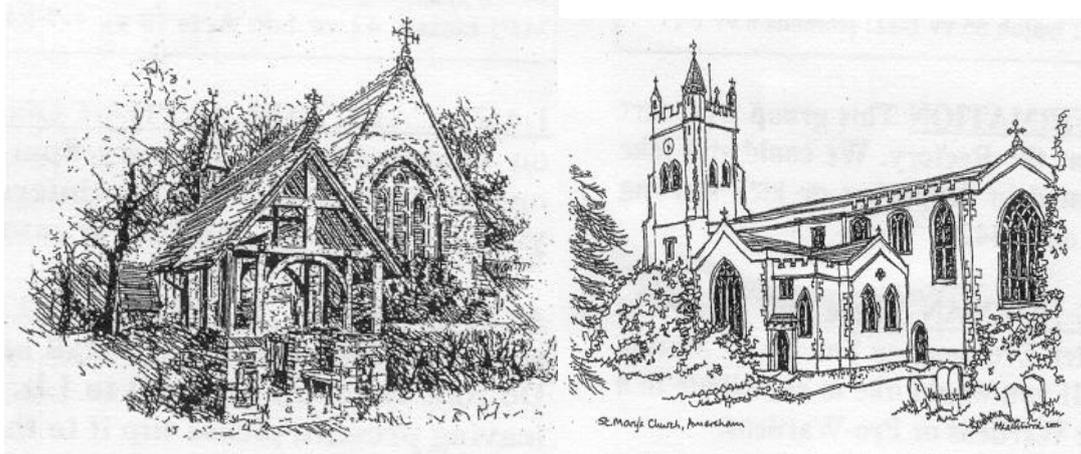


# **THE PARISH OF AMERSHAM WITH COLESHILL**



## **Annual Report 2019**

**Come to the Annual Parish Meeting  
on Sunday 28th April 2019 at  
11.30am in St Mary's Church**

**To discuss the past year and elect  
Churchwardens and PCC members**

**All welcome**

## RECTOR'S REPORT TO THE AGM AND PARISH PATRON 2019

As I write at the beginning of April there is no doubt in my mind that it has been an encouraging year. After a couple of quieter years with a big turnover, attendance at services is very much on the up at St Mary's. All Saints too has become much more stable and its seasonal invitation services, especially those with the school, are very well attended too. In recent years St Mary's has moved from being just a parish church to in a sense be the 'pro-cathedral' of the area. For example, we offer the widest range of services and each week and send clergy/reader cover to many other parishes. My role as co-area dean has contributed something to this as some 60 clergy look to me for pastoral and professional supervision and support. It is a ministry for which the whole parish is well suited. I have also just re-trained as a church school SIAMS inspector under the new regulations and inspection framework. At Christ Church Cathedral Oxford, I can find myself leading and singing a service with the Cathedral choir attended by the various professors of theology in their stalls, only hours after doing something similar with our infants. This feels somewhat bizarre!

Some highlights: at St Mary's our work with younger children at First Steps, parent and toddlers is booming, and this is now spilling over into Sunday school. Despite the turbulence caused by the leaving of two head teachers, Coleshill school achieved a result of 'Good, with pockets of excellence' at a recent Ofsted inspection. Given the tougher gradings this is exactly where every school should aim to be. St Mary's school too is strong, with stable staffing. Rev Sue Gill is about to complete her curacy, and we hope that Bishop Alan will agree to her continuing with us. With our LLM/Readers Charles Howlett and Sheila Shield we have been able to cover the many services and ministerial tasks despite the absence of Rev Tim Barnard for health reasons. We hope he will continue to recover and rejoin us soon.

Challenges remain. The St Mary's electrical and refurbishment projects are as yet incomplete. Money has been tight, mainly through the comings and goings of so many people. However, through the hard work of wardens and parish officers we are addressing the tasks. Our work with teens is currently on hold, though it looks likely that PCC will approve the appointment of a part time youth leader over the summer.

I must also thank our wardens, parish administrator, ringers, MDs, choirs, treasurers, sacristans, flower teams, sides persons, PCC and committee members, children and youth leaders, pastoral visitors, head teachers and school governors, and so many others for their sterling efforts on our behalf. We are very grateful to them all.

Tim Harper  
Rector and Area Dean  
Easter 2019

**Parochial Church Council**  
**Secretary's Report, 2018-19**

The PCC has met formally on four occasions since April 2018, with an additional consultation by email in preparation for the 2019 Parish Meeting, and the brief first meeting of the “new” PCC immediately afterward. There were 20 members of the PCC during this year; the names of the members appear at the end of this report. Average attendance at meetings this year has been 17. The minutes of all PCC meetings are available in the file on the table at the west end of the church.

The Standing Committee of core PCC members is sometimes empowered by PCC to take decisions on specific issues; this it usually accomplishes by consultation, always reporting its decisions at the next PCC meeting.

Of the two Church Committees, All Saints holds scheduled meetings though the St Mary's Committee has not met since November 2015 as its agenda overlapped almost totally with that of the PCC. The Wardens of both churches give a report at every PCC meeting, as does the Treasurer. The PCC also receives regular reports on Youth Work, Charitable Giving, Mission work, the two schools and the Almshouses. Safeguarding and Data Protection are required as permanent agenda items. There is a report from the Deanery Synod, if a meeting has taken place.

