



St Mary's Church Wargrave
With Knowl Hill

**THE PARISH OF WARGRAVE WITH KNOWL HILL
PARISH REPORTS**

For the Year

2017

**ANNUAL PARISH MEETING
and
ANNUAL PAROCHIAL MEETING**

**To be held in St Mary's Church, Wargrave
on
Monday, April 16th 2018
at 8.00 p.m.**

(Preceded by Refreshments at 7.30 p.m.)

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MINUTES OF THE MEETING FOR THE ELECTION OF CHURCHWARDENS, AND THE ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING OF THE PARISH OF WARGRAVE WITH KNOWL HILL HELD ON MONDAY 24th APRIL 2017 IN ST. MARY'S CHURCH AT 8.00 P.M.

About 45 members of the congregation were present. Before the meeting, refreshments were served.

Meeting for Election of Churchwardens

Salomé Laschinger and Christine Walker had previously been proposed and seconded for Wargrave, and Sandra Baker and David Manning for Knowl Hill. There being no other nominations, the four above named were unanimously declared elected as churchwardens.

The Vicar thanked the Churchwardens for all their work in supporting the life of the church.

1. **The Annual Parochial Church Meeting** commenced with readings from Joshua 1 v 6-9 and Hebrews 13 v 5> on being strong and courageous, followed by prayer.
2. **Apologies**
Apologies for absence were received from Sandra Baker, Jon Edgell, Julia Freeman, Richard and Barbara Lloyd, Jimmie and Serena Remnant, Margaret Tumber and Ann Whittaker.
3. **Minutes of Parochial Church Meeting 18th April 2016**
The minutes of last year's meeting were reviewed and agreed (*Doug Clark and Salomé Laschinger*) *nem con*.
4. **Vicar's Report**
The Vicar's report is included in the published Parish Reports document, page 11. Our calling as Christian Individuals and corporately as the Body of Christ was highlighted encouraging us to know this more in our Church family so that it is recognised in the wider parish community.
This was supplemented by two summary slides noting the highlights of 2016 and the Priorities for 2017. A copy of these headlines is annexed to these minutes.
There were no questions and the report was received.
5. **Electoral Roll**
Richard Lloyd, the Electoral Roll Officer, informed the meeting that there were now 261 members on the combined electoral roll (Wargrave, 229, Knowl Hill 32). This represented an increase of 8 on the number on the roll in 2016. Members of the Churches' congregations are encouraged to apply to join the Roll – as the Vicar uses it as the basis for his daily prayer for the Parish.
6. **Financial Report for the year 2016**
Jane Wills gave an overview of the Parish finances for 2016 – the accounts had been distributed beforehand and on the website - a copy of her presentation is also available there, as well as her Annual Report included with the Parish Reports document.
The general (unrestricted) account showed a surplus of £22,074. This reflected an overall decrease in income of 12% on the previous year due to changes in the allocation of the Parish Share assessment and it not being a Village Festival year, coupled with a reduction in expenditure of 8%.
The accounts were accepted *nem con*.

The appointment of Paul Worthington as our Independent Examiner, proposed by Andy Ferguson and seconded by David Williams, was approved *nem con*.
7. **Parish Composition**
Following a presentation by Andy Ferguson, highlighting the unrepresentative share of PCC Membership places between Wargrave and Knowl Hill, it was proposed that the PCC representation should be changed for the year 2018-2019 from 13 to 16 elected members for Wargrave and from 5 to 2 elected members for Knowl Hill. Proposed by Steve Turville, seconded by Bill Haines this was approved with 43 votes for and 2 abstentions.

Co-opted membership to stay the same.

8. **PCC Reports**

The statutory parish report, which is bound with the accounts, gives a full account of the membership of the PCC and an overview of its work during the year.

Reports of the activities and plans of the Churchwardens were also included in the Parish Reports document.

9. **Elections and Appointments**

Election of Deanery Synod Representatives

Brian Griffin stood down from the Deanery Synod and Richard Lloyd was nominated in his place.

As there were no further nominations, the 5 places were filled.

The five representatives (who are also ex-officio members of the PCC) continue for one more year:

Sue Griffiths	Richard Lloyd	David Manning	Steve Turville	Sheila Williams
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Election of Parochial Church Council (13 lay members for Wargrave, and 5 for Knowl Hill)

With 17 Nomination Papers received for Wargrave it was agreed the Andy Ferguson would be nominated for Knowl Hill and Angela Thomas, Haydn Selwyn-Jones (Secretary) and Jane Wills (Treasurer) would stand down from their nominations with a view to being co-opted to PCC membership.

Wargrave:

Bob Austin	Amanda Bayley	Mike Buckland	Linda Carradine	Michael Carver
Doug Clark	Amy Goodall-Smith	Verna Houghton	Andrew Imlay	Karen Lloyd
Peter Mayes	Lesley Turville	Sue Witney		

Knowl Hill and Warren Row:

Andy Ferguson	Bill Haines
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Proposed by Jane Wills, seconded by Peter Mayes, the election of the above was approved *nem con*.

Appointment of Sidesmen

Wargrave:

Bob Austen	Tessa Baird	Michael Carver	John Coombes	Julia Freeman
Brenda Keast	Guy Laschinger	Barbara Lloyd	Sue Mackenzie	Peter Mayes
Sue Mayes	Tony Moul	Neill Pitcher	Marion Pope	Michael Pope
Lloyd Scrivener	Margaret Snell	Angela Thomas	Christine Walker	Tony Wilson
Ann Woodward				

Proposed by Sheila Williams, seconded by Mike Buckland and approved *nem con*.

