

Reports to St Mary Oatlands APCM 2017

1. Electoral Roll

- Unlike most reports, the Electoral Roll covers periods between APCMs, not per calendar year, as it affects those eligible to vote at the APCM
- Report was last presented at the APCM in 2016
- At that time, we had 157 on the roll
- Since 2015 APCM, the number of leavers and deceased has been assessed at 2
- We have had 6 applications to join the roll
- The roll now stands at 161

Mike Williams

Electoral Roll Officer for 2017

2. Fabric Report

- Building Project snagging list was fully attended to by Contractor
- Several roof leaks in main hall repaired but a major one between window frame and wall is evident and several repairs have not lasted long.
- Major leak in window overlooking stage (on office side) caused problems at the winter fair. A long-term solution is being sought as this had been repaired once.
- Flat roof 'garden' above kitchen, corridor and vestries removed as were the concrete slabs. Plaster in church office had become damp from water overflowing on the outside from the roof and become full of mildew so was removed and allowed to dry out before re-plastering is considered.
- A sound amplifier broke down preventing sound from reaching the nave affecting the organist and choir. This was replaced with a re-furbished unit.
- Numerous IT problems appeared with the office computers and fixes were made and some software updated but a serious review is considered necessary.
- All lights replaced in Nave prior to Christmas season.
- New gas heaters were fitted in the Main Hall in January 2016.
- Most fabric issues were handled by a combination of Parish Office and Mike until the appointment of Malcolm Groom (MG) as Fabric Officer in June 2016.
- Following MG's appointment:
 1. All defective bulbs in the Hall have been replaced (necessitating hire of a scaffold tower) and some serious de-cobwebbing accomplished
 2. All gutters, gullies and downpipes have been inspected and cleared (and an annual inspection instituted)
 3. Once cleared the Octagon roof has now been visually inspected and any vulnerable areas sealed with fibreglass reinforced acrylic resin
 4. The Hall roof adjacent to the Octagon has had the edge tiles repointed where necessary
 5. The leaking large window in the hall has been re-sealed
 6. Dead leaves at front of Hall, ivy from Octagon walls and intrusive lower branches at entrance have been removed.
 7. Minor internal repairs (door-closer to office, doorstops to ladies loo and kitchen have been replaced (thanks to Clive Monk!)
 8. The leaking stage window will be entirely replaced by modern PVC on April 10th .
 9. A plasterer has been contacted to quote for repairs to right side of Altar and interior Office wall
 10. **Outstanding** -spot light on stage needs replacement
 - Lady Chapel light fitment needs adjusting
 - Various Octagon fluorescent tubes need replacement
 - Any other issues identified by Quinquennial inspection –April 26th

Mike Williams/Malcolm Groom

Acting Fabric Officer/Fabric Officer

April 2017

3. Safeguarding Report

Hugh Montgomerie continues to act as Validator. During the last year, we have carried out six DBS [Disclosure and Barring Service] checks, of which four were repeat checks for Sunday Juniors leaders and two were checks on newly appointed Home Communion Assistants.

These two Assistants have also attended the required Safeguarding training courses.

As several people needed to attend Safeguarding training, which has to be repeated every three years and usually involves attending courses at Guildford, I arranged a half-day course on Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults at St Mary Oatlands in early February. In order to have a large enough group for the trainer's requirements, I opened the course to three adjacent parishes and we had attendees from St James, Weybridge and from St Peter's, Hersham. The course was useful and thought-provoking, and enjoyed by all who attended. I also attended the Diocesan Safeguarding Course, 'Responding Well,' in early March. Soon, there will be a new basic online Safeguarding Course which will need to be done by all those working with children and vulnerable adults, but, as yet, no details are available.

Anne Vrionides
Safeguarding Officer
April 2017

4. Health & Safety Report

- See separate Safeguarding Report above
- The Health & Safety sub-committee did not meet in 2016
- A practice fire evacuation was carried out at all main services. This is a requirement of our insurance and will become a regular activity.
- The smoke/fire monitors are professionally checked twice a year. These are located in the Halls.
- There were 2 incidents logged in the Accident Log Book for 2016. We should report any and all incidents in the log book (by the backdoor) so that we can learn from them.
- Routine visual checks are made of wiring circuits between 3 yearly formal checks.
- Failures to lock church premises properly still occur occasionally, largely through personnel failures rather than procedural failures. We will continue to monitor persistent 'offenders' and give them further training.
- A single worker Keyguard personal monitor is provided to Helen P in Parish Office to raise emergency alarms if necessary.

Mike Williams
Safety Officer
April 2017

5. Parish Office Report

Overview

Since May 2014 I have been the only paid member of *office* staff working in the office.

(Sue Jordan the *wedding coordinator* is based in the office on Thursday morning).

The parish office is a busy workplace, providing support to clergy, parishioners and people from outside the church, who come into our environment for various reasons.

It is necessary to liaise effectively and diplomatically with everyone to ensure that the desired outcome is achieved.

Day to day working of the office (This is by no means comprehensive).

General office administration includes filing/post/emails/telephone calls and responding to these as necessary and dealing with IT related issues. We experienced some pretty disruptive IT problems at the end of Dec 16/beginning of Jan 17. Thanks to Brian Stickland, Colin Blowers and Mike Williams for the considerable amount of time (and perseverance) they spent restoring a normal service.

The working of the office continues to be interrupted because it is a thoroughfare. Some serious thought needs to be given to providing a quieter working environment. Office Cleaning is carried out on a voluntary fortnightly rotation by Val Gadd. Sincere thanks to Val.