**Main matters discussed by the PCC 2018-19**

1. Considerable time is spent on finance. The Treasurer presents a report at every meeting, along with a lively commentary on the issues raised and related matters. Obtaining best value for money in everyday expenditure, as well as on major projects, has contributed to an improving financial position overall, as has pursuing all potential sources of funds for specific actions. Parish running costs are being brought directly to the attention of the parishioners as a stimulus to planned giving.
2. The Charitable Giving Committee (formerly the Mission Giving Committee) considers how we can raise money for various causes and charities. Making more widely known the success of the parish in raising money for charitable giving, so as to encourage more donations, remains a concern. About £10,000 is raised each year for a range of causes, including support for Steve Poulson, our Mission Partner working with Street Kids Direct in Honduras, and for charities in the UK and abroad.
3. Another permanent agenda item is Fabric and Property: the running, refurbishment, repair or replacement of everything from buildings and boilers to chalices and chasubles.
  - At both churches, new sound systems have been installed and the use CCTV to monitor the interiors of the churches as a deterrent to misuse or damage was considered at length but not thought warranted at present.

- All Saints has had some tree damage repaired, and has settled a colony of honey bees in the churchyard. The lychgate doors need refurbishment and guttering needs work too.
  - At St Mary's, a strong desire to commence the major project of renovating the lighting and the stonework has resulted in an attempt to break the massive scheme down into more do-able sections, on which work could the sooner begin. Stone crosses on the north side of the church have been replaced and the vestry refitted and recarpeted. The brasses in the Drake Chapel have been restored and remounted strikingly to display them. The yew trees near the main entrance to the church need serious surgery and consultation is underway on this.
  - The ceilings of the storage garages of the Parish Rooms were found to contain asbestos which has now been sealed.
  - The maintenance and management of the house let at Piggott's End has taken time and resources, but essential work was needed to keep the tenant content and to provide a regular income for the parish.
4. Youth Work in the parish is a major concern as a special subcommittee of the PCC decides the job description for the eventual new appointment. Ann Pearse has taken on Sunday School with typical care and enthusiasm, while some activities for older children are being organised by Martin Pounce on a temporary basis.
  5. The implications of the General Data Protection Regulation have enthralled PCC meetings, in particular, the strange reluctance of several solid church members to return the GDPR consent forms which risks their contact information being deleted.
  6. Ways of improving the planned giving scheme are always of interest to the PCC, which has considered various ideas this year, including introducing contactless payments.

Steve Johnson,  
PCC Secretary.

### **Safeguarding Report**

Everyone working with children and young people has been properly checked by the appropriate agency and all DBS records are up to date. The Parish Safeguarding Policy is reviewed and agreed by the PCC annually. However, following new guidelines from the Diocese and CofE, a complete review of safeguarding policy and practice will be undertaken in the next few months.

There have been two reports of possible safeguarding concerns within the parish, revealing a further deficiency in the current safeguarding administration: there is no method by which such information can be formally recorded and securely stored. This lack is being addressed

by the introduction of a written record form and it is hoped to develop a safeguarding area on the renovated website where resources and support material may be found.

Similarly, the potential risk to members of the parish working in church on their own, or making solo home visits to support vulnerable adults has prompted the introduction of a Lone Working Policy, and guidance on making a risk assessment before any such action.

The mandatory safeguarding training and the recommended further training modules for some church officers have been taken up more assiduously this year. I am pleased to report that 21 church officers have completed the basic training module, of whom 11 have gone on to finish the next online module too. Because of their positions in the parish, four people have proceeded beyond that level, as required by the Diocese.

I maintain a record of all safeguarding training completed by lay members of the parish, so please inform me when you have completed an online module or attended a training session.

Steve Johnson  
Parish Safeguarding Officer

### **Planned Giving (St Mary's) 2018**

The results for the year were:

	<u>2018</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2015</u>
Planned giving	£86,650	£88,362	£85,785	£87,204
Gift Aid envelopes & Loose Cash	£12,997	£13,753	£9,115	£10,426
Tax reclaimed	£24,234	£24,200	£21,559	£22,083
<b>Total</b>	<b>£123,862</b>	<b>£126,315</b>	<b>£116,459</b>	<b>£119,713</b>
No. of PG donors	156	164	175	182

I took over the administration of the planned giving in November this year. There was a backlog of standing orders to be processed and it has taken me a little time to both get to grips with the software and with getting the claims done through HMRC owing to necessary paperwork changes, the timings of which were outside our hands. All gifts for 2018 were processed and gift aid was claimed by mid February 2019.

Members of the congregation continue to switch to donating through standing order mandates which lessens the administration of the scheme significantly. The main reason for people to stop their standing orders are tend to be either that they have moved to support a different church, or have died.

The reduction in the number of those using coloured envelopes has continued, but this is balanced by the increase in standing order mandates. However, as in 2017 several times we have had 4 figure cheques in the weekly donations.

The amount of donors in the planned giving scheme has continued to drop this year. However, I have noticed a number of people who regularly use white envelopes. If this is you and you would like a coloured set, please do let me know.

Clare Atkinson  
27 March 2019

### The youth year in numbers

7 young people awarded for making their own anti-smoking film.

6 Forest Church sessions for Junior Church children, exploring creation

28 children creating assemblies to show their learning about faith in Sparks club

11 songs played on our Radio Christmas show

2 Fellowship lunches for the parish

8 water balloons dropped from the church tower by Smyle

1 water balloon survived to throw at Kathryn

1000's of pots of slime made by young people at Tuesday and Friday youth clubs and at Smyle (at least it felt like it!)