Knowl Hill and Warren Row:

Valerie Charlton	Brian Griffin	Jim Hadden	Christopher Westacott	David Manning
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Proposed by Bill Haines, seconded by Steve Turville and approved *nem con*.

10. **Strategy Team Reports**

The reports of the two Strategy Teams had been included in the published Parish Reports document; the work of these teams and their regular undertaking of detailed topics on behalf of the PCC were noted.

11. **Ministry Team Reports**

The reports of the eight Ministry Teams had been included in the published Parish Reports document; the work of these teams and their regular undertaking of detailed topics on behalf of the PCC were noted. There followed some discussion and explanation of topics addressed within these reports.

In particular:-

Pastoral Care Team is progressing with Home Communion and Safeguarding the elderly.

Mission Team – Verna Horton reported that work on ticket sales for Brass on the Grass was progressing well.

Stewardship Team – Andrew Imlay advised that the Stewardship Campaign was beginning in May to catch up on the current status of 40% of regular giving.

Children, Youth and Families Team has been impacted by the loss of Steve Cooper and 2 leaders for the Sunday Club and the main drive is currently for leadership for the groups.

Mill Green – John Fryer commented on the need for a new mower due to the issues with grass collection on the current mower. Andy Ferguson suggested asking the Festival Committee for help in funding a new mower.

Comment was made on the reports in general could be improved by showing a measure of activity.

12. St Mary's 21C Accommodation Project

Nick Rule presented a brief, but positive, overview on the progress of the project.

13. Any other business

None

14. Prayer

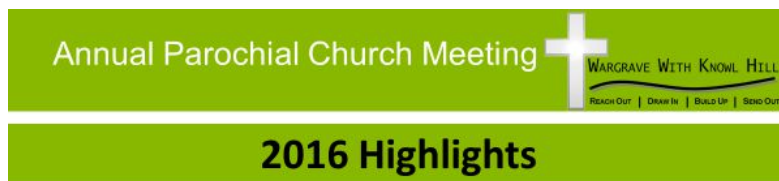
There being no other business, the Vicar closed the meeting at 9.35 pm with prayer.

*Haydn Selwyn-Jones
Hon Secretary to the PCC*

Annexes

1. Highlights and Priorities

Headline presentation by Salomé Laschinger APCM 24th April 2017



Life, Christianity & Discipleship Explored

Digging Deeper

Marriage Course

New people

Heartful Praise

Growth in house groups

Outreach to teenage group & schools

7



Integration

**Reaching out to parents
with school age children**

Stewardship

Annexe

Website

Growing disciples

8

PARISH ANNUAL REPORT 2017: PCC REPORT

(In order to avoid duplication of information, this is a shortened version of the formal report which is published with the Annual Accounts)

After the Annual Meeting in April 2017, the following served as members of the PCC (“K” denotes a person elected by the parishioners of St. Peter’s Knowl Hill, “W” a person elected by the parishioners of St. Mary’s Wargrave).

Incumbent: The Revd. John Cook
(Chairman)

Curates The Revd. Hugh Barne
The Revd. Steve Turville
(Both from 2nd June '17)

Churchwardens:

W Mrs Salomé Laschinger
W Mrs Christine Walker
K Mrs Sandra Baker
K Mr David Manning

Elected Members

W Mr Robert Austen
W Mrs Amanda Bayley
W Mr Mike Buckland
W Mrs Linda Caradine
W Mr Michael Carver
W Mr Doug Clark
W Mrs Amy Goodall-Smith
K Mr Andy Ferguson
K Mr Bill Haines
W Mrs Verna Houghton
W Mr Andrew Imlay
W Ms Karen Lloyd
W Mr Peter Mayes
W Mrs Lesley Turville
W Mrs Susan Witney

Representatives on the Deanery Synod

W Mrs Sue Griffiths
W Mr Richard Lloyd
K Mr David Manning
W Mr Steve Turville *(until 2nd June 2017)*
W Mrs Sheila Williams

Co-opted by the PCC

W Mr Haydn Selwyn-Jones *(PCC Secretary)*
W Mrs Angela Thomas
W Mrs Jane Wills *(Treasurer)*

The PCC met 6 times during the year with an average attendance of 78%. Committees/Ministry Teams met between meetings, and their meeting minutes were received by the full PCC and their recommendations to be discussed and acted upon.

COMMITTEES - Following a series of Visioning meetings held in the middle of the year four main leadership teams were set up:-

1. The Ministry Team - made up of our Incumbent, Assistant Curates, Lay Minister and Youth Worker being responsible for our worship, preaching and teaching, occasional offices, school visits in the Parish, reaching out into the Parish, especially to families, the youth and delivering pastoral care to the sick and elderly.
2. The Support Team - encompassing Steward-ship, Church buildings, Graveyards and Mill Green.
3. The Outreach Team - responsible for the Church’s growing activities out into the Parish as a whole, to families, the elderly and to the youth.
4. Knowl Hill Strategy Team – responsible for developing and implementing a community-based plan for Knowl Hill based on extending church worship, integrating with school life, and organising social and fund-raising events.

The Mission Team, supporting out of Parish and overseas Mission, and the Eco-Church Team are both now standalone teams.