Baptism admin involves liaising with families of the candidates and Hugh Montgomerie, Jonathan Bridger and Rosalind Binns, ordering resources required for baptism, as well as making up the baptism preparation packs and ensuring all relevant certificates are issued. Baptism Families are also invited to Baptism Prep evenings. *A special mention must be made of Douglas Robertson who has, for many years kept the baptism register updated, in his perfect handwriting.*

Funerals through the Vacancy have involved liaising with Hugh Montgomerie, Undertakers, Verger (usually Ros Binns) and Jonathan Bridger.

Rotas are produced for:

Baptisms, 10am Readers, Intercessors (& producing the monthly Intercessions prepared by Francie McIlwraith) and the Thursday morning Holy Communion Service.

Admin for any Autumn courses and Confirmation courses.

Sourcing, ordering and putting into stock the office supplies.

I have tried with *very limited short* term success to recruit volunteers to keep the notice boards updated. I now tend to try and do this myself on a regular basis, giving priority to the notice board on Oatlands Avenue. Sourcing, ordering and putting into stock all the supplies for the kitchen and toilets.

Security concerns from 2016 have largely been addressed with a 'locking up procedure' being produced by Hugh Montgomerie to help those locking up the premises on Sundays after services, but there are still ongoing issues with some hall users that Mike Williams has in hand.

(**from 2016 report** "For some considerable time, security at SMO has been lax. I frequently get told that on arrival, people have found doors unlocked, open even and the alarm system not armed. Lights get left on etc. I send emails and try to follow through on all such notifications, but usually reach an inconclusive end. It is not unusual to learn that the door between the chapel and the vestry has been left unlocked after the weekend").

Going Forward A much mooted stud wall being built in the office to minimise disruption and enhance privacy did not materialise. This, or an alternative, should be reconsidered.

I am hopeful that 'making good' the inside wall under the office window will take place very soon.

The IT issues in early 2017 highlighted that we did not have any form of IT support in place. Colin Blowers produced a report on SMO computers/IT which concluded that when the new Vicar is in place this could be reassessed.

I am looking forward to supporting Reverend Folli (the 14th Vicar of Oatlands) in his task of taking St Mary Oatlands to its next chapter.

Thank You to everyone who has supported the Parish Office over the last twelve months.

Helen Penkethman.
Parish Office Coordinator
March 2017

6. **Deanery Synod Report**

Topics in 2016 continued on the theme of 'Growing churches'

'A church that makes prayer a priority'

The February meeting focused on prayer, using the paper 'A church that makes prayer a priority' as a basis for discussion. As is the usual format for Deanery synod meetings, we gathered in small groups to discuss what the prayer life was in our respective churches with feedback at the end. Following this, it was agreed that St. Mary's should discuss this topic at a future PCC meeting.

Thy Kingdom Come

Alan Hulme, Director of the Diocesan Parish Development and Evangelism Team, then gave a presentation on the Church of England's initiative to invite all churches to focus on prayer and take part in this event in the week leading up to Pentecost. The notes below are from the PCC follow up meeting and the resulting actions on both the above topics.

PCC notes -16th March 2016

Discussion: A Church that Makes Prayer a Priority

Hugh invited us to ask, silently, "What is Prayer?" His thought provoking words led to one conclusion that "Anyone who lives, prays."

Referring to the circulated document of the above name, the meeting was asked initially to rate SMO, out of 10, as "one in which prayer and listening to God, underpins church life and decisions." This proved to be a difficult question to answer and a thoughtful and interesting discussion took place during which the following points were made:

- Could we establish more/different opportunities for Prayer in our church? We already have the Chapel, the Prayer Board and the weekly Intercessory personal requests for prayer.
- Ann Blowers reported that, following the Deanery Synod presentation on "From Evidence to Action", the Worship Committee had agreed that she should set up Seven Prayer Stations in the Church from Thursday 13th – Monday 16th May. The church would be open for visits and private prayer. This would be SMO's contribution to "Thy Kingdom Come".
- Would it be possible to set up House Groups? Prayer breakfasts? A Prayer Curry?

The discussions were brought to a close as we read together Acts 2: 42- 47.

Following the discussion, it was recognised that we need to develop the prayer life at St. Mary's and there were several ideas for prayer activities (see above).

We set up the Prayer Stations for 'Thy Kingdom Come' in the Chapel. While there were few visitors, we hope such prayer events will become a regular part of our church life. Plans are in place for 2017.

One other action I have taken is to create a prayer space at the front of the church with prayer leaflets, books and other resources. Increasingly churches are setting aside areas in their church or even a 'Prayer Room' as a focus for prayer. Also, we are able to display some of the prayer activities from the 'ALIVE at 10' services here.

'Transforming Churches, Transforming Lives'

The main item for the October meeting was 'Transforming Churches, Transforming Lives', the Diocesan initiative for growth. All churches had seen the video produced by the Diocese and booklets were available with information about the twelve goals. Parishes were asked to respond by Easter 2017. Being in a Vacancy, our Parish Profile acts as our response, so we were not expected to take any action at this time.

Philip Plyming, the Area Dean, explained that he would like the parishes in the Deanery to work together on specific projects. After discussion in small groups, the feedback was strongly in favour of supporting goal three (Grow Youth & Children's Ministry) and goal ten (Sharing Expertise).

This matter will be taken forward to the next Deanery Synod meeting in February.

More information on this topic and the goals can be found on the Guildford Diocesan website; the link to this initiative is on the home page of St. Mary's website.