60 rashers of bacon eaten on Sunday Mornings, many by our faithful volunteers

100 Christingle oranges prepared and distributed at St Mary's (many more at Coleshill)

76 assembly talks prepared for our two schools

7 tables filled for our spectacular Joint Youth Summer Ball

3000 marshmallows on hot chocolate or toasted on our bonfire

96 worship songs sung at Rise with joyful accompaniment from young people on a range of instruments, including chairs

36 scones made and eaten by our

young people to celebrate the Royal Wedding

17 sunbathers on our beach trip plus a couple who stayed in the shade

1 farewell and many thanks.



## **Sunday School....Explorers**

This is a young group of children ranging from nursery to 8 year olds. Developing from crèche to explorers.

We meet every Sunday in the Drake Chapel and this term have been following the life of Jesus using map form, from Nazareth to Capernaum and onto Jericho and Jerusalem, while learning important meetings with people, miracles, and teachings on the journey which culminates in Holy week.

We have news time to start our session followed by prayer, story and craft with singing. The children do their own register, use their sand timer for prayer time and often pray themselves. We sing. A mini church.

The children learn to serve in church by offering biscuits around to other children in the congregation and crèche., collecting hymn books or cups.

Creche is linked to Explorers so a little one can visit to get used to the format while older children pop into crèche before and after explorers.

We average 7 children per week. Out of 4 weeks a child may be part of Explorers once. Only one child will be there on 3 out of 4 sessions. This means that lessons must be make sense independently, although holding with a theme. Each child knows they belong in church family. Everyone will get an Easter Egg!

## **First Steps**

St Mary's short service and funtime for toddlers under school age. Toddler Group every Monday at the church rooms.

We have had a very good year with both groups.

First Steps, the first Monday of the month, where around 30 families attend this service which now includes craft time, story time, fun play and good snacks. Parents give us really good feedback. People are disappointed when they cannot come.

The team produce a fun morning. Early birds arrive at 10 a.m. for real coffee or tea and general play, then Tim our Canon, takes centre stage at 10.30a.m. Phillip our pianist keeps us in tune and all enjoy the quality play areas and super craft tables.

After the short session of music, prayer and drama we head to the food table where healthy snacks, drinks and treats are available. Hospitality is a hallmark of family and church life. For us, here conversations take place, and mums/carers and dads feel refreshed. Our care in hospitality is well recognised both in Toddler group and First Steps. A recent improvement in our advertising flyers, posters and being on an app for young children's play sessions is providing another link to those caring for young ones.

Toddler group has built up over the year too. We now have a baby area as well as providing

play, craft and educational/sensory activities. All our children sit down together for their snack time which is unique to our group and provides a family/party experience.

Again parents really appreciate our good standards and the story time and singing session is enjoyed by the very young as well as toddlers. This year, one mum found the friendliness of the group prompted her to ask about child baptism. We now have three mums following through on this with the help of our clergy. I think you may have noticed our creche is well used on Sundays.

It is a pleasure to be involved in Toddlers and First Steps. We have a super team and our families are very supportive of each other and welcome new folk with ease.

Fortunately we have no limit on space, so no waiting list and everyone is welcome. Initially we care, we share faith and provide a wonderful environment that brings the children eagerly through the door.

### **Report from Charitable Giving Committee (CGC)**

The Charitable Giving Committee (CGC) gave c. 12.5k to various charities this financial year which included funds raised at the 2018 Summer Fete. This is a 16% increase over last year.

Beneficiaries are selected based on their relevance to the work of our Parish and in accordance with the aims of our Charitable Giving policy. These included three charities that benefitted from monies received from our 2018 Summer Fete. These were: Niche International, Huntingdon's Disease Association and Buckinghamshire Mind and youth work.

Amongst those that also benefitted from funds are: the British Legion, Bucks Historic Churches Trust, Scanappeal, Christian Aid, Chiltern Food Bank, MacMillan Cancer Organisation, Alzheimer's Society, St Marys C of E Primary School, Coleshill C of E Primary, Street Kids Direct (SKD), the Church Mission Society.

Steve Poulson, our mission partner, continues as a beneficiary through our ongoing links with the Church Mission Society. Steve works in Honduras for Duncan Dyason's charity, Street Kids Direct. SKD has set up a successful mentoring programme in Honduras to prevent vulnerable young people from living on the streets.

All monies raised in connection with our charitable giving come from Parish funds, the annual church fete, concerts, sponsored walks, cycle rides, pet services, talks, harvest suppers, special services and other fundraising events.

In 2018, our committee proposed the following new charities for consideration by our 2019 Fete committee – all were approved:

- **Where Rainbows Meet**, a charity based in South Africa, which supports those in communities at risk of becoming victims of crime, giving them opportunities to build safer and better lives,
- **Bucks Mental Health (Mind)**,

- **The Rwanda Sisterhood**, set up after the 1994 Rwanda genocide. It aims to support women and young girls giving them opportunities to work together in the community focussing on health and wellbeing.

During 2018, the Charitable Giving Committee also:

- Distributed in both churches a printed flyer listing beneficiaries and ways of giving.
- Included an article in the October issue of the St Mary's Parish Newsletter
- Provided information on our Charitable giving at various events, such as the Harvest Supper and at Church services.

Louise Baneke, member of the Charitable Giving Committee.

### **St Mary's Church** **Churchwardens' Annual Report for 2018**

The last year has been another busy year for the Wardens with a lot of activity in addition to the day to day duties of the Office some key highlights have been:

**Routine maintenance and repairs** to the fabric of our Grade 1 Listed mediaeval building. **Redecoration** of the Upper Vestry and new carpets in the upper vestry, stairs from the Chancel to the Drake Chapel, Pulpit and area around the organ.

Having received consent to renovate and relocate the old **Brasses** we are delighted to see them returned and installed in the Drake Chapel.