Haydn Selwyn-Jones
(PCC Secretary)

PARISH ANNUAL REPORT 2017: PARISH STATISTICS

	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011
Communicants for the year St. Mary's	3633	3891	4089	4182	4029	3742	3565
Communicants for the year St. Peter's & St. Paul's	260	162	252		387	771	833
Baptisms	23	16	5	26	23	11	15
Thanksgiving for birth	0	1	-	1	-	1	-
Funerals/Memorial Services/Cremations/Ashes	27	36	30	31	32	52	49
Weddings	6	5	7	8	10	13	9
Services of Blessing for Marriage	3	1	-	2	3	2	-
Confirmations	0	1	-	4	-	-	-
Thanksgiving for Marriage	1	2	-	-	-	1	-

PARISH ANNUAL REPORT 2017: CHURCH TREASURER'S REPORT

2017 was a much more successful year than was envisaged at the time of my last annual report – showing a surplus of £44,656 on 'normal activities' compared with a surplus of £18,298 in 2016. This result is looking at the day to day activities of the church – with income generated from stewardship, collections, donations and fund-raising, etc, and the total costs of the day to day administration and ministry of the church, and the maintenance of its properties and churchyards.

Each year we examine our costs and implement whatever savings we can, but the element that most importantly influences our result is the continuity of the income stream from our church family. Stewardship income (excluding gift aid tax recovered) ended the year at £106,662, an increase of 15.6% over the 2016 total of £92,288. This is testament to the generosity of our parishioners, and to the success of the campaign run by Andrew Imlay to increase our regular giving in the light of the increased costs which need to be covered. Gift aid recovery was up on the previous year (as a result of this higher income figure). Church collections were slightly decreased at £24,387– around £179 lower than 2016.

Fund raising, excluding the 21st Century Appeal, amounted to £20,676 compared with £4,626 last year due to the additional gross income from the events run during the Festival. Fees from weddings and funerals (retained by the PCC) increased slightly last year, due especially to additional weddings in the summer and at £13,343 they were £6,045 higher than 2016.

The Parish Magazine continues to flourish, although a decline in advertising income meant a slight decline in income over 2016. We also received £1,800 additional donations and legacies in the year, and £2,051 of additional income from dividends compared to 2016.

Total income from 'normal' activities at £228,225 was £46,318 (25%) higher than the previous year.

Total costs at £203,996 were £40,387 higher than last year with a number of major influences causing this additional expenditure. These include:-

- Ministry costs – £10,461 up £7,783 over 2016 – as well as additional expenses for Steve and Hugh, we are also funding the accommodation for Hugh and Grace. Unlike for Jon Drake, the diocese is not paying the rental for their house, and we are also covering Council Tax and Water Rates (which we have always covered).
- Fundraising costs including Festival events costs - £13,307 up £12,958 over 2016– these are significantly higher than usual with the costs of the concert with the Academy of St Martin in the Fields being added to the usual Festival events.

- Repairs - £10,295 up £5,761 over 2016 – these included some additional one-off work on the boiler which cost around £4,500.
- Youth groups - £5,420 up £4,399 – this cost also includes the salary paid to Grace since July for her work as a youth worker.
- Office expenses - £9,215 up £2,872 – this includes around £3,000 investment in the new website. There is a further cost of around £2,000 to cover in 2018 – and it is hoped that the new website will be in operation shortly after Easter.
- Mission giving - £9,288 up £4,562 – the Mission allocation is governed by a formula based on unrestricted income agreed by the PCC a number of years ago, and has increased in 2017 due to the increase in stewardship and other related income.
- Churchyard and cemetery maintenance - £8,848 up £3,263 over 2016 – this is mainly due to continued work on the chalkpit and to work in St Mary’s churchyard including the repairs to the boundary wall to allow the re-location of gravestones as part of the preparations for the Annexe construction.
- Heating, lighting, water and insurance - £17,346 up £1,111 over 2016 – the increase is mainly due to the additional heat and light charges due to the Festival. However, Festival events brought a net profit of around £3,500 to offset this additional expenditure.

To offset these additional costs, there was a saving of around £5,471 due to our parish share allocation falling from £97,941 to £92,470.

Although fundraising in 2017 focussed on the raising of additional funds to cover our general running expenses, the final construction phase of the 21C project was started in early 2018. The costs needed to complete the project are estimated at around £420,000 and at the end of December 2017 there was a balance of £200,082 in the fund towards these costs. Additional funding, including a ‘contribution’ from general reserves will cover a significant part of the required funds, but a concerted effort to raise the final tranche will be undertaken in 2018 in the hope the project will be completed by the end of the year.

A draft budget has been prepared for the new financial year. Based on the increase in regular giving following the stewardship campaign in 2017, the initial budget shows a small surplus despite the on-going additional cost base mentioned above. However, we cannot afford to be complacent – in a time of rising prices we need to ensure that we continue to monitor all costs to ensure we get the best possible return on the generous funds provided by the church members. Whilst efforts in 2018 will be rightly concentrated on the completion of the 21C project, we cannot afford to ignore the regular and unsung work which goes on and which will still need funding on a day to day basis.

My thanks to Richard Lloyd for administering the gift-aid system, Andrew Imlay for his efforts on stewardship and to Kim for her help in the office.

