hymn practice. I think this has been a good service to the school. The children have joined us about once a month to contribute to services and this has been quite successful. The numbers we see on Sundays are lower than the numbers I see during the week, which is perhaps inevitable, but it would be desirable if we could work to get even fuller involvement.

Band

The band continues to play in many services. There have been lots of comings and

goings of personnel, with competing pressures on people's time, but all in all the band does a great job. I think it would be desirable for all of us (including me) to try to plan ahead a bit more with this. With the group being so flexible in constitution, quite a lot of the arrangements have to be prepared with the specific available resources in mind. I think that too often this year the services have come together so late that there has been a feeling of the music being rather thrown together at the last minute. We have held the quality together though, and it's always been a cheerful affair.

Congregational Involvement

We have attempted in the past to have sessions on a Saturday morning when we invite anyone from the congregation to come in and sing through some repertoire, trying to consciously mix the styles and introduce new things. These were partially successful, but not quite sufficiently so for us to feel motivated to carry on doing that this year. This is an idea that we may revisit though, and suggestions for refinements of the basic idea would be welcome.

I sometimes make very short presentations at services, when new music is introduced or when explanation of how something needs to be performed is required and I think this helps people to be involved.

Non Liturgical Music

There have been various non liturgical music events in the church this year. Two spring to mind as events that have impacted on us (or have the potential to impact on us) more broadly.

The Flower Festival Concert was a very successful event. And I give credit to this for introducing to us many singers who have continued to take an interest in us and to contribute.

The recent 'Scratch Stainer Crucifixion' was also – I think – successful. We wait to see if that has positive impacts in addition to the success of the day itself.

Instruments

The organ now has quite a sophisticated microphone pointing at it. The purpose of this is to make the organ more powerful when required and to enable the organist to use the organ more subtly at other times (in other words to liberate him from feeling that he has to have most of the stops on most of the time in hymns).

This is obviously a pragmatic solution to issues with the organ. There are those that would advocate more radical steps, but I would support the move that has been made.

Jeffrey Gray

THE CHURCHES TOGETHER

In keeping with what has become a tradition, the Anglican and Catholic Churches in Goudhurst and Kilndown have continued to work together, pray together, organise events together, and worship together. In doing so, we have learned how much of our faith we share, and have deepened our commitment to the God whom we all follow.

In the past year, joint Lent study groups have met once again, this time focussing their thoughts on a York course entitled “Praise Him,” described as being “ideal for ecumenical use.” Extra efforts to publicize the Lunches in St Mary’s on Saturdays through Lent have attracted more participants and a wide range of people to these enjoyable events, when a delicious light meal is provided by teams from both churches.

The now established pattern of special shared services has been repeated – Ash Wednesday, Good Friday, Easter Eve, Ascension Day, and Advent. This year, however, there was an additional service in March, when priests and congregations of all three Churches were present for a shared communion. Bishop Stephen Platten, formerly Ecumenical Chaplain to Archbishop Runcie, was our preacher. With all his experience in this field, he was able to speak with authority and conviction of the need to encourage ecumenism in our congregations.

Bearing in mind the Bishop’s words “Ecumenism is not a luxury”, the Churches Together Group are now ready to set to work with renewed enthusiasm in the cause of bringing our Churches closer together in the year ahead.

Sheila Klopper

CHURCH ROOM

Buildings Maintenance

Following problems with the soil drains caused by root ingress from adjacent trees the drains were relined with plastic inserts, these are not prone to invasion by root systems. This work was covered by our buildings insurance.

Repairs had to be carried out to the assist arm in the disabled toilet. The damage was caused inadvertently and should not have occurred if the arm had been properly fixed to the wall in the first place! The hirer concerned generously made a contribution to the repair costs.

New gates have been fitted by Tates at a cost of £889.

Generally the building appears to be in fair condition but the brickwork will need re-pointing fairly soon. I intend to obtain quotes for this work for your

consideration.

Finance

I am pleased to report that income from letting is some £2,000 up on this time last year mainly due to the contribution from the Pre-School. At the end of the financial year the net debit was £2,425 which should be cleared during the current year.