The **stone cross** replacement on the gable end of the Church was so well received that we are looking at replacing two similar crosses on the North side of the church which have been missing for many years.

The scheme to **re-wire and re-light** the Church is progressing although far slower than we'd like. Nevertheless we have taken a wide range of advice including from the Diocesan Advisor. A revised scheme has been proposed by our Church Surveyor and we hope that a scheme will be progressed later this year. In the meantime, as a matter of urgency, lights have been replaced in the Tower and to the lectern.

A replacement **Sound system** was installed and we have had no recurrence of the old problems. This work included a relocation of the hearing loop system. It would be helpful to know if this is satisfactory for those who use it.

The **Churchyard** continues to be well maintained by Amersham Town Council who have the responsibility for doing so. Professional advice is being taken on the care of the two large **Yew Trees** which may need some attention later this year.

The "**Curate's House**" at Piggott's End is privately let as it is not currently required for a Curate and brings in a useful income for the PCC. Work was done at the house this year to

redecorate, carry out minor repairs and tidy the garden after which a new tenant was successfully found.

Two major issues for the Wardens and PCC this year have been **GDPR** and **Safeguarding**. Training and reviews of processes and procedures have been successfully undertaken.

The Warden's have continued to support the development of **Youth Work**. This has included a review of our arrangements with the vacancy in the Youth Worker post and supporting the Scouts in developing their local facilities on part of our Glebe land.

Other reports will highlight the work of our teams and groups and the wide range of services in the Church. As ever the Wardens are extremely grateful for all the hard work and support given by so many people and teams at St Mary's. There are far too many to name but it includes Canon Tim and his Clergy team, Dorothy, the Youth team and of course all those in the Congregations who worship with us at St Mary's.

Howard Hughes and Susan Pounce

### **ALL SAINTS' CHURCH** **WARDENS' REPORT 2019**

#### **WORSHIP:**

The pattern of services has remained generally as in previous years, with the addition of a number of themed services.

Our house group continues to flourish, and we usually average 12 – very ably led by Audrey Tridgell with back-up from Louise Baneke.

Coffee (and a chat) immediately after Sunday morning service has become a firm institution.

#### **SPECIAL SERVICES:**

We hold themed services to encourage particular groups of people from the village and Winchmore Hill to join us, and especially welcome the children.

The children from the village Church of England school and their families join us formally three times a year – for Mothering Sunday, Harvest Festival, and Christingle services. They continue to prove a great success. In addition they visit the church at the end of each term. Bibles were presented again to school leavers at the end of the Summer term. Open school assemblies now take place in the Church every month.

Baptism follow-up service continued for those children baptized during the previous year, and has become a regular event in the calendar – this year on April 28<sup>th</sup>.

During Passiontide and Easter we hold a special service on Palm Sunday, evening meditation for the Parish on the Tuesday of Holy Week, we join the Christian Passover Meal at St Mary's before the Holy Communion on Maundy Thursday, we hold an Ash Wednesday service, which included a soup lunch in Church for those unable to attend Sunday services, and we have a special service of hymns, prayers, and meditation, with the lighting of candles on Good

Friday. On Easter Day, in addition to our usual Communion Service at 9.00, members of the choir join St Mary's for the choral evening service.

Our pet service turned out to be a great success again. Sue Gill took the service and was able to bless all creatures great and small – the animals behaved impeccably !! Non regular churchgoers attended in numbers.

Other themed services included bees, patronal celebration, remembrance, and mothering Sunday. The aim is to hold a themed service each month.

### **MISSION ACTION PLAN:**

We continue to hold regular monthly prayer meetings in church. From a small start, the growing number of attendees is encouraging.

We held an afternoon tea for senior members of the congregation, which was enjoyed by all. Children from the Magpie Club have been invited to visit the church for a short service once a term – and attendance has been encouraging – with numbers growing steadily.

Two talks arranged by the Parish took place in the year – proceeds of which increased our charitable giving.

Themed services have been arranged for the coming year as follows : 28<sup>th</sup> April – baptism renewal, May 14<sup>th</sup> – Christian Aid soup lunch, 19<sup>th</sup> May – Christian Aid walk, 16<sup>th</sup> June – fathers' day, 23<sup>rd</sup> June – pet service, 10<sup>th</sup> July – walk with communion, 29<sup>th</sup> July – baptism renewal, 16<sup>th</sup> September – school service.

A bee club based on the bees in the churchyard is being organized together with the school on Sunday mornings after Church for children and their carers. A generous donation from the Oxford Diocese supported the purchase of protective bee suits for the children,

### **PASTORAL CARE AND OUTREACH:**

Events and activities are organized to support people within the villages of Coleshill and Winchmore Hill.

The Magpie Club continues to go from strength to strength. The Club meets on a Friday morning in the village hall, specifically for carers and toddlers, but an increasing number of villagers have been encouraged to join us for coffee or tea, managed by Jean Dover, and a chat.

The Patch system is designed to support those who are ill or need company, and to welcome newcomers to the village. Regular meetings which are totally confidential try to ensure that all are included. A newcomers' party was held in the cricket club on May 12<sup>th</sup> 2017.

At Amersham Hospital the Chaplaincy team provides a rota of helpers to visit the hospital each week to establish those patients who would like to receive Communion, and to provide company to any who so require.

### **ACTIVITIES:**

Kathryn Ridout, previously our youth worker, organizes "Open the Book" regularly at the school. From March 2018 monthly open school assemblies are held in Church.

The format for Christian Aid week was changed to focus on soup lunches in Church.

**FABRIC:**

Running repairs were made to the Church. We now seek to explore possibilities of organizing a working party in Spring to remedy minor requirements arising from the quinquennial survey.