Jane Wills

PARISH ANNUAL REPORT 2017 – VICAR’S REPORT

“Now is the time of God’s favour, now is the day of salvation.” (2 Corinthians 6:2)

All members of the church fellowship are encouraged to attend the APCM, which is a key event in the life of our church and is more than just a business meeting. It provides an opportunity for us collectively and individually, to:

-reflect on our ministry as a church over the past year, the changes we have seen, and the ways we have witnessed God at work;

-look ahead to the challenges and opportunities in front of us, and how we can each be a part of the onward journey;

-equip ourselves through the election of churchwardens, officers, and PCC (Parochial Church Council)

Throughout the year we have:

- a) been getting to know people and making connections in the parish and on our fringe. We are already ‘off the blocks’ in this, but this will continue to be vital for church life.
- b) made young families a focus.
- c) been taking discipleship seriously in home groups and been making Jesus known etc.
- d) discovered further that the church is the people not the building and seen a growing breadth in profile of the church family.
- e) seen the Annexe building work begin after the roller coaster life since its conception.

Looking Back

Structure: with the increase in ordained and lay staff members it has given us the opportunity to properly cover the parish. In particular I want to thank Grace and Hugh Barne, Steve Turville, Andy Ferguson, as well as Kim Moul as church administrator. Curates in training must have exposure to the whole gamut of Church of England ministry: alongside ensuring this is covered adequately we have been involved in evangelism, leading services, preaching and teaching, growing our schools involvement, significant ministry to children and teenagers, work with families, pastoral care of sick, elderly, frail and dying (including residential homes and ‘home communions’ to housebound).

St Peter’s, Knowl Hill/St Paul’s, Warren Row: is on a sounder financial basis and thinking through possible shared use of KH building, but aware of numerical departures due to people moving elsewhere in the country or death.

Finance: stewardship campaign went well at Wargrave and a sounder financial footing has enabled us to have adequate staff. But we must not be complacent. We abandoned the monthly all-age service and introduced an all age slot at beginning of every 10.30 am service.

Sunday services: changes and varied pattern has been a real help. Church family seem more energised by the new changes. At Wargrave more young families are attending, and others being added to the church. Knowl Hill and Warren Row loyal but small congregations.

Issues which need to be grappled with:

Ministry: belongs to the whole people of God. We need younger adults to commit and take responsibility in the life of our churches. Please pray that each of us will find where we need to be serving God in our churches ‘Succession planning’: in all areas of church life we need to identify and train up leaders (for example children’s and Pathfinder leaders and assistants). We need new PCC members and Churchwardens who properly reflect the age demographics of our fellowship.

PCC: as chairman of the PCC I am aware there have had to be many agenda items which has squeezed time available for a regular broad discussion on life and health of the churches. We will ensure we do this in the coming year and have plans to allow this broad conversation to occur.

The Apostle Paul (2 Corinthians 6:2) having just implored them to “be reconciled to God”, urges his readers at the start of 2 Corinthians 6 “not to receive the grace of God in vain”. For now, today, is the day of salvation. Paul’s understanding of time is a reminder to us all that we live in an urgent, finite and never to be repeated chapter in history. The “day of salvation” “will come to an end with terrible consequences for those who resist the call to be reconciled to God. It is this reality which must shape our understanding of our own lives and purpose. This should be our priority in the year ahead of us. Our great charge as individuals and church is to live each day as ambassadors of our heavenly king, transforming lives for eternity through the work of the gospel. The time is short and the need urgent.

And yet what an encouragement it is also to know we live in “the day of salvation”, and that through the same ministry of reconciliation (note Paul’s somewhat different understanding of that term from some contemporary Church of England common parlance!). Every day of the coming year will be a day of “God’s favour” when adults and children can be reconciled to their creator.

Clear vision is vital for our church health and growth. We have known and seen the Lord bless us. Going forward our vision continues to be a church at the heart of the community:

1. to see more become followers of the Lord Jesus Christ. We want to give everyone across this parish and our networks the opportunity to hear about Jesus and respond to him.
2. to be deeper followers of the Lord Jesus Christ. We want to be growing in our knowledge of God, and in service to our churches and environs.
3. to be closer followers of the Lord Jesus Christ; we want to be a loving community that cares for one another and models God’s love to the world.

ALL INVOLVED

I am grateful to all who serve across church life and want to thank the Churchwardens this last year and mention them by name: Sandra Baker and the late David Manning, Salome Laschinger (stepping down) and Christine Walker. These have all been servants of us all and helpful eyes and ears and advisers to me.

This means asking the question 'how I can play my part in making the vision a reality?' This means we must all involve ourselves in thinking about how we can use the time and gifts the Lord has given us.

John R M Cook

PARISH ANNUAL REPORT 2017: SONNING DEANERY SYNOD

What is Sonning Deanery?

First a little about Sonning Deanery. What is it? Why does it exist? Why does it matter to us within the Parish of Wargrave with Knowl Hill? Simply put, it is one level of the organisation of the Church of England by which ideas, teaching, money, support and direction is transferred throughout the Church and between parishes.

Sonning Deanery comprises 15 parishes of which Wargrave with Knowl Hill is one. The Sonning Deanery is our link with the rest of the Church of England. It has its own Area Dean and is made up of all the Clergy, and lay members who are elected by every parish. Four meetings (Deanery Synods) are held a year for its component parishes.

Sonning Deanery, is one of 29 deaneries, which make up the Diocese of Oxford which extends across Oxfordshire, Berkshire and Buckinghamshire. Covering 2,200 square miles, Oxford Diocese serves a population of 2.2 million people, 815 churches within 626 parishes. Representatives of Sonning Deanery attend the Oxford Diocesan Synod. In turn the Oxford Diocese represents our interest at the General Synod of the Church of England.

Highlights of Deanery Synods during the year

There were four Deanery Synods during the year, all of which have already been reported in more detail to the PCC. The Finance matters covered at the Synods have been brought together in the final paragraph of this report.