Ann Blowers
Deanery Synod Representative
April 2017

7. Pastoral Assistants

There is a team of five PAs, augmented by two recently trained Home Communion Assistants, who regularly take the Reserved Sacrament to those unable to attend church. Two care homes (Sunrise and Sutton Lodge) are visited monthly. The service to the Reminiscent floor at Sunrise was regrettably temporarily discontinued. Hospital visits are arranged as required.

On behalf of Ros Binns
Pastoral Assistant
April 2017

8. List of Readers

- **8am Service**
Ian Ferris, Rosalind Binns, David Erlam, John Winterbottom.
- **10am Service**
Anne Vrionides, Diane Keith, Robert Winterbottom, John Winterbottom, Jane Evans, Bruce Rogers,
Jane Ruddlesdin, Bernard Day, Petra Hickman, Richard & Frances Barker, Brian Brown.

Helen Penkethman.
Parish Office Coordinator

9. Intercessions Rota

Intercessors:

Bernard Day, Francie McIlwraith, Brian Brown, Darrell Greenwood, Sarah Miseldine, John Winterbottom, Rosalind Binns.

The Guildford Diocesan Calendar of Prayer comes out monthly and is available to download from the Diocese of Guildford website. Intercessions for our own Parish are prepared month by month and can be found on the table at the back of the church. We sincerely thank everyone who serves on this rota. The Intercessions are such an important part of our worship and would not be so inclusive or thoughtful without your help.

Helen Penkethman
Co-ordinator

10. Baptism Preparations

There were 11 sessions for 42 candidates in church and 3 private sessions for 5 candidates

Hugh Montgomerie
30th March 2017

11. Sides people at 8am, 10am & Baptism Services

- **8 am Service**
Ian Ferris, Rosalind Binns, David Erlam, David Cobbett, John Winterbottom.
- **10am Service**
Rosalind Binns, Edna Burrage, Liz Davies, Bernard Day, Helen de Fraine, Yvonne Ferrari, Petra Hickman, Malcolm Jeffreys, Helen Maloney, Howard Unsworth, John Winterbottom.
- **Baptism Services**
Rosalind Binns, Yvonne Ferrari

More Sides people are needed so that duty is not so frequent, especially as some people are also Readers, Intercessors, Servers or serve on the Tea/Coffee Rota as well. We are 3 short from our original Baptism team of 5 Sides people, so urgently need more volunteers for that service in particular. Please speak to me if you are willing to help in this respect.

Rosalind Binns
April 2017

12. Servers at 10am Service

Nancy Basham, Sarah Miseldine, Robert Winterbottom, Anna Reading, Yvonne Ferrari, Ray Newell
Assistant Servers Francis and Richard Barker

We were sad to lose James Davis when the family went to Dubai after Christmas, but are delighted that they have now returned to Oatlands and hope that James will be back "on the team," before long.

Nancy Basham
Co-ordinator
April 2017

13. Choir Report

As always, our stalwart choir members work hard during the year to bring varied items of music to the morning Eucharist, as well as several other services throughout the year, including many weddings and a few funerals. We appreciate the extra people who join us for the Christmas and Easter services.

If you would like to join our choir or know anybody who may be interested, then please contact either myself or any member of the choir. New members are always welcome.

Jonathan Bridger
Director of Music
April 2017

14. Bellringers' Report

In 2016 we rang the bells for the ten o'clock Sunday morning service 49 times out of a possible 52. We also rang for St George's Day and on Christmas Eve. There were no special anniversaries to celebrate this year.

Bell ringing was provided at nine weddings.

The band is still not numerically strong. We have had the same six or seven people ringing for several years, though we cannot depend on them all being available every Sunday. For weddings, we always try to have the full eight bells in action and this means we have to rely on the goodwill of ringers from other local churches to make up the number. We really could do with one or two more ringers.

We have yet to pursue the maintenance work which professional bell hangers recommended at their last inspection.

The lighting in the ringing chamber has always been poor. We are seeking quotations for improvements.

John Burnett
Tower Secretary
7 April 2017

15. Mission Report

In 2016 we continued to support our Mission Partners:

David & Rine Ingleby worked with the **Church Mission Society**. They returned to the UK in September. Sadly, the problems of bringing up two young children in Delhi forced them to return earlier than they had anticipated.

Captain John Marrow is an Evangelist with the **Church Army**. John works with children and young people in churches and schools in the Guildford area. John has started his Ordination training and combines studying with his work for the Church Army.

Our focus on World Leprosy Day in January was the **Leprosy Mission's** 'rebuild Nepal'. Our TLM Regional Manager, Rebecca Tennant, spoke about how Nepal was still suffering from the devastating earthquakes in 2015 and the urgent need to rebuild, particularly the damaged hospitals.

The speaker from **Bible Society** in July was Heather Clements, who spoke about her visit to Cambodia and the growth of churches in Asia.

In October, our Harvest project was **The Leprosy Mission's** appeal for fruit trees; these yield vitamin-packed food as well as making farmland more fertile.

Our Lent Lunches were held to support the **Bishop of Guildford's Lent Challenge**, raising money for the Bishop of Guildford's Foundation (50%), supporting local projects around Guildford, and the other 50% going to the Church Mission Society & USPG

We continue to collect food for the **Walton Charities Food Bank** with other local churches.

Other events included a Fish & Chip Supper and Quiz for **Christian Aid** and a Christingle Service for the **Children's Society**.

Donations of Boots gift vouchers at the Christmas Crib Service were given to the **Weybridge Sure Start Centre**.