Brian Ferdinando.

Goudhurst Pre-School

“Goudhurst Village Pre-school opened on January 8th 2014 with three staff and four children. It obtained a “Good In All Areas” Ofsted rating in the April which was the best a new setting with little historical evidence could obtain. Numbers of attendees increased all through the Spring and Summer term and totalled 12 when the pre-school broke up for the Summer holidays.

Hal Bedford-Cooper, the pre-school assistant left in the Summer holidays to further his career and embark on teaching training at Canterbury University having garnered experience with children through his time at the pre-school and a teaching assistant role that ensued at Goudhurst and Kilndown Primary. He has just taken a teaching job at Smarden Primary

After a series of successful fundraising events - a wine tasting evening, the village fete and a Go Ape Sponsored Fancy Dress at Bedgebury the pre-school was able to recruit two new assistants, Jorge Blanco and Holly Watkins who both started their employment in September 2014. This was found to be necessary very quickly as more children joined in September bringing the number of attendees up to 20 by the October half term.

A Halloween party for the local pre-school-aged children was held in the Church Rooms as a community get together rather than a fundraising event which was a great success and raised the profile of the pre-school further. The pre-school nativity held in St Mary’s showcased the children’s French and Spanish sessions and brought all the parents and extended family together.

In January 2015, the pre-school hours were increased from morning sessions to full days until 3.30 pm (excluding Wednesdays due to the Tea Club using the Church Rooms as a venue). These afternoon sessions were quickly taken up, in part due to the timetable of Pilates / keep fit on Mondays, Spanish on Tuesdays, French on Thursdays and Cookery on Fridays. A reciprocal playdate with the Reception Class at Goudhurst and Kilndown Primary on the last Friday of each month also proved to be extremely popular, especially amongst the children who are due to start school in September.

A rental contract was signed with the PCC and in addition, they kindly allowed the pre-school to treat an initial loan of £500 as a gift which was timely and very much appreciated.

Attendees are increasing every week. The number on the register at present is 31 and in the Summer Term will be 41. There is a healthy number on September's register already and waiting lists for morning sessions. A fifth member of staff has been employed on a part-time basis to make up the necessary staff ratios and her hours will increase to accommodate future needs.

A fundraising sub committee is in the process of being formed and a joint fundraising event with Little Squirrels in Kilndown may be in the pipeline for 2015."

Alison Clarke, Chair/Trustee.

COFFEE & QUESTIONS:

This year at Coffee & Questions we have done a variety of things.

Before Christmas we had a short series on what it was like for the Shepherds, the Wise Men and Mary - looking at the birth of Jesus from their point of view. This last term, we have listened to a variety of speakers talk about what "Following Jesus" means to them.

I hope that it continues to inspire, encourage and stretch the women who come along in their Christian walk. We have had a lot of great input from Jane Ashton, the ex Chaplain of Benenden, who is a wonderful Bible teacher.

And Caroline Davis has very kindly baked some delicious cakes for everyone to enjoy during the time of coffee and chat at the beginning.

Henrietta Mayhew



WEALD DEANERY SYNOD

Deanery Synod

Goudhurst and Kilndown are part of the Weald Deanery - the local grouping of Anglican Churches. The Deanery Synod is the local level at which church communities can contribute to shaping the direction and policy of the Church of England. Rev Ali Duguid, the Vicar of Marden, is the Area Dean, and works closely with the Lay Chair, Sandra Marsh from St Dustan's to lead the Deanery.

The Deanery has worked hard this year to put the vision that we recently developed into practice.

The purpose of the Deanery is:

To work together for the growth of the Kingdom in the Weald

Our vision is:

- 1. To be a forum in which Ministry & Mission can be re-imagined and developed in the context of the Deanery, both theologically and practically.*
- 2. To have a particular focus on developing and strengthening Lay Ministry across the Deanery, and on the role of the full time clergy and how they can be freed to minister rather than to administer.*
- 3. To focus on those things we can do better together than apart*
- 4. To keep Synod and the wider Deanery closely connected to our work*

We have supported each other in a range of initiatives, including an expanding youth program in Cranbrook, Frittenden and Sissinghurst, a new network for Church Administrators, and a range of excellent speakers, including Julian Hills, the Diocesan Secretary who spoke about the recent reports given to the General Synod which will shape the future mission of the church, and Rev Dr Joanna Collicutt, who spoke about the Spirituality of Ageing. We will be inviting other speakers later this year.