**PARISHIONERS:**

All Saints' is a beautiful 1861 Victorian rural church, designed by GE Street, which plays an important part in the community life of the village and surrounding parish.

The Church Committee met on four occasions during the year. There are many people with specific roles and talents who keep our church in an attractive, open, and welcoming state by giving generously of their time.

We are fortunate that our worship is enhanced by having a fine organ, a consummate professional organist and choirmaster, Ruth Murphy, and a loyal band of faithful singers.

One of the glories of All Saints' is the colourful and artistic floral decoration organized by Rosemary Valentine, but with the flair and hard work of the team of talented workers.

Chris Wege, as well as being the secretary to the Church Committee, devotes a great deal of time and care to the maintenance of the churchyard, including a redesigned flower bed, which is admired by local people and visitors alike

A beehive was introduced to the Churchyard in the Spring of 2017. The local Womens' Institute has planted a bee friendly garden in the Churchyard to provide suitable forage.

The Church school was subjected to a rigorous Ofsted inspection. With two changes of headteacher it achieved the very creditable "good with outstanding features" classification. A tribute to the acting Head, Sarah Hewat. It retained the SIAMS (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools) grading of outstanding – with exceptional input from children, the acting head, teaching staff, the rector, Kathryn Ridout, and governors

Jane Stefanovic has continued her duties as cleaner, and works very hard to keep the building spotless and shining which is appreciated by worshippers and visitors. Paul Evans ensures that the church is unlocked and locked – and therefore remains open to all during the day. The list is not exhaustive, and we are fortunate to have such a faithful team of sidespersons, readers, chalice bearers, as well as those who prepare the church for, and those who provide coffee after, services.

We must also thank those few who provide regular financial support to the church.

Finally we need to register our huge thanks to our rector, Tim Harper, who despite the small size of our Parish, spends time with us, and in support of the school. He is wonderfully supported by his team of Tim Barnard, Sue Gill, and Charles Howlett, to give positive guidance and support to the congregation and the church.

## **Report for Annual Meeting 2018 – House Groups**

St Mary's. The group which meets every Wednesday fortnight during term time at Tim and Elizabeth Barnard's has continued to meet. Over the past twelve months or so we have concluded our study of Revelation, and have been studying Proverbs and a series about the Names of God. Please speak to Tim or Elizabeth if you would like to join the group. It was decided not to run an Advent course in 2018, and for Lent 2019 Church members have been encouraged to use "40 days of Reflections on the Beatitudes" by Bishop Steven Croft.

### **COLESHILL CHURCH OF ENGLAND INFANT SCHOOL REPORT SPRING 2019**

We have had a very busy term, the children have worked extremely hard, and we still have more exciting adventures to come over the next term. At the start of the Spring term we experienced a heavy snowfall and the children (not the adults!) were delighted. They thoroughly enjoyed playing in the snow and building snowmen. We always encourage the children to see the beauty of our surroundings and we are certainly very lucky in that regard being located in Coleshill Village.

As you may be aware, we recently had an Ofsted inspection at Coleshill. We are extremely proud to be able to announce that the overall effectiveness of Coleshill CE Infant School was judged to be Good, with 4 out of the 5 categories being Good; and importantly Personal development, behaviour and welfare judged as Outstanding. The inspector took pains to emphasise this was an impressive outcome, particularly in light of recent changes to leadership and especially since we had not been assessed since 2007. She highlighted in particular 'Leaders ensure the school makes superb provision for pupils' personal development.' She also commented on behaviour stating that 'Pupils' behaviour is impeccable. Pupils conduct themselves exceptionally well throughout the school day. Consequently, the school is a happy and calm environment.' This is testimony to the hard work and dedication of all staff, governors and parents involved.

This term we are undertaking several whole school topics and themed weeks, including Royalty, Science Week and our annual Spirituality and Citizenship Weeks. We have had the "Living Eggs" programme visiting us in March as part of our science week, where the children have seen 9 chicks hatch and all chicks are now happily living on a farm thanks to one of our parents. We also held a Science day entitled 'Inventing Isobel' and one of our Governors visited us to talk to the children about Bee Keeping. The children were also very fortunate to visit the Wycombe Swan to see a production of 'Dear Zoo'.

During Lent, we encourage the children to think about how to behave towards others, to have good manners and to be particularly kind and caring towards one another. We have a 'Child of the Day' every day from each class. They wear a special rosette for the day and have special privileges, such as being a group leader, or being first to come in and out of the playground. Everyone has to say something kind to the Child of the Day to make them feel loved and special.

The children will be presenting mums and grandmas with flowers at All Saints' Church at the service on Mothering Sunday, March 31<sup>st</sup> at 9 a.m, to which all are welcome. Our end of term service is on Friday, April 5th at 11 a.m. at All Saints' Church, Coleshill.

Looking further ahead, our annual May Fayre will be held in the school garden, weather permitting, on Saturday, May 11<sup>th</sup>. The children will be busy preparing for our Dance festival, Sports day, country dancing festival and the Summer production.

Sarah Hewat  
Acting Head Teacher

**St Mary's CE Primary School Report**  
**from the Governors 2019**

**Introduction**

Claire Hayes now leads the Governors as Chair in a sole position and J Rouse has stepped into the Vice Chair position; this continues to work successfully as a structure on the basis that we also have two very active and supportive Sub Committee Chairs – J Skinner (LA Governor) & C Monnington (Parent Governor) and we operated as a Snr Governor team.