We give additional help to mission agencies throughout the year by collecting the following -

- Stamps, postcards, foreign coins and other collectables for The Leprosy Mission.
- Printer cartridges for The Mission to Seafarers.
- Bibles, Christian books and Ladybird books for Book Aid.

Thank you to everyone who supported the appeals for the Mission Agencies during the year.

The decision by the PCC to reduce our Outward Giving tithing from 10% to 5% has meant that we were only able to give away £3,400 from our 2016 income. This means there is insufficient money to fund Mission Partners at the moment, as they require a commitment for several years.

Support for World Mission is very much part of the Diocesan initiative, 'Transforming church, Transforming lives', goal seven reads "Reaching Beyond Borders". It is disappointing therefore that at St. Mary's this has been relegated to a 'minority interest' in recent years, rather than being an integral part of our church life as it was in the past.

Ann Blowers
Missions Co-ordinator
April 2017

16. Worship Committee/Staff Meeting Report.

SMO Worship Committee first met on 10th November 2015 with Rev Steve Brunn in the Chair and Hugh, Ros, Ann B, Jonathan, Helen P and Helen S in attendance. As January 3rd was to be Steve's last Service, general plans for the Vacancy were outlined at this time. Regular monthly meetings have been held since then, with Brian Brown and John Winterbottom joining the team and Hugh in the Chair. In May 2016, it was decided to change the name of the meeting to Staff Meeting since, in the absence of a Vicar, we were tending to focus on organisational matters rather than theological ones. We are hoping to re-dress this balance in the coming months somehow.

These meetings have been invaluable in producing the smooth running of our services during the Vacancy thanks in no small part to the Monthly Service Rotas that Hugh, assisted by our Church Warden Mike Williams, have produced, detailing the Clergy and Readings for each Service plus any "Special" Services, Baptisms or Weddings that might be taking place. Lent, Easter, Harvest, Remembrance, Advent and Christmas Services have been planned, together with Services for the Queen's 90th Birthday, a Godparents' Sunday Service and our annual Lodge Bros. (undertakers) December Service. We have had a Choral Evensong as well as a Parish walk, organised on Rogation Sunday. There were three candidates for Confirmation. Two of our young people were confirmed at Holy Trinity, Claygate in May and one adult at St Mary's Walton in November.

We have highlighted the need for a Children's work Meeting to review the work we are already doing – Sunday Juniors, Family Praise, Alive at Ten, First Steppers, Smart Club plus Oatlands First School, Cleves Junior School and Walton Leigh School who all use the church for services and visit the church in small groups to learn about what is inside a church and why. We are also hoping to engage further with those who have had their children baptised at SMO. Unfortunately, ill-health rather scuppered these plans, but, happily, with full recovery these plans will be resumed.

We have considered the Bishop's Lent Call and other Deanery matters, we have organised a Church information visit for the Oatlands Beaver Group and Ann Blowers re-designed the "Welcome to St Mary's" Leaflet.

Helen Stickland
April 2017

17. Churches Together in Weybridge CTiW

This year has been rather difficult as 3 churches of the group have been in a vacancy. The 3 main events of the year were carried out, these are Women's World Day of Prayer, Walk of Witness and a Pentecost Service.

Weybridge Methodist Church runs a Clothes and Bedding Bank once a month with the help of the other churches. This has been well received and several Families have been helped.

Janet Evans and myself are St. Mary Oatlands representatives on the forum and hopefully we will soon have a few extra members with new ideas.

Helen de Fraine
CTiW Representative
March 2017

18. Wedding Administration

Our Wedding Season commenced on Saturday, 4th March with guests flying in from Canada and Germany and Jo and her team working overtime to prepare the Church to look its very best! The groom's parents are Parishioners and played a large part in organising the wedding for their son and his German wife. They became well known to all of us in the office. Our visiting retired Vicar, the Reverend Rod Jones (a very safe pair of hands) carried out the service and the wedding party were very complimentary about the whole Wedding.

So far this year, we have eleven confirmed Wedding bookings, one Renewal of Vows and one Wedding Blessing. However, it is still early days in terms of the Wedding Calendar and so more than likely that we will receive more bookings for the latter end of the year and maybe some Wedding Blessings as well.

St Mary Oatlands continues to be a very popular church for weddings, as not only does the Church itself offer a wonderful, holy ambience, but we are also able to provide reasonable car parking for the wedding party and guests, as well as attractive grounds for photographs after the wedding has taken place. When couples come to us, we want their day to be personal, meaningful, legally binding and beautiful. This need not cost them a fortune. Couples with children are also very welcome to marry in our church, in which case we suggest they hire one of the Halls to accommodate them if they should feel the need for a change of scene!

When a couple marries in church, it is a privilege for them to pay! They become part of a centuries old tradition by contributing financially to the ministry costs of their wedding. In so doing, they help sustain Christian service in that community. To simply marry in church, everything that is legally required costs just £424. This basic fee is set by the Church of England nationally. However, at St Mary Oatlands we do encourage our couples to use the Verger, who ensures that the church is clean and tidy for their wedding and I always suggest that they should not stint on the Choir and Bellringers.

A good marriage service begins months beforehand and it is the Wedding Administrator's role to see to all the paperwork from the first initial enquiry, right through to the successful completion of the wedding itself. An updated Wedding List is regularly circulated to all Church Members involved in weddings, as well as the Church Diary being kept up to date. There is also constant liaison with the Musical Director, Vergers, Bell Captain and Church Florist to ensure nothing is missed.