St Mary's should elect 2 members of the Deanery Synod, but this year have only had one - Jane Wickham. My thanks to her for taking on this role. If anyone else would be interested in being involved in shaping the future of the Church of England, locally, at Diocesan level and nationally, please speak to Rev Hugh.

Rev Hugh Nelson

FRIENDS OF ST MARY'S

Membership is currently at 143 members. Sadly our Patron and one of the founder Committee members Derrick Head passed away last year.

At last year's AGM our Chairman, Barbara Payne and our Treasurer, Steve Hope stepped down. Pam Stubbs is our new Chairman and Andy Payne is our new Treasurer. Andy has spent a lot of time stream lining and computerising our membership which makes life a lot easier for us all. During the year Sylvie Harris stepped down from the Committee. Carol Buckland and April Cornish have joined the Committee.

We had another good year fund raising starting with the Village Fete, where we had our ever popular "Human Fruit Machine" and "Guess the Wine". We raised a very respectable £208 at the Fete.

In June Carol Buckland very kindly hosted “Pimms by the Pond”, an enjoyable evening in her beautiful garden enjoying a glass of Pimms with delicious nibbles, being entertained by the Morris Men. We were lucky with the weather and a great time was had by all raising over £900.

Our Christmas Fair was again a very successful evening. Goudhurst and Kilndown Primary School Choir and the Kilndown Community Choir sang for us, making a wonderful atmosphere in the Church. Nick Seymour brought his Street Organ and the Village was buzzing. We are planning that this will be an annual event always on the last Friday in November.

We would like to thank our Jill Dunstall and our 5 generous hosts of Carol parties. The combined parties raised over £1200, which was fantastic as it was nearly double the amount raised the previous year.

A working party tidied up the South side of the Church on a rather wet Thursday morning and Gill Wallace-Hoskins very kindly put some plants in for us and offered to look after them. Sadly, some of these plants were taken. We are planning another working party on Saturday 25th April to continue the good work that was started last year.

Donald Sargeant has joined the Property and Fabric Committee who have met several times over the last year.

This year we are reproducing our somewhat outdated brochure. We hope to have something available within the next few months and following that will begin another recruitment drive.

Over the past year we have funded several projects which are as follows: donation to church sound system £8,000.00, clock maintenance £246.00, planting by south door £85.00 and upgrade to lightning conductor £903.72. We await further requests from the PCC.

Secretary: Mrs Andrea Kirkby, 2 Grand View, North Road, Goudhurst. Kent TN17 1AS



Throughout the 2013/14 academic year, we expected our OFSTED inspection and when it finally arrived in mid-March, we were fully prepared! We were judged to be an “Outstanding school” in every area – Achievement of the pupils, Quality of teaching, Behaviour and safety of pupils, Leadership and Management and Overall effectiveness. This was a tremendous achievement, particularly under a new more challenging OFSTED framework, but it is one that the entire school community truly deserved. I was thrilled that the inspectors recognised the tireless hard work, commitment, dedication and diligent professionalism that occur every day across Goudhurst and Kilndown Church of England Primary School.

The report was fantastically positive, was written so personally to us and captured so well what our school strives to be, and clearly is:

“Pupils make rapid progress in reading, writing and mathematics, as well as many other subjects. They reach standards which are well above average.....There is a great deal of mutual respect between teachers and pupils.”

“Teachers plan work which pupils find exciting and focuses extremely well on developing their skills.”

“Behaviour is exceptional. Pupils are immensely proud of their school and of the learning they are doing.”

Indeed Ofsted has toughened up their criteria massively since the last inspection in 2009, when the school achieved “Good” and it is obvious that a judgement of “Outstanding” across all categories can only be achieved when everyone works effectively together and has the same vision for all our pupils. I would therefore like to take this opportunity to thank the teachers, support staff, Governors, parents/carers, members of the community and most importantly the children. They really are amazing and an absolute credit to the school.