**1.1 Governing Body Structure**

The Parish continues to have strong links with St Mary's School, with eight of the governing body's 12 members being appointed by the PCC or the Diocese of Oxford. The Governors currently are:

<b>Tim Harper</b>	Ex-officio Governor	Ex-officio
<b>Claire Hayes</b>	Chair	Appointed by the PCC
<b>Jacqui Rouse</b>	Vice Chair	Appointed by the PCC
<b>James Skinner</b>	Subcommittee Chair	Local Authority appointed
<b>Steve Johnson</b>	Governor	Appointed by the PCC
<b>John Bennett</b>	Governor	Associate
<b>Chris Monnington</b>	Subcommittee Chair	Parent Governor
<b>Prina Mistry</b>	Governor	Parent Governor
<b>Miriam Hancock</b>	Governor	Appointed by the Diocese
<b>Edward Staite</b>	Subcommittee Vice Chair	Appointed by the PCC
<b>Nicky Norman</b>	Governor	Diocese appointed
<b>Julie Hill</b>	Head teacher	Diocese appointed
<b>Edward Brown</b>	Subcommittee Vice Chair	Diocese appointed

## **1.2 Committees**

The two main Committees continue to meet once a term:

- The Teaching, Learning, Pupil and Community Committee and Community
- Finance, Personnel and Premises.

These committees continue to drive clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction. Through these committee meetings the Head teacher is held to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils; and it oversees the financial performance of the school making sure its money is appropriately spent. The outputs of these meetings is then communicated to the wider Governor Body at the twice termly Full Governing Body Meeting.

We also form working groups to focus on particular issues and report back to the Governing body. We currently have working groups looking at communication including engaging our parents and wider community.

## **2.0 Overview of 2017-18**

This academic year has built on last years success of the Math's Mastery roll out, a transformational approach to math's teaching which stems from high performing Asian nations such as Singapore. The approach of this teaching method is different because it offers all pupils access to the full math curriculum and the school has seen real success in the approach.

Whilst the school continues to be challenged with regards to the restricted Budget the Parent Voluntary fund has continued to build positively and the Friends of St Marys have been very active in fund raising for the school. The Governing Body have continued to take every opportunity to make Parents aware of the Voluntary Fund which has proved successful.

Our Glebe land project continues and is almost now ready for use. The Governing Body have been very active including and encouraging Parents to get involved in supporting the preparation of the Glebe land.

Our newly acquired land continues to attract interest of the local council as we are the only school locally with enough space to grow to meet the potential demands of the local plan's new housing vision. Following meetings regarding expansion, feasibility plans are being drawn up by the local council. As Governors we have a strategy working group to ensure we can negotiate the best opportunities for the school.

The school continues with good academic progress and attainment. The school offers a wide range of sports utilizing our Sports Premium. The school continues to partake in interschool competitions in various sports, with much success. Daily extra-curricular activities are part of school life and include football, Karate, cross-country, gymnastics, dance, environment club, drawing classes, IT club and Choir.

Our Nurture group and breakfast club still provides a fostering environment for our pupil premium children and SEN where needed.

The Governing Body has this last year supported the Head Teacher and the school in setting in place measures and processes to enable the school to meet its legal obligations regarding GDPR

The Governing Body have recently appointed an Associate Governor who has expertise in Communication, particularly regarding Online Communications. He has been supporting the Governing Body in exploring the opportunities and providing recommendations for the introduction of an updated and improved School website which will be in place over the next couple of months. This will allow for a far more professional and improved way of communicating with both current and prospective parents.

The Governing body continues to appraise the parents of the key focus areas for the Governors through the Statement of Intent. Later this year we will be providing parents with an update on each initiative and related activity which tie in with our 5-year vision from the School Development Plan.

As Governors continue to self-evaluated against the OFSTED requirements to help us identify any areas we need to look at and if there are any skill gaps. We feel this is very important so that we can continue to provide the best Governance possible.

### **Conclusion**

The Governors continue to support the School on enabling the children to achieve their very best in a happy and safe environment.

Claire Hayes  
Chair of Governors  
March 2019

### **Bellringers Report March 2019**

During the year we have continued to ring for all Sunday services, School Carol Services, weddings and other special services. We have also rung a number of longer lengths; peals (about 3 hours) and quarter peals (about 45 minutes). Some of these longer lengths were to mark special anniversaries and occasions, including:

28th January to mark the installation of the Rector as Canon of Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford.

2 April to mark the Centenary of the formation of the RAF

19 May to celebrate the marriage of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle

31 May to celebrate the forthcoming marriage of Jill Galloway, who learnt to ring at Amersham

16 June for the Fete

11 November to mark the centenary of the end of WW1

We also rang a quarter peal on 26 April to mark the centenary of the death of a local ringer, Private Reginald J Fortnam

Four female members were joined by four other ladies to ring a very special quarter peal on 15<sup>th</sup> December to mark the centenary of the first general election in which women could vote and 60 years since the first woman entered the House of Lords. This was the 60<sup>th</sup> quarter peal rung by ladies' bands in 2018 to meet a challenge by the conductor, Alison T Merryweather-Clarke, to ring 60 quarter peals with 100 different ladies in 2018.

We took part in the Lorna Newton striking competition again this year and were pleased to come first. A very handsome winner's cup graces the bookcase in the tower.

We were saddened to lose our previous tower captain, Iain Anderson and his wife Elva and family, when they moved to York in the summer, and even more so when Alan Ainsworth, who had been tower captain for many years and the mainstay of ringing in Amersham for nearly 50 years, also moved to York in October.

I would like to thank the band for their support this year and to the church for allowing us to ring the bells.