Following an enquiry (usually made by the bride to be), the couple are sent a Banns of Marriage Application Form (with accompanying notes on how to complete same) and a Qualifying Connection Form to return and complete. If either (or both) of the couple has been married before, then they are asked to speak to the Clergy before proceeding further and if deemed acceptable for them to marry at St Mary Oatlands, then we ask them to fill in a Marriage in Church after Divorce Form.

Qualifying connections are as follows:-

- 1) That one of the couple:-
 - Has at any time lived in the Parish for a period of at least six months
 - Was baptised in the Parish
 - Was prepared for confirmation in the Parish
 - Has at any time regularly gone to normal church services in the Parish Church
- 2) Or that one of their parents at any time after they were born:-
 - Has lived in the Parish for a period of at least six months
 - Has regularly gone to normal church services in the parish for a period of at least six months
- 3) Or that one of their parents or grandparents was married in the Parish.

At the same time as sending out these forms, we ask all couples, whatever their circumstances, to send us a cheque for the sum of £200 to secure the booking. Included in this amount is £50 for attending one of our Marriage Preparation Courses.

We try and make sure that every couple getting married at St Mary Oatlands attends one of these Courses to enable them to achieve a life-long partnership. We are planning to hold our next Course at the end of May.

Just for the record, last year the Clergy carried out ten Weddings between them. It is also most encouraging to note that we already have 3 confirmed Wedding bookings for 2018.

Once the forms listed above have been received along with a cheque, we send the couple a Wedding Pack which contains relevant information to enable them to plan their Wedding at St Mary Oatlands. At this stage we also indicate when their Banns of Marriage will be read and if one or other live outside the parish, then remind them to contact their own parish to have their Banns read there and obtain a Banns Certificate. Banns are when their names are read in church according to a legal custom. On these occasions, everyone in the Church will be praying for them. It can be very special and moving and we ask each couple to attend at least one of the readings.

Banns of Marriage are read over three consecutive Sundays 12 weeks before the wedding day. It is up to the Wedding Administrator to write Banns dates and details in the Banns Publication Book the week before the first Sunday they are to be read. A note is also put in the Church Register for each Sunday that Banns are to be read. If the couple are marrying out of the parish, then a Banns Certificate needs to be written up and given or sent to them after the third reading of the Banns. One great benefit from this, is that the requirement for a certificate encourages people into the Church and they usually enjoy the service so much that they continue to attend.

We also ask for some indication of which of our additional services they might require – ie Organ/Organist, Choir, Bells/Bellringers and Church Florist and of course we need to know if they intend to have a video of the Wedding.

Approximately four months before the wedding, we ask the couple to liaise directly with the Vicar to arrange a meeting to sort out their particular details – especially the Order of Service, which must be approved prior to going to print – and also to pencil in a rehearsal date (usually the night before the actual wedding). We will also ask them to communicate directly with our Musical Director, Jonathan Bridger, to sort out what music they will require for the Marriage Service and if flowers are required, then we will ask them to telephone our church florist, Jo Paines. In the few cases where an outside florist is being used, then we ask for a questionnaire to be completed by them, which is then passed to Jo to check the arrangements are acceptable.

About six weeks before the wedding, a statement of accounts is produced for the bride and we ask her or a nominated member of her family to come into the Parish Office to settle up. The entire amount outstanding is required to be settled by cheque at least one month prior to the marriage taking place.

The Wedding Administrator fills in and completes all the Marriage Certificates, Registers and Returns prior to the Marriage Service. Marriage Returns are delivered by hand to the Registrar in Oatlands Drive every quarter.

Finally, Wedding Administration continues to take place in the Parish Office on a Thursday morning between 9am and 12 noon.

Sue Jordan
Wedding Administrator
April 2017

19. First Steppers' Report

Ros Binns and I run First Steppers every Friday in term time. It takes the form of a religious service for toddlers, and often their baby siblings. It comprises 2 prayers, thought for the day, religious songs with percussion, a birthday candle, a story and an activity based on the story. This is followed by drinks and biscuits in the Octagon. It takes place between 10.30 and 12 o'clock.

It has become a close-knit group with a corps of ladies who have been with me in some cases for 10 years. Our numbers are now small and in many ways, I blame this on the difficulty we had with parking since the hall is now let to a baby sensory group that starts earlier that day so that when my group arrived there was no room to park in the church car park. Also, though many attempts have been made to reach a wider group through the baptisms and children's services, this has not happened.

Kim Groom
First Steppers Co-ordinator
April 2017

20. Sunday Juniors Report

Sunday Juniors are held on the 2nd, 4th & 5th (if there is one!) Sundays in the month during school term time. The leaders are Philippa King, Darrell and Rita Greenwood, Jenny Reading, Amy Lacey, Ed Salter and I. We continue to follow the liturgy suggested in the Roots Magazine to which all leaders have access. This liturgy usually correlates to that being used in the 10 am service. The children and their leaders leave the church after the first hymn and a blessing and go to the Octagon where they participate in a short Bible story (frequently the Gospel reading for the day) and linked activities returning in time to receive a blessing at the Altar during Communion. They enjoy coming out to the front to recount what they have been doing and we are enormously grateful to the small band of leaders who prepare and deliver this important part of our Church Children's Work.

Decreasing regular attendance continues to be a worry, although we have been blessed with one new family. Church activities on a Sunday morning seem to permanently clash with sports commitments. Unfortunately, because of the health problems I have had since the last APCM, (now thankfully resolved!) scheduled Leaders' meetings have had to be cancelled. We will endeavour to redress this omission as soon as possible. Pippa King continues to organise the Leaders' Duty Rota, for which we thank her.