As you are fully aware we are not a school to rest on our laurels and our “Outstanding” judgement has not brought complacency. We have continued to implement strategies to work towards Ofsted’s two development points and we have already embarked on the next stage of our exciting learning journey.

In order to encourage ‘pupils to be less reliant on teachers in moving on to the next stage of their learning when it is suitable for them to do so’ we have taken the decision to integrate outdoor learning and forest school activities into our curriculum.

Forest School is an inspirational process that offers ALL learners regular opportunities to achieve, develop confidence and self-esteem through hands-on learning experiences in a woodland or natural environment with trees. Forest School is a specialised learning approach that sits within and compliments the wider context of outdoor and woodland education. The Forest School Association

Today, outdoor learning has shown to increase attainment and attendance levels in students. It is also shown to increase self esteem, confidence and communication skills.

All the staff attended an outdoor learning training day in September 2015 and Mrs Stanford has now achieved her level 3 Forest School Accreditation. Mrs Mileham and I completed our level 2 training and will be supporting Mrs Stanford lead all Forest School activities moving forward. We are extremely grateful to Joe Meyer who has kindly allowed us to use his woodland, in Ladham Lane for all our future activities.



Thank you to Kilndown Education Trust who provided a grant towards our Outdoor Learning Programme.

In order for us to achieve our second OFSTED action point 'developing pupils' understanding of when computer technology would be most beneficial to their learning' we have introduced the use of I pads to complement our current ICT provision. We have also updated our school website:

www.goudhurst-kilndown.kent.sch.uk

Please visit the site, as it is a great way to keep up to date with all the latest school news and events.

29 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.

I am delighted to say that we started the new academic year with a full complement of staff, and although as the year has unfolded we have said a fond farewell Mrs Woods, Mrs Plummer, Mrs Osborne and Mrs Pierce, we have been pleased to welcome Ms Speller, Mr Goodman, Mrs Morris, Mrs Herbert, Mrs Neal and Mrs Barry to our team.

For generations, parents have found themselves visiting primary schools with their children only to hear themselves saying, "It's not like when I was at school." Things change quickly in education, and at no time in the past 25 years has that been truer than September 2014 when the whole school primary curriculum changed for maintained schools throughout England and a new assessment system was also introduced. Much of the publicity about the changes to the curriculum has focussed on 'higher expectations' in various subjects, and it is certainly the case that in some areas the content of the new primary curriculum is significantly more demanding than in the past. It is said to be a Mastery Curriculum for ALL with children being encouraged to study subjects more in-depth and carry out investigative work to allow a greater understanding of concepts and ideas. I would like to thank the staff for embracing all the changes and for their continued dedication and professionalism.

Besides 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. A new club this year is KS1 Gymnastics, run by Premier Sport and we now offer a breakfast club every morning. The children and staff in KS2 put on a wonderful performance of 'Robin and the Sherwood Hoodies' at the end of the summer term. Once again sports day was a huge success and we were so lucky with the weather! Year 6 completed a fantastic residential trip to Hilltop in Norfolk which we all enjoyed. Year 5 completed their two night residential trip to Swattenden during the middle of September. All classes have engaged in a music fortnight which focussed on the BBC 10 Pieces and this year all the children will have received weekly whole class djembe drumming lessons from Cheryl Blake (Kent Music) by the end of the year. To enhance and enrich the children's outdoor learning experiences, all classes have engaged in 'Wild at Art' Workshops lead by a local artist Lucy Williams.

It has been another year of great sporting success. We competed at the Kent School Games in June 2014, representing Tunbridge Wells against the other areas of Kent in hockey; we came a very close 2nd! However, we were delighted to win the Julie Rose Athletics event for the 5th time in July. In January 2015 some of our YR 6 pupils represented Kent in the Indoor Athletics Competition and the girls squad came 2nd whilst the boys squad secured 1st place. We started the year in September with a 1st and a 3rd position in the Rawlingson Run and one of our YR4 boys has just achieved a Silver Medal in the Kent Cross Country Championships, March 2015. In addition we have taken part in many of our local area festivals (WOKSSA): football, basketball, cross country; swimming; indoor athletics; hockey and infant agility to name but a few. The children always represented the school and area with pride. Thank you to Mrs Mileham for all her hard work coaching and supporting the teams.