Jan Galloway, Tower Captain  
March 2019

### **Music in the Parish** **St. Mary's Choir**

Music continues to play its significant role in worship at St. Mary's. We are indeed fortunate in our loyal 4 part choir confident to lead us through various styles met in 400 years of church music – plainsong to 20th century.

As well as our regular services of Matins, 10.15 Family Eucharist and monthly Choral Evensong, we support weddings, funerals, thanksgiving services and civic events. This past year we very successfully highlighted the church's big festivals – with ambitious programmes, especially Easter, Advent and Christmas Carol services and in March 2019 a very moving performance of Handel's Passion.

Fortunately our clergy team include confident singers – Tim, Sue and Charles whose voices are in constant musical use!

My thanks now to some of the very many people who support my work as Director of Music. Firstly our clergy team headed by Tim, with his superb voice and musicality; to Tim Barnard, Sue Gill and Charles Howlett. Thanks also to Ruth (Murphy) who partners me on many choral occasions and the Coleshill choir members who join us sometimes. I am grateful to Adrian Simmonds, Philip Woodhead who share some of the morning organ duties and Howard Hughes for many practical details, and my thanks as ever to my virtual lifeline – Dorothy Potter who puts together the jigsaw of dates, contacts, publicity and much more.

*Olwen Morris, Director of Music*

## All Saints' Choir

Our small but supportive choir keeps going and I know is much appreciated by the congregation, particularly at our morning services.

As ever, it is sometimes a challenge to produce a full Choral Evensong but we usually rise to it, thanks to the commitment of choir members and the support of Tim Harper, Sue Gill and Charles Howlett.

Most Parish weddings during the year take place at St Mary's and it's always a good opportunity for members of both choirs to get together to support these special occasions. Also, on a few occasions in the past year our choirs have combined to support funerals at St Mary's.

As always, my thanks to my fellow organists for their help: Gerard Anderson for playing for morning services once a month, sometimes more, and to Jeannette Cash and Adrian Simmonds for organ playing during my absence. Thanks are also due to Olwen Morris for directing and playing for April Choral Evensong; also to Dorothy Potter for her willing and patient help.

A special thank you to Tim Harper for his constant encouragement and help in all aspects of our church music.

Last, but not least, many thanks to all choir members for their continuing support and interest.

Ruth Murphy

**BRASS CLEANING:** Nothing changes. Brasses cleaned and gleaming, but as the "team" is now only me, they are only done every third week! Anyone interested in helping please give me a call Val Royal on 01494 433198.

## Sunday Morning Get Together after the 10.15 service

Our social half hour after the 10.15 service is still as popular as ever. It is a wonderful opportunity to welcome and get to know new members of the congregation, or to catch up on all the news from regulars. Indeed, the buzz of conversation and laughter is most pleasing! Grateful thanks go out to all 26 members of the coffee team who cater for us every Sunday. We are always looking for new helpers, so if you feel that you could assist, for just 4 duties per year, please contact me (01494 725469). We often need a helping hand if one of our members has to miss out on a quarterly duty due to other commitments, so a reserve person would be ideal to step in to cover. Please consider it.

We do, of course, extend a warm welcome to any members of the congregation who have not yet stayed for coffee. The more the merrier! We look forward to seeing you one morning soon. Please do come and join us.

Janet Clayfield, March 2019

## **Sacristan's Report**

I am immensely grateful to the team who week by week continue to assist with all the Sacristy tasks associated with the smooth running of the services: those who wash and iron linen, prepare candles, change altar frontals – the list is endless.

We are pleased to welcome two young people, Carrie and Isobel, to train as Servers, and grateful also to the adults who serve each week at the 8am and 10.15am Communion services and at special services throughout the year. The appointed chalice assistants also play an important part in our worship.

Having, sadly, lost our dear friend Pat Westcott, I am pleased to say that Alison Skinner has taken on the job of laundering of the larger altar linen.

This year the Sacristy has had a grand spring clean: it has been decorated and a new carpet laid. Many thanks to Susan Pounce for all the organisation and hard work.

Candles and flowers were again presented to families at Baptism; flowers were distributed on Mothering Sunday, palm crosses on Palm Sunday and Easter eggs to the children on Easter Day. All are greatly appreciated by the recipients.

The candle stand continues to be well used by visitors and members of the congregation. It was again used at the Remembrance Sunday Memorial Service.

A special thank you to Loraine Hollett and Dorothy Potter for all the help and support they willingly and gladly provide in the Sacristy.

Brenda Woodhead , Sacristan

## **St Mary's Church Flowers**

The flowers have been arranged by all the ladies in the Flower Group throughout the year for the Sunday services and for funerals, concerts, anniversaries and several weddings.

On Mothering Sunday bunches of flowers were again prepared for the children to give to their mothers and other ladies in the church. We have also continued to give a bunch of flowers to the mothers of a child being baptised.

The giving of lilies at Easter in remembrance of loved ones is much appreciated and numbers of lilies ordered continues to increase. Many thanks to David Royal for his beautiful artwork decorating the mount for the lily list. Thanks to Philip Woodhead for his hard work creating the list of names. Thanks again to Brenda Woodhead for arranging the Easter garden.

Various groups in the church were again invited to decorate a window sill to symbolise Harvest Thanksgiving.

The annual lunch party was a great success again this year. It was held at

Shan Pearce's house. It seems to be a popular event and gives everyone a chance to get to know each other and have a good time.

We had successful workshops in February. We were thrilled to have a member from Coleshill and some new people from other churches who wanted to learn how to flower arrange in their church. The flower arrangers seemed to enjoy working together and also taking on new and challenging designs. The results were extremely good.