On the 3rd Sunday in the month, there is always an activity for the Children related to the theme of the Alive at Ten Service. We are indebted to Claire Goodfellow for her organising of these activities in the Children's Corner and to those who help her. On the 1st Sunday in the month and during holidays, I endeavour to provide suitable activities in the Children's Corner, for the younger members of our congregation to engage in during the service. However, I cannot manage to cover all these Sundays, so more helper volunteers would be greatly appreciated.

My last paragraph is a copy from last year!! "Our mission is to get more children involved, so please encourage any youngsters living around you to come along. We must also be mindful of the need for a suitable "follow up" group to Sunday Juniors. Please give this your prayerful attention. An organised Creche would also be a great advantage."

Our grateful thanks go out to all who help or contribute in some way to Sunday Juniors.

Helen Stickland
Sunday Juniors Co-ordinator
April 2017

21. Family Praise Services

Family Praise Services, usually on the first Sunday in the month, have continued to give me enormous pleasure as we endeavour to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ in many and varied ways and, so I am told, have been very well received by all the participants who range in age from new-born to those of rather more senior years!

The format of the service has remained much the same: the children particularly like the percussion instruments, action songs, dramatized reading/story, Prayer Candle, Messy Grace and concluding "activity" where we record the theme of our service in our Memories Book. If you get the opportunity, please have a look at this anthology of the children's work: we are now into our second book!! It is always on display in front of the Chapel at the 10am Service on Family Praise Sundays.

Over the last twelve months we have focused on the Palm Sunday, Easter, Harvest and Christmas stories, together with the Good Samaritan, Jesus and the Taxman, the Prodigal Son, then back to the beginning again with Creation, Adam and Eve, Noah's Ark, Abraham and Isaac and Moses in the Bulrushes.

Attendance has kept to an average of 20 adults and 18 children, but our register shows two or three times this number on roll. Regular attendance is very difficult for young families these days. Sunday morning school/sport activities continue to affect attendance and I continue to agonise on whether we are meeting at the most convenient time for optimum attendance.

I made a start trying to keep in touch with those who been christened/baptised at St Mary's, as well as those who attend First Steppers and SMART Club, but time has beaten me and I need to "do better next year!" Family Praise would not happen without the wonderful support from my wonderful friends and helpers. They register everyone in, are happy to make fools of themselves if necessary in the dramatised readings, they supervise the children's closing activity and, most important of all, they help clear up afterwards and pack up my car. What would I do without you all?

If you haven't been to a Family Praise Service yet, please try and come soon. I am sure you'll enjoy it and you might have some ideas as to how we might make improvements!!

Helen Stickland
April 2017

22. "ALIVE at 10"

The ALIVE at 10 services have been running since October 2014, following the PCC's agreement that we needed an informal service that was accessible to younger families, and to people with little or no regular contact with the church. Generations growing up now are unfamiliar with traditional liturgy and many surveys have shown that these age groups are unlikely to attend formal services. The aim of all-age worship is that everyone should be able to participate fully; this includes children and it has been encouraging to see them taking an active part in the services.

Each service has a theme and includes elements such as dramatised readings, sketches and creative prayer activities. The visual elements are important and we use Power-point and video clips throughout the services. In 2016, these included Palm Sunday and Pentecost and other services for Bible Sunday and Advent. We also moved our Harvest celebration to the September slot as a comment from the Brownie/Guide leaders suggested a service without communion would be more suitable for the girls, so we were pleased to see a number of them present and joining in.

I would like to thank all those who have helped at these services in any way, especially to Hugh who took over leading the services when Steve left, to Jonathan for his musical versatility and to Claire Goodfellow for her hard work in planning crafts with the children. I would also like to thank all those who have been willing to take part with readings, prayers, drama and particularly the sketches, which have been very well received.

We were pleased to welcome our Archdeacon, the Venerable Paul Bryer & his wife Fiona, to the January service this year (Epiphany). Paul led the service and was happy to join with the children in their activities; he also enjoyed the hot chocolate after the service (thanks to Janet Williams for this). Paul was very encouraging at the time and later referred to it, in the presence of Bishop Andrew, as a 'great service'. Paul recognised that we clearly have problems with an out-of-date audio-visual system and was pleased to hear that the faculty has been granted to install a projector and screen. He also recommended that we re-order the church and remove the pews, to make a more versatile worship space. This is the way churches are being encouraged to go, to have church buildings fit for the 21st Century – see goal twelve of 'Transforming church, Transforming lives'.

Thank you to those who have been supportive of these services, and particularly for the encouraging comments. **Ann Blowers April 2017**

23. Open the Book

September 2016 saw the beginning of our fourth year of visiting Cleves School on a monthly basis for our Open the Book Assembly and in the last twelve months we have been privileged to share Open the Book Bible stories with staff and pupils of years 3 and 4 eleven times. Back in July 2016, I shared in the Cleves School Leavers' Service in our Church, a truly inspiring Service and was just a little emotional remembering that our first Year 3 audience for Open the Book in Sept 2013, were now about to leave the school! I feel very lucky and blessed to have such a wonderful working relationship with Cleves, especially with their dedicated staff, head and deputy and I mustn't forget the Reception Staff without whom I would have been totally lost, on more than one occasion!!

I have a wonderful team of adult "storytellers" and have been thrilled to welcome several newcomers in the last twelve months. We have continued to involve one particular class as our "helpers" for the monthly story. Apart from playing some of the main characters in the story, they have been animals e.g. Noah's Ark, Christmas Story, Prodigal Son or soldiers or "the crowd" plus the "noises off!" They love dressing up and, as in Family Praise, tea-towels are our "stock in trade" for this purpose!!