Our strong partnership with Canterbury Christ Church University continues and

once again we have had a variety of PGCE students working alongside us sharing good practice and complementing teaching and learning across our school.

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. We have been delighted to welcome Kevin Draper into our school this year. Both he and Reverend Hugh have lead our Wednesday Collective Worship Services; they have lead Lent information sessions for some of the older pupils; ran a worship after school club and we are excited about Kevin's plan to replace our allotment area with a prayer garden. Watch that space!

We held a Community Harvest Shared Lunch in the school on Wednesday 1st October. The children had grown pumpkins as part of a PTFA competition. The entries were then made into pumpkin soup and served at the shared lunch. Our Harvest Festival then took place on Friday 3rd October in St. Mary's. 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.

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. In addition our Year 5 and 6 pupils attended the official Remembrance Day Service at the War Memorial in the village.

Our Choir has performed at the village late night shopping event held in St. Mary's Church on Friday 28th November and have contributed to a number of Family Services. I would like to thank Jeffrey Gray who has given generously of his own time to attend our choir practice every week and more recently to lead our whole school hymn practice alongside Ms Lane. KSI performed a wonderful Nativity Play entitled 'The Very Hopeless Camel' on 11th and 12th December which was very well attended by parents. The dress rehearsal on 10th December was watched by KS2 alongside members of the community who had first enjoyed a delicious lunch. On Friday 19th December we had our end of term Carol Service which was again very well attended and a lovely end to a very busy term.

Again this year we held our Christingle Service in St. Mary's Church on Friday 30th 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. It is moments such as these that really help to deepen the children's spiritual development.

On Wednesday 25th February Years 4/5/6 attended our Ash Wednesday service led by Reverend Hugh in Christ Church. We then walked back to school using the millennium walk. I would also like to thank David Denton for giving up his time to

play the organ, the Church Wardens and all the parents who supported us during the whole morning.

Today we have held our Easter Service in St. Mary's Church. Many parents and family members joined us; it was lead confidently and capably by our Year 6 children, whilst the beautiful singing by all the children filled the whole church. I cannot think of a better way to have ended the term!

*Lindsay Roberts
Headteacher*

PARISH MAGAZINE

Following last year's three months of delivery to every household in Goudhurst, Curtisden Green and Kilndown, there was a small increase in the number of Magazine subscribers. As so often happens, this has fallen off again with the new year subscriptions becoming due.

The Trade Directory has flourished under the care of James Cooke. It now occupies fifteen pages of the usual total of forty pages and there is a waiting list. This 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 therefore been 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.

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), James Cooke (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.

St. Mary's P.C.C. met 9 times during 2014, including the A.P.C.M. These meetings were split into 5 business meetings, and 3 strategy meetings to plan the way ahead.

In January the P.C.C. discussed the appointment of Kevin Draper as our Families Minister, on a temporary and part time basis for 12 months. It was agreed that Kevin be appointed, subject to an interview panel being satisfied.

At our March meeting the P.C.C. agreed to the Charitable Giving Sub-Committee's recommendations for St. Mary's giving for the year.

In May, following the A.P.C.M. in April, the Officers were elected.

A Strategy meeting was held in June, with the sole aim of agreeing to establish a restricted fund to be used to support those in urgent financial need, from the church and local community. It was agreed that Barney would assist Hugh to administer this fund.

At our November meeting the P.C.C. strongly supported the proposal for the appointment of a new Benefice Administrator.

Before every meeting, reports are circulated to P.C.C. members to study before the meeting. Items regularly on the Agenda include, Mission and Outreach, Service to the Community, Teaching and Worship, the Church Community, Fabric and Finance, Communication, Church Room and Deanery. Reports on these subjects are to be found elsewhere in the Reports Book and Annual Report.

Copies of the Minutes of P.C.C. meetings are available in a folder at the back of the church and on the website.