Some of the flower arrangers went to Chichester and Winchester Cathedral Flower Festivals. These flower festivals are wonderful to go to and one comes back with all sorts of ideas which can then be used in our own church. Some entered flower competitions and managed to win prizes.

We would like to thank all those who have contributed in any way and would love to hear from anyone who might be interested in helping us in the Flower Group.

Jo Coldham, Flower Co-ordinator 01494-725284

### **ALL SAINTS' FLOWER TEAM REPORT**

Every year our challenge is to have the lilies in perfect condition for Easter Day; sometimes they need warmth to make them open, last year they needed a cool environment to stop them opening too far. On the day, the church looked wonderful full of lilies and spring flowers donated in memory of friends and family.

In June, a member of our flower team, Samantha Donald was married in All Saints' giving us the opportunity to help her make the church look really beautiful. Her husband created some neat little wire hooks to use for end-of- pew flower arrangements, very useful.

Our Harvest Festival event last year was a great success. We decided to encourage more villagers in, to see our arrangements by offering tea and cakes during Saturday afternoon. The Little Stars with Kristina's help, arranged flowers in pumpkins and the village school gave us an enchanting display of a tree collage and hedgehogs in the porch supervised by Catherine Watts. It was a wonderful celebration to see the whole church filled with a harvest of colourful flowers, fruit and vegetables. Despite the wind, rain and road works in the village, we had many visitors including a lady from Australia who happened to just drop by to visit a relative's grave!

We raised £200 for the village school and £150 each for MIND and Alzheimer's Society. We are grateful to all those who made the effort to come and support us.

The Alter pedestal for Remembrance Sunday was a beautiful cascade of red roses and carnations created by Susan Smith.

It is a long time between our Christingle service and Twelfth Night but we managed to keep most of the greenery alive throughout the Christmas season. The church always looks special with winter decorations, enhanced by candlelight.

Another weather challenge greeted us on the 23rd of January. The snow prevented some of our regular visitors attending our annual Coffee Morning this year held at Friars Vane. We still managed to raise over £500 for the flower fund and enjoyed seeing friends and neighbours.

Thank you to all our arrangers, helpers and supporters and to Judi Herbert who has taken over writing the Newsletter reports.

Rosemary Valentine. All Saints' team coordinator. Tel 01494 725794.

### **WALKING GROUP**

The Group has continued its monthly walks throughout the year albeit with one omission. We were pleased to be invited again to the home of Anne and Brian Lake for a shared meal after a walk led by Brian which was also part of the celebrations of their Golden Wedding Anniversary.

The Annual Festive lunch proved popular once again and was well supported.

Though we were pleased and encouraged by the prompt and sizable response to the publication of our first walk for 2019 our ranks continue to dwindle and newcomers are fewer.

An appeal to share the responsibility for arranging, publicising and leading both the walks and the pub lunches which follow them has had some success but more volunteers are now urgently needed. We would also encourage our members to recruit newcomers from within our congregations.

Apart from outdoor exercise commensurate with the average ability of our age range, we do aim to foster real friendship and fellowship in a healthy and convivial atmosphere.

Do join us. All enquiries to George and Jo Worrall at 01494 764555 or [geoanjo@waitrose.com](mailto:geoanjo@waitrose.com)

### **St Mary's Sides Team**

The sides team continue to be a lovely group of efficient, happy and enthusiastic members. Being on the team is a great way to get involved at St Mary's and to get to know people. We cover all services including special services and support the Verger role for weddings and funerals. The team has the important role of welcoming people to the Church and the feedback received shows how well this is received and appreciated.

Everyone on the sides team work so well together in a caring and supportive way with each typically on duty two or three times a quarter. There is a small but steady turnover of team members with new people regularly joining the team of around 40, please speak to Howard Hughes if you'd like to join us."

**PARISH OF AMERSHAM-WITH-COLESHILL**

**CHURCH OFFICERS FOR 2018**

**Elected at the Annual Meetings 24th April 2018**

**Parochial Church Council:**

<b>Rev'd Tim Harper</b>	Rector	<i>(Chairman)</i>
<b>Rev'd Tim Barnard</b>	Honorary Rector	
<b>Rev'd Sue Gill</b>	Curate	
<b>Howard Hughes</b>	Churchwarden(St. Mary's)	<i>Lay Vice-Chairman</i>
<b>Susan Pounce</b>	Churchwarden(St. Mary's)	
<b>Dumpy Swerling</b>	Churchwarden(All Saints')	
<b>Howard Pool</b>	Churchwarden(All Saints')	
<b>Steve Johnson</b>	Deanery Synod representative	<i>(Secretary)</i>
<b>Graeme Coles</b>	Deanery Synod representative	<i>(Treasurer)</i>
<b>Stephen Fitzjohn</b>	Deanery Synod representative	
<b>Loraine Hollett</b>	Lay representative	
<b>Clare Atkinson</b>	Lay representative	
<b>Charles Howlett</b>	Lay representative	
<b>Nadia Daly</b>	Lay representative	
<b>Peter Clackett</b>	Lay representative	
<b>Brenda Woodhead</b>	Lay representative	
<b>Karen Martin</b>	Lay representative	
<b>Sarah Ainsworth-Coles</b>	Lay representative	
<b>Louise Baneke</b>	Lay representative	
<b>Peter Whipday</b>	Lay representative	

**Representatives to the All Saints' Committee:**

**Ruth Murphy**  
**Helen Spencer**  
**Audrey Tridgell**  
**Lindsey Eardley**  
**Chris Wege**  
**Pat Dawson**  
**Maddie Murray**