We are dependent on the school for the timing of our visits which, this academic year, have been on a Tuesday afternoon. Ideally, we would like to involve Oatlands Infant School and Walton Leigh School in this scheme, but my time is too limited. If anyone else feels inspired to join me in organising this outreach, please have a word with me. Whatever happens, I would ask you all, please, to keep this work in your thoughts and prayers.

It is so wonderful to hear the children say things like "Oh, good, it's Open the Book Assembly today" or for them to introduce members of the team to their parents if they meet in the street. I have so many smiling young friends greeting me now as I go about from day to day – it is a real tonic!!

If you would like to attend one of the Cleves Assemblies yourself and experience an Open the Book Assembly first-hand, please let me know. I am sure you would feel really uplifted as I do each time, and you just *might* want to take part on another occasion?

Helen Stickland
Open the Book Co-ordinator
April 2017

24. SMART Playgroup

Overview

2016 has been another positive year for the SMART Group. Kay Roberts ran the group for the first two terms, and handed over to me at the end of July. Numbers remained fairly steady during the spring and summer terms, with 15 families on average attending the group on a weekly basis. This increased to 18 during the autumn term. To encourage new families to come to our lovely playgroup, I designed new posters and, to ensure retention, I set up a Facebook page, which most families have embraced. On this page, we share photographs and useful information.

Playgroup Sessions and Activities

The format of the playgroup sessions remains unchanged and we continue to offer a mix of free play and craft activities with singing at the end of the session. Parents and Carers regularly comment on the friendly and welcoming atmosphere at SMART and we are delighted that families seem to really enjoy attending the group.

Claire Goodfellow has continued to run our arts and crafts sessions for us and these remain immensely popular, with a variety of creative and messy play activities for the children to have fun with. We would like to say a big 'thank you' to Claire for the fantastic craft work that she does, and to the various playgroup members who help with setting up and clearing away each week.

As in previous years the children had fun helping to decorate the side chapel of the church for the Christmas festivities. We also held our usual summer and Christmas parties which were very much enjoyed by the children as always.

Refreshment Rota

Petra has been doing a fantastic job in helping us provide drinks and refreshments each week. Popcorn remains a popular SMART tradition! We are as grateful for Petra's help as we would not be able to run our playgroup sessions without her. We were also delighted to receive additional support from Judy during the autumn term prior to her move away from the area. Since then, Petra has continued to support us on her own, which is a big commitment. Whilst we continue to appreciate her input hugely, we feel this is a lot to ask of one person and would be very grateful for an additional church volunteer to work with Petra on the Rota if at all possible?

Revenue and Expenditure

Our weekly charge remains £2 per session per family and revenue levels remained steady during the spring and autumn terms, with a dip in the summer.

SMART aims to donate as much money as possible to St Mary Oatlands Church as well as to Charities, once general running costs are taken care of. Whilst our numbers remain lower than in previous years, we continue to spend less money on arts and craft sessions as we have a good stock of materials to use, and regularly receive donations of good-quality toys. As a result, the majority of our expenditure continues to be for refreshments and we have continued to raise a reasonable amount of money to give away in donations.

Donations and Charity Fundraisers

SMART gave away £1000 in donations to charitable causes during 2016. Please see breakdown below:

St Mary Oatlands Church (spring, summer and autumn term donations)	£650
Sport Relief (spring term donation)	£100
Great Ormond Street Hospital (summer term donation)	£ 75
Crisis at Christmas (autumn term donations)	£45
UNICEF (autumn term donations)	£130

TOTAL **£1000.00**

Plans for 2017

Over the next few months I will also be preparing to hand over the running of the group to a new coordinator. An advert for this position is being advertised internally, at Weybridge Children Centre and in The Family Grapevine magazine.

Charlie Tillin
SMART Playgroup Co-ordinator
March 2017

25. Not Just Sundays

This social group has continued to meet every couple of months. The varied program included a visit to the Isabella Plantation in the Spring and a Guided Walk around Historic Guildford. We have noticed the popularity of food and drink being included, such as the morning at The Medicine Garden and the wonderful Lunchtime Concert at the Riverhouse Barn by The Clare Scholars. We hope this year's programme will continue to appeal. As always, everyone is welcome and please feel free to invite friends and neighbours. It is a great way to get to know fellow parishioners and offer friendship to others.

Liz Davies
Co-ordinator
March 2017

26. Meeting Point

Wed. 27th January – John Banks talked about SHOOTING STAR CHASE CHARITY
Wed. 24th February – Paul Whittle showed slide show of his ALASKAN ADVENTURE
Wed. 23rd March – John Pulford discussed the Locke King Family and BROOKLANDS
MUSEUM
Wed. 27th April – FRIENDS IN HARMONY entertained us led by choir member Gill Strange
MAY - COACH OUTING – 11th May – to ROYAL HOSPITAL CHELSEA Tour and Cream Tea
Wed. 25th May – Charlotte Ager tested our knowledge of HOLLYWOOD GREATS with a
QUIZ
Wed. 22nd June – SPLENDID REFLECTIONS organised by Helen Stickland
Wed. 27th July – SUMMER PARTY – sponsored by BUPA Sutton Lodge
AUGUST – STRAWBERRY TEA in Church Garden – shared with PCC
Wed. 28th September – Trevor Sapey described the MARY ROSE's new home in Portsmouth
Wed. 26th October – Dan Farrant – MAGICIAN!
Wed. 23rd November – Vicky and Zoe of Mackrell Turner Garrett discussed L.P.A's/wills
Mon. 12th December – CHRISTMAS LUNCH at the OATLANDS PARK HOTEL

We are pleased to report that Meeting Point continues to be popular with its members, with a healthy turnout of about 40 people each time. The format of a lunch before a talk or entertainment seems to work very well. One of the team gives a Christian Thought for the Day too. We go through the What's On and include birthdays and church services. There are lovely cards for sale at great prices and the occasional raffle raises funds to spend on subsidising outings. Volunteers offer their services to shop, prepare the food, set up the hall, run the dishwasher and give lifts. On a good day we have as many as 15 volunteers... HOWEVER, we will need new helpers to come forward to keep the same level of support so that no-one is over-worked. So PLEASE ask around if any of your friends would like to come forward just once a month to help!