Jill Dunstall - Secretary

PRAYER AND STUDY FELLOWSHIP

As a group, we are reading "The Acts of the Apostles" and in the words of Tom Wright, we should think of it as "The Acts of Jesus : Part Two". The presence of Jesus haunts the whole book as a living powerful reality and these study guides help us to see how Jesus acts through the apostles, and guides us through prayer and thoughtful questions into a deeper understanding of how the Christian story and the Christian life empowers our acts today.

We meet on the 3rd Tuesday of the month at 2 pm. The Revd Hugh came to our December meeting House communion, reading the scriptures and praying together, Heaven and earth interlocked.

We have had a very good year.

Patrice Springett

ST MARY'S CHURCH CLEANERS

The last year has seen a change in the way we clean our church. Our lady cleaner, Julie Blackford, has proved a great asset. Paid by the PCC Julie does 2.5 hours a week, one on Fridays – ready for the weekend, paying special attention to the kitchen and toilets; and again on a Tuesday, following the weekend's activities, in the pews and surrounding areas, together with cleaning up the Children's Room. Tidying up the toys in this room is requested to those who use it. Julie is a huge help and we are extremely grateful to her for her flexibility and commitment.

Routine Church cleaning still takes place on an ad hoc volunteer basis, cleaners fitting their tasks into the end of the week or month they are scheduled for. They have to take account of funerals, wedding preparations and any other activities which may arise. We are particularly grateful to the Wives Group whose weekly commitment is legion.

Some cleaners bring their own equipment, although there are hoovers, dusters, polish and brass cleaning products available.

We currently have a core of 20 dedicated cleaners – if you could add to this team, I would be very happy to hear from you. Only an hour a week or month can make a difference. You can work on your own or with a friend. All of us in St Mary's are deeply indebted to our cleaners' faithful application which happens without reminders, or coercion. As mentioned last year, frequent references are made to the beautiful, clean and shining church in the Visitors' Book, which pays tribute to your efforts. With Very Many Thanks to you all.

Sue Crookall 211710

2014 TOWER WATCHING REPORT

Income showing comparison with previous year

Year	2014	2013
<i>Tower days achieved *</i>	40	44
Visitor fees	£1,469.76	£1,597.00
Donations	£73.21	£44.62
Cards, Guides, Parish mags	£7.40	£35.60
Sub Total	£1,550.37	£1,677.22
plus 3 further days of tower fees received during the Flower Festival in aid of St Mary's Church	£734.00	N/A
CUMULATIVE TOWER RECEIPTS	£2,284.37	£1,677.22

As sourced from the Log Book, the figures are for Saturday, Sunday and Bank Holiday afternoons when tower stewards are on duty. At other times there may have been visits by groups; as with the receipts during the Flower Festival, such visits are understood to be recorded by the Treasurer.

*The number of tower duty days achieved is subject to when Easter falls and to any days lost due to weddings or bad weather. There was no flower festival in 2013 and so the return of the festival in 2014 had a huge impact on tower visits, not least because of the good weather over the Early May bank holiday weekend. All credit to the organisers of the Flower Festival for coordinating the separate tower rota for those 3 days.

Thanks go to the volunteers who give up the occasional weekend or bank holiday afternoon to welcome visitors to St Mary's Church tower. As ever St Mary's Church depends on these tower helpers and on further recruits. Now that I stand down after 4 years of coordinating the tower rota, I understand that Lara is to be the take on this role and I would urge the community to whole heartedly support her.

Tim Stobbs

TUESDAY CLUB

We have had another interesting year with good speakers.

Rosemary Southon gave us an insight into the Pilgrimages that she has taken during many years.

Barney Mayhew gave us a talk on the work that he has undertaken during his working life.

We were lucky with the weather for our annual BBQ, which was warm and sunny.

Since the beginning of our New Year, which is September, we have held our meetings in the Children's Chapel. This has proved popular with our members.

Our New Year's dinner was held at the Star and Eagle.

Gill Joye told us about the History of Burgess Stores, and George Pullman gave an interesting talk about Church Law.

Marilyn Whitewood