In March the Deanery Synod met at Owlsmoor Church, where we discussed what would make all the parishes work better together. A suggestion to draw up a central register of skills which may be shared across local deanery proved very popular. We are awaiting an out- come of this suggestion. The meeting also celebrated the work of schools across the Deanery and the great many volunteers who gave their skill to enhance the work of local schools.

At the June Synod at Ruscombe, officers for the Deanery and for the Deanery Standing committee were elected. It was agreed that the Deanery Mission and Standing committee should be combined, as is the practice in other Deaneries within the Oxford Diocese.

In September there was a demonstration of Messy Church, led by The Revd Anna Harwood, Vicar of Twyford and Ruscombe. This is a different type of Church, which has been running nationally for over 13 years. A good Messy Church engages with absolutely everybody; children, teenagers, adults, single people and older people. There is a bible story or seasonal activity with craft activities for all ages. Every session includes sharing some type of food or meal. It should be an intergenerational set-up. People of different cultures and faiths often find they are welcome at a Messy Church, it is intended as gentle and accessible.

All the material is available, there are books to follow, with sessions worked out for leaders, with themes, activities, gospel stories and prayers. There are videos and resources for all sessions

including Mothering Sunday, Easter and Christmas. Everything is made easy. Messy Church is currently being discussed by our own Ministry team and they are considering if it could be introduced into the pattern of our activities in the near future.

At the end of November Bishop Andrew Proud of Reading, came to outline the Diocese of Oxford's initiative for the regeneration of churches within the Diocese, based on the Beatitudes (Matthew 4 verses 1-10), which has been formulated by the new Bishop of Oxford, Stephen Croft, following visits to all of the deaneries within the Oxford Diocese. Bishop Stephen had distilled these teachings into 'The Three Cs': Contemplative, Compassionate and Courageous. Booklets have been produced to study in Lent.

It includes plans to build on what is best across the Diocese, and due to the pressures on the Church of England to actively involve more lay leadership in the Diocese. He wants us all to be a more Christ-like Church for the sake of God's world, courageous, contemplative and compassionate. Every Christian is invited to take part in this transformation and he wants PCCs to actively support the common vision.

Bishop Andrew asked us all to dwell on the Beatitudes whenever a meeting is held in individual churches or a meeting is held across the Deanery. Bishop Steven feels that as a Diocese we stand at a huge crossroads. These verses should help us all to 'let go' (of ego, power status and busyness) and to 'let come' (something new from these words of Jesus, which can be a vehicle for God's future plans for his Churches). This way of thinking should continue to help us as we all grow in spiritual awareness.

The Revd John Cook, feels that we have already embraced 'The Three Cs' in our own Parish in a number of ways. As individuals and as a Church we cover the priorities of authentic New Testament Christian discipleship. Our series of Lenten Lectures was based on the Sermon on the Mount, with our booklet on the Beatitudes.

Finance

On the question of Finance in March, the Lay Chair of Synod, reported that Sonning Deanery is now one of the worst performers in the Diocese. Senior diocesan staff will no longer support parishes that could pay their share but do not do so. This is a policy which has been endorsed by Bishop Stephen since his appointment. The overall consequence of non-payment is a need to scale back on paid ministerial posts.

At the end of 2017, the Sonning Deanery fund showed a drop over the year as only 90% of the total parish shares for our Deanery have been received. The result of this is that our Deanery has not received a rebate from the Diocese. Of the 15 entities only 8 have paid in full. The 7 who have not, have been asked to submit their payment plans for 2018 to enable future planning. The Bishop and the Area Dean are well aware of our funding problems and there are many parishes across the whole of the Oxford Diocese, who are experiencing large 'drains' on their finances.

As a parish we have raised far more than our Parish share and, with thanks to increased stewardship giving, we are also funding housing for additional members of our Clergy team. This has all been achieved, as well as working towards raising the full funding for our extension which is under construction.

Sue Griffiths and Sheila Williams

PARISH ANNUAL REPORT 2017 – CHURCHWARDENS' REPORT

ST MARY'S

It has been an exciting year. We have seen so many changes take place within St Mary's which has been encouraging to us and we hope to the whole church family.

Our work is centred on supporting John in his ministry and sharing responsibility for the smooth running of the church. Last year we worked and prayed for additional staff and God truly blessed us abundantly when He provided two curates, Hugh Barne and Steve Turville, and a youth worker, Grace Barne.

We made a decision early in the year at a PCC vision morning to reduce the number of Strategy Teams from nine to three. We now have a Support Strategy Team with responsibility for Stewardship, Buildings and Graveyards; an Outreach Team with a clear role to look at how the church can serve the community; and a Mission Team which supports local and global Christian charities and missionaries from our church.

The PCC agreed that we wanted to focus our attention on young families with school children, and with the extra clergy and youth worker we were able to put in a greater effort in this area. In order to attract these families to the church we changed our service style; introduced a new logo used on revised service sheets, screen slides and other documentation; and started communicating using social media such as Facebook and Twitter. We agreed on updating the website to give it a new look and feel and await its implementation in 2018.

In September we held a "Get to know St Mary's" weekend with the opportunity on Saturday for the village to come and see not just what St Mary's was going to be running in the new academic year but also what St Mary's was already doing. Though the attendance was not high, we felt the weekend was well worth repeating. On the Sunday we introduced the new style of service which was more approachable for young families and as we look back at the past six months we have seen an increase in these families attending and a growth in the children's work.