Jane Ruddlesdin
Meeting Point Co-ordinator
March 2017

27. Bible Reading Group

There are presently only 6 members remaining who subscribe to the New Daylight booklets for daily Bible Reading, which is the minimum for ordering the booklets at a group price. We did start off with 8 members at the beginning of the year, 1 member sadly having passed away and the other taking a break after many years. Hopefully, I can bring the group back to at least 8 members.

Petra Hickman
BRF Group

28. Caring and Sharing Group

The Caring and Sharing Group pray for about 30 people who have either requested this or someone else has requested it for them. We always confirm that the recipient likes to have this.

The group meets once a month to keep up to date with the situation of those for whom we pray and add new people or subtract where necessary. Many find great comfort in the support they know they are getting

Francie McIlwraith
Co-ordinator

29. Flower Arrangers' Report

Weddings:

For the first time in many years, the Flower Team was not required to arrange any wedding flowers this year. Most brides chose their own florists or did not request any flowers.

Festivals:

Easter, Harvest and Christmas are, of course, very busy times for the team. I would like to thank the congregation for their very generous donations towards the cost of the flowers on these occasions.

On Mothering Sunday Posies were made by a small group of church ladies and one Family Praise Mother and daughter. The Brownies and other young children were unable to attend on a Saturday morning because of other commitments. We hope to arrange an afternoon time next year to avoid this clash.

My sincere thanks go to all the Flower Team ladies who work so hard to make SMO look so special.

If there are any budding flower arrangers reading this report who would like to be involved in the Flower Arranging please phone me on 01932 225456 or see me in church after 10am Sunday service.

Many thanks.

Jo Paines
April 2017

30. Sunday Morning Coffee

Members of the congregation have enjoyed the Sunday morning get together over coffee and biscuits and sometimes even extra treats! A welcome opportunity to socialise and make friends. Your generous donations are a welcome contribution to church funds. As organiser, I particularly wish to thank the many volunteer helpers who give of their time so generously!

Petra Hickman
Sunday Morning Refreshment Organiser

31. Lettings - Church Hall & Octagon

The total revenue received for the year under review was £29,956, an increase over last year of over £3,000. This revenue mainly came from regular users: Baby Sensory, Slimming World, Jack & Jill Toddler Group, A Cappella Singers, Monkey Music, Toddler Tango, Move a Muscle, After the Bell homework club and Pilates. The Hall is also used for Children's Parties. We do not have much availability for many other bookings with the usual internal church bookings taking some sessions.

We are due to increase our hire charges from September 2017 in line with inflation

Helen de Fraine
March 2017

32. Winter Fair

Thanks to great teamwork and a lot of enthusiastic input from many people, the Winter Fair was, once again, a very enjoyable day and a successful fund raising effort. We have done well to keep up our traditional high standards in providing a wonderful range of things to do and buy, and I hope we will do just as well in 2017. The best part of the day is really to see the way we work as a community, because that is what makes it such a good occasion. It is not all about raising the most money on a stall, although that is obviously important, because some of the smaller profit makers are valued and sought out by regular customers and it is lovely to see some faces return to our fair each year in pursuit of marmalade or wrapping paper!

It is also important to have a few new ideas in the mix, and we have been very grateful to the Guides for the work they do each year. (We will miss them in 2017 now they have ceased to meet through lack of leadership.) We have traditionally welcomed a few charity stalls, which add variety.

A good way to increase our income would be to increase the sale of advertising in the programme pages and increase the effort to sell programmes in advance to friends, families and neighbours. I am hoping for your support in expanding this aspect for the next event, so please start thinking about who could be approached to place adverts next time.

There are too many people to thank individually, but without the work of Helen Penkethman, the Fair could not happen! Finally, a very big thank you to all of you – you just need to do it all again in December!

Janet Evans
Winter Fair Co-ordinator

33. Thursday Morning Prayers and 10.30am Service

One of our first pro-active steps at the beginning of the Vacancy was to start a weekly Prayer Group at 9am on a Thursday morning when prayers could be offered primarily for help and guidance from God as we journeyed through this uncertain time in the life of our church. A bookmark was produced together with a small book of prayers which were used on this occasion so that those who were unable to join us at 9am could share them during their own private prayer time. Between 6 and 8 of us have met fairly regularly, taking it in turns to lead and, since Folli's appointment, we have continued to meet, giving thanks for Folli and praying for him and his wife, Patricia and daughter, Emma. These times of prayer have been so valuable to us all and we sincerely hope that they, or something similar, will be continued.

The Pastoral Assistants often held their bi-weekly meetings after the Prayers. At 10.30am, the Thursday morning Communion Service took place concluding with refreshments for all in attendance. This Service is much appreciated by those in attendance. It has a beautiful calm, peaceful and reverend atmosphere and we are blessed to have Hugh and Ros available to lead these services. Thank you to all those who contribute to this lovely service.