Churchwardens also have responsibilities concerning the safe keeping of certain items of the church and keeping an Inventory and Log Book. Both are available for inspection. We are fortunate in being able to delegate the maintenance of the church to the Support Strategy Team who report that all is in good order and are grateful that our responsibility for the management of church services is facilitated by the large number of people willing to assist and thank them all.

There have been so many highlights this year, the Annexe being agreed and a works schedule planned; the church family growing; new activities such as the Big Breakfast encouraging the two Sunday congregations to spend time together as one church family; and our involvement in nine events at the Wargrave Village Festival such as the long-time favourite and popular folk night, and a new event, the stunning performance in church by The Academy of St Martin in the Fields orchestra.

Christine Walker & Salome Laschinger

ST PETERS AND ST PAULS

Due to David Manning's sad demise we are in the process of seeking a second Churchwarden.

Sandra Baker

PARISH ANNUAL REPORT 2017: KNOWL HILL STRATEGY GROUP

The Strategy Group consists of Ann Griffin, Brian Griffin, Valda Hadden, Jill Hendry, Lesley Bell, Bill Haines, Hilary Buckle and Sandra Baker. Tracy Bird was co-opted onto the group in November 2017.

We were deeply sad to lose our friend and colleague, David Manning, who had been Churchwarden since 2013. Dave died on 25th February 2018 and we shall very much miss him. He carried out all his duties with total reliability and dedication.

We have continued to fundraise throughout the year to support St. Peter's financially and have held several successful events including a skittles evening, quiz night, open mic night, bingo and the Christmas Party.

We are enormously grateful to the Knowl Hill Village Association for their help and support in organising and attending fundraising events, churchyard maintenance and gatekeeping at the Littlewick Green Show.

Services Currently we have three services per month: 1st Sunday Village Praise at 10.30 am, 2nd Sunday Communion at St. Paul's at 9.15 am and 3rd Sunday at 9.15 am Communion at St. Peter's. We are delighted that Steve Turville has been working in the school on a weekly basis and getting to know the members of our CAMEO group at its monthly meetings. We are grateful to Hilary Buckle who plays the organ or keyboard

for all our services. She has kindly offered to work with the school to form a choir. Thanks to Jill Hendry for cleaning and looking after St. Paul's.

Mission Unfortunately we do not have enough resources to carry out mission work at present but church members are visible in the community and help at the CAMEO group and provide lifts for hospital appointments etc. We hope to address this during the coming year.

Project Our funds raised from grant-giving organisations remain at approximately £40,000 and we have instructed builders to commence work on the exterior of the church to repair pointing and brickwork where necessary and clear and repair guttering. The work has had to be postponed because of bad weather and we are waiting to hear when it will commence.

Inspection The next Quinquennial Inspection is due to take place next year by which time we hope to have carried out some of the repairs recommended such as replastering and redecoration. The large holly tree adjacent to the church has been removed as advised by the Inspection Report.

Fundraising As noted above we have held a number of fundraising events which have been successful and raised enough funding to take us out of debt to St. Mary's combined with the derestriction of funds which enabled us to repay the sum of £7939. We are grateful to the St. Mary's PCC for their support and help in achieving this.

Maintenance and cleaning Although a small group everyone has a role in cleaning and maintaining the church, providing flowers, coffee etc.

Sandra Baker

PARISH ANNUAL REPORT 2017: OUTREACH REPORT

In April 2017 the PCC decided to simplify the strategy teams from nine teams down to three, of which one was the Outreach Team. The focus was to "to make the name of Jesus known and respond to the needs of the community by loving service".

The Outreach Team was to support the vision of the PCC which had as its central focus to encourage more young families to the church. We set in motion a calendar of events that would help to fulfill this priority.

We continued with many successful groups and events which supported this focus, such as Butterflies, children's work on Sundays, the Tuesday Group for teenagers, house groups, pastoral care and running courses throughout the year which would help those seeking to know more and explore the Christian faith. One of the existing activities was St Mary's involvement in the Wargrave Festival, where as a form of outreach St Mary's ran nine events over the three weeks, helping to reach out to the wider community.

We also looked to further existing activities and add new initiatives such as "Who let the Dads out", parenting course for parents with preschool children and a marriage course. We looked to the style of worship and have changed our Sunday service to be more family friendly, and more on this topic is covered later in this report. In September we ran a "get to know St Mary's" weekend where we opened the church and invited in the community to find out what the vision of the Church was, and the plan of events it was looking to run that would make St Mary's the heart of the community. Visitors could learn more about the extension, what new activities we are running and to understand more about what the church already does. Though the attendance was not high we saw new families starting to come to church as a result of this weekend, which was very encouraging.

Christmas was a highlight of the year, with numerous services and events to cater for different age groups and different worship styles, and we added a new service which was called the Seniors' Carol Service. This service was very well attended and reached out to many senior members of our community who are not always able or willing to attend church. We hope to continue this service in the future.

Below is more information on the work being carried out with young families, and how this work has grown during 2017.

Thoughts on work with young families

Our focus and prayers as a church have been driven by the desire to see more children and young families come to know the Lord Jesus and be actively involved in church. Since September we have seen several changes in service patterns: no All Age Service, the introduction of an all age slot at the beginning of each service, uniformity of teaching across all ages (Sunday Club and Pathfinders have been looking at the same Bible readings as the adults in church) and more informal music style. We mention all of these because we think a combination of all of the above has been helpful.

We have been aware for a while that we have had contact with many, but our core of young families has been few. This appears to be changing. Our core is growing, and we are seeing many more families showing regular, sustained church attendance. Friendships are developing amongst the families both in and out of Sunday church.

Parents seem to be seeing each Sunday as an all age service (i.e. suitable and enjoyable for all ages). The all age slot at the beginning and informality of the music has helped with this. They have really enjoyed talking to the children about what the whole family has been learning about.

We think parents are grateful for the church's desire to engage with them through parenting and marriage courses, and 'Who let the dads out?' as well as the termly parties/activities for the children.

So what next? We are in need of more leaders across our children's groups – people who love Jesus and want to make him known. They don't need to be teachers! Our next Digging Deeper should help in terms of training potential leaders but they do need to be identified. We'd also like to see more of our long term members getting to know the young families.....

Overall though, there is much to praise God for. Please keep praying for our young people and their families.

Pathfinders is encouraging at the moment. The group has on average about six or seven young people coming regularly, across the age-range year 5-year 9. We have also had a good number of new young people this year. As for Sunday Club, it has worked really well to tie our teaching in with the rest of the church family and we've had some lovely Bible studies. The young people are often keen to ask questions, and discussions can be fun and lively. Sometimes it is a challenge to engage the entire age range, and to help them be patient with each other. We are blessed to have had another adult join the team - Chris Hobden - meaning we have two leaders and five helpers. This is a great number of helpers, but we could do with more people who are confident leading Bible studies with the group.

Tuesday Group has had a great few terms. A new, younger contingent moved up in September and settled in well. We have had great Bible studies in John and currently in a confirmation course. Five young people have said they wish to be confirmed in April, with another five or so still weighing it up, which is very encouraging. A number of young people have big exams this year and are keen to live for God through this stressful season. Sunday church has also been very much on the radar and there is desire amongst the teens to make this a priority. We've had fun socials each term, and these are a great opportunity not just for regulars but also for those away at school during term time.

Holiday Club preparations are well under way for August. A reasonable number of people have volunteered to help (and more will doubtless be asked over the coming months!) and the date has been shared around. Booking forms are now available in church and will be distributed at the Robert Piggott Infant and Junior Schools to invite all children from there to come and join us.

Psalm 78:4 and 7. '.....we will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord, his power and the wonders he has done....Then they would put their trust in God and would not forget his deeds but would keep his commands.'

Working with the Senior members of our Parish

The Reverend Steve Turville, Assistant Curate

With a particular focus on building relationships with the older members of the parish, Steve aims to be at:

- Wargrave Pop In Club every Monday morning,
- Elizabeth Court Coffee Morning every Tuesday morning,
- Wargrave Lunch Club once per month (third Thursday)
- Knowl Hill CAMEO Club once per month (third Thursday).
- The Mount Care Home every Tuesday morning for a Communion service.

Pastoral visiting: *We need to review our pastoral visiting in line with new safeguarding rules etc. and rebuild and re-authorise a team of visitors.*

New initiatives include:

- The Welcome Café on Tuesday afternoons attracts about a dozen people and is run by a team of volunteers. *We need to look at ways of helping people come to that.*
- The 'Seniors' Carol Service and Tea. 40 people attended, with 25 being 'senior', and the vast majority were not usual Sunday attenders. We arranged transport for most, but some came as a result of ads in Wargrave News or the Parish Magazine. *Many others wanted to come but couldn't because they*

were either with family for Christmas, or being visited by family, so next year we will have the service earlier, and possibly midweek.

- 'Films on First Friday' ran from September to January but with very little response. We decided to cancel that in February.

Conclusion

The outreach work continues strongly, and shortly we will be looking to what activities will continue into this year and what new initiatives we would like to put in place. We are pleased to say on the whole the outreach to the wider community is happening, we are witnessing growth in our church and our prayer is that all these activities are done with Jesus in the middle, looking to him for what we need, and giving him all the glory of the work and fruit that is being borne.

Salome Laschinger, Camilla Cook, Grace Barne and Steve Turville.

PARISH ANNUAL REPORT 2017: COMMUNICATION REPORT

2017 was a busy year for the Communication Team. It started by establishing a Big Picture Planning Team and creating "Our Plans for 2017-2018" based on an academic year. This included the Vision created by the PCC (To be a Church at the heart of the Community), the various key focus areas – Family and Young People, Exploring Faith, Wider Community and Caring Church – and key events for the year.

A total rebranding exercise was completed with a range of logos in green and purple:



This branding is now used on all key communication and will be a cornerstone of the redesigned website to be launched in 2018.

During the year a Facebook page and Twitter feed were launched which have attracted a dedicated group of followers.

The Magazine continues to be successful. The number of pages has increased from 32 to 36 each month and the annual surplus generated is just under £2000.

In order to make St Mary's activities known widely throughout the village, material has been sent each month to the Wargrave News to create a St Mary's page.

During the year the team were proactive in advertising events via posters and newsflashes.

Many thanks are due to the disparate team who diligently undertake the various tasks involved in communication - Bob Austen, Grace and Hugh Barne, Kim Moul and Richard Lloyd – and to Peter Dart for assisting in the rebranding process.

Andy Ferguson

PARISH ANNUAL REPORT 2017: MISSION REPORT

During the year 2017 the group met on 3 occasions to discuss ways we can support our chosen agencies financially and in practical ways.

As it was a Festival Year in the village, much time and energy went into organising the Tearfund Concert 'Brass on the Grass' which took place in June and raised a record £3,500 for the charity. It also proved to be one of the most popular events of the Festival, selling 500 tickets to families and friends in the village, who were able to see for themselves the work Tearfund does in disaster relief, and by enabling communities to become self-sufficient.

An Open Day was held at Yeldall Manor in July, supported by a good number of church members, and in September we hosted a Ladies' Day for the Staff and Missionaries of the London City Mission. Over 30 ladies were involved in what proved to be a very happy occasion on the river or on walks around the village.

The support of the church for the work among the homeless in Reading has continued through 'FAITH' where our interests are kept right up to date by their manager Amanda Bayley, who is one of our church members. We were able to meet David Kereto in November to hear more of his work in Kenya, and two of our young people were able to update us during the morning Service about their work overseas in mission situations.

Anyone with an interest in the wider Christian Church is warmly invited to join this vibrant group.

Verna Houghton

PARISH ANNUAL REPORT 2017: ECO CHURCH REPORT



On 16th October 2017, Wargrave with Knowl Hill PCC voted unanimously to register our parish in the national [eco church](#) initiative. This is a public declaration that we take seriously the biblical mandate to care for God's earth and the life it sustains, as tenants and custodians, in line with the Church of England's 5th mark of mission.

We registered on 1st January 2018. This does not make us an eco church. It is a public statement that we see care for God's earth as a core element of Christian discipleship. Christian communities that demonstrate this well are awarded bronze, silver or gold status. Gold and probably silver too would require a root and branch revision of how we live and do church. Bronze is an achievable goal for our parish. Several in our diocese have achieved it so far.

Progress is measured via an online survey. We are currently at bronze level in land management, community and global engagement, church service catering, worship and teaching (sermons and the last two Lent courses). This is a good start. We have however yet to extend the survey beyond St Mary's, and we have work to do across the parish on buildings, lifestyle and other areas of teaching.

The initiative is sponsored by the Church of England, the Methodist Church, Tearfund, Christian Aid and A Rocha, a Christian charity which works to revitalize and unite communities through nature conservation around the world.

Eco church encompasses every aspect of church life. It requires the support of the whole church. Thank you.

Mike Buckland

PARISH ANNUAL REPORT 2017 : CHURCH BUILDINGS & GRAVEYARDS REPORT

Goal : To maintain and develop the buildings, inventory, facilities and graveyards in the service of the Lord

Action/ Initiatives	Progress	Owner	Deadline
Maintenance of buildings and facilities to sound standards fulfilling, H & S regulations and environmental considerations	Quinquennial 2014 report completed, maintenance work in hand and up-to-date Health & Safety annual audit completed September 17 Eco heat saving: previous audit reports St Mary's routine maintenance; no outstanding items Graveyard Regulations up to date; Diocesan authority to remove illegal items granted. Removal completed November 2017. Completion certificate in hand	PM DC PM CW/PM PM/CW/RL	Apr 18
	Concept for new Garden of Remembrance in Cemetery under development Cemetery Maintenance Fund: Friends of Cemetery fundraising fulfilled maintenance budget target for 2018 Friends of Mill Green launched October: funds raised to complete pollarding of Poplars	PM/NR AR/LR/PM PR/PM	Jul 18
Annexe proposal to cover outstanding requirements	Faculty signed by Chancellor 10 November. Removal of gravestones completed 11 December. Site safety fencing & access track to be completed in January with excavation of foundation pads to follow. Target to complete shell construction before end of May. Budget review scheduled 15 January. Approaches to charitable trusts under consideration Annexe formally named St Mary's Church Centre	NR/MM BA/AD/JW PCC	May 18

PARISH ANNUAL REPORT 2017 : STEWARDSHIP REPORT

Goal : To present to the congregation the principles of Christian Stewardship of their resources of money, time and talents, and to manage and encourage their donations

Action/Initiatives	Progress	Owner	Completion Date
Regular giving initiative reactivated	i) Stewardship Campaign launched in May 2018 – ca90% of £30k plus gift aid regular giving increase target achieved by 2017 year end.	Andrew Imlay	December 2017
	ii) Series of articles in the Parish magazine – introduction to AI, methods of giving available, and subsequent articles with a personal perspective on giving.	Andrew Imlay JRMC	During late 2016 and 2017 Autumn 2018
	iii) Series of Sermons on Stewardship.		
To manage the process of maintaining a regular flow of funds in the most tax-efficient manner	i) Letters thanking new regular givers and individuals increasing their giving. ii) Review and update Website pages. iii) Letter thanking for previous donations, giving details for tax return purposes and encouraging a review of the level of donations (yet to be discussed with RL).	Andrew Imlay Richard Lloyd Richard Lloyd	Ongoing During 2018 May & June 2018
Collaboration with other Ministry Teams	i) Work with Integration team to identify newer members of the Congregation who are in a position to and are willing to give regularly.	Andrew Imlay	Ongoing
	ii) Work with 21C appeal team to assist with fund-raising initiative during 2018.	Andrew Imlay	December 2018
Improved communication with congregation	Leaflet produced outlining the current needs and financial position. Copies made available in St Mary's and handed out to members of Congregation after services.	Andrew Imlay	September 2017
Wills / Legacies to benefit St Mary's	Initiative to work with local firm of Solicitors (possibly Mercers in Henley) to promote putting in place or updating Wills and to consider legacies for St Mary's Wargrave.	Andrew Imlay	June 2018

Ongoing Responsibilities: General principles and their promotion – AI; Data Management and Gift Aid – RL