

**St Mary's Church, Purton
Annual Report
for the year ended 31 December 2019**

The Trustees

The trustees of St Mary's Church are the PCC members who have the responsibility of working with the incumbent to promote the whole work of the church in the ecclesiastical parish.

PCC Membership

At the end of this period the following were serving as members:

Vicar Revd Ian Tweedie-Smith

Curate Revd Judith Wells

Wardens Sandra Horsnall (Secretary)
Jane Smith

Elected Members

Kathryn Bartlett

Paul Dempsey (Deputy Warden)

Roberta Legg (Treasurer)

Reps on Deanery Synod

David Martin

David Nettleton

Bank

National Westminster Bank

24-30 The Parade

Swindon

SN1 1BA

Independent Examiner

Mrs Christine Makings ACCA

1 Tawny Owl Close

Covingham

Swindon

SN3 5EX

Sub-Committees

Standing Committee: Meets before each PCC meeting, produces an agenda for the PCC meeting and carries on PCC business between its meetings.

Finance Committee: Monitors income and expenditure and considers stewardship strategies.

Partnership Enabling Group: Incorporates Mission and oversees the working together of Purton churches.

Building and Health & Safety Committee: Oversees care and maintenance of the church and works to ensure conformance to relevant Health and Safety standards.

Family Worship Committee: Meets to plan and organise First Sunday of the Month services

Social & Fundraising Committee: Plans social and fundraising events.

Friends of St Mary's Committee: Oversees relationship with the "Friends".

Renewal Group: Oversees the planning of future developments for the church building.

The PCC met 8 times during the year with an average attendance of 89%. The sub-committees met between PCC meetings and their findings were presented to the PCC for consideration and approval. The PCC have been assisted by Rosie Harris - Parish Administrator, Vivien Lawrence - Verger The committees were normally convened and attended by PCC members but also assisted by co-opted non-PCC members.

Electoral Roll

The number of people on roll in December 2019 was 68 currently 67.

Rosie Harris, Electoral Roll Officer

Vicar's Report

Little did we know as we lived through 2019 what was in store for us in 2020. Whilst I am writing this and you will be reading this after the world was overtaken by the corona virus pandemic, it is important to remember 2019 as a year in its own right rather than just a different world from the life before "lockdown". So even if 2019 appears now to be ancient history, it is still history in which God was at work and for which we can give Him thanks and praise. Our 2019 verse for the year took Jesus' words at the end of His earthly ministry, His promise, "I am with you always to the very end of the age" [Matthew chapter 28 verse 20]. At the time it would have felt like a year of uncertainty in our national life as well as in our local life here in Purton. We were preparing for change and as such we needed the reminder that God keeps His promises and that Jesus will be with us, God will be alongside us always - not just for 2019 or 2020 but for all time, to the end of time itself when Jesus returns. He did not promise that life would be easy, straightforward or comfortable, but He did promise to be with us in whatever we faced.

Renewal of our Building

It was a year of preparation for change, a year in which the Faculty finally was granted (summer 2019) - we now had permission to go ahead with the works - and there followed many months of detailed planning for those works (more details in the Renewal Report). For some the prospect of change in the Church building was greeted with excitement and enthusiasm whereas for others it was received with fear and uncertainty. As a Church Family we are seeking to make our building fit for purpose not just for our generation but for future generations. We are prayerfully seeking that God will enable us to provide a "quality place for worship" for both traditional and contemporary styles of services. None of us know what future opportunities and challenges we will face. In 2019 we were preparing to meet in St Mary's Primary School during the building works - little did we know what actually would happen during 2020 but that is for the next annual report - in the present we placed our trust in the One who promised to be with us always. And we give thanks to God for His provision of both the Faculty and the Funds to be able to do the majority of the works planned, and for God's wisdom to prioritize what is attempted in Phase One. We also thank Dave Nettleton, Paul Dempsey and Howard Smith, along with others who have worked so hard not just on the Faculty process but also on the detailed planning process that followed during the year. Finally, we thank all those who have given so generously and prayed so faithfully for this project to the glory of God. God has been with us always throughout this time of preparation for change - so we give Him thanks and praise.

Renewal of our Ministry

This year has marked the conclusion of the Exploring Christianity Course with a discernment day and process for each of those who were prayerfully putting themselves forward for accredited ministry in God's Church. David Martin and Celia Tweedie-Smith were accepted to begin their Formation Year for Licensed Lay Ministry (LLM). Liz Martin was also accepted but has decided to defer starting her Formation Year until she has concluded a series of important projects with Bible Society which will involve a fair amount of overseas travel. Kenny Wickens has been accepted to train for ordained ministry and to begin a distance learning course at Sarum College. Robert Hetherington had already decided not to go for accredited ministry but continues to preach on an occasional basis and conduct Extended Communion services at White Lodge. Simon Wills has had a positive first year as our new Youth Worker (but more of that in the Youth Report). My thanks go to all of those named and to so many more who have been part of the Renewal of our Ministry under God. Behind all the new members of the ministry team has been our existing Leadership Team of Judith Wells and the Wardens who have all worked tirelessly to further God's ministry here in Purton in God's Church. Behind all our ministry our thanks and praise go to the One who has been beside us always throughout this year renewing, restoring and enabling our ministry to His glory.

Renewing our Discipleship

Discipleship is a lifelong process of learning and growing, developing and renewing in which we are dependent upon God's work in us rather than merely upon our efforts. However, there are highlights in that process sometimes they are personal and private and at other times they are public and proclamatory to the whole Church Family. The Confirmation service on May 12th 2019 in St Mary's was just such an opportunity for not just for the adults and young people from our Parish who were being confirmed but also an opportunity for us all publicly to declare, confirm and renew our faith. Many have taken further steps to renew their discipleship during the year for some this has been on their own in personal Bible reading and prayer and perhaps reading a Christian book, for others it has been through renewed participation in our Sunday or midweek services, and for still others it has been through becoming part of a small group to pray and learn from God's Word. We are all very grateful to those who have helped with those services and small groups. But above all we bring our thanks and praise to the One who has been with us always as we have renewed our discipleship in His name.

Saying Goodbye

In 2019 we remembered with thanksgiving to God the lives of Francis Young, Ian Wooding, Susan Pagett, Moira Hayward, Eric Ball, John Belt, Anne Shailes and Margaret Gregory, along with a number of others known to us in the community or amongst our own families or friends. It is very comforting to know that the God we believe in promises to be with us always even in the valley of the shadow of death.

Thank You

Finally, I would like to say thank you to all those who are part of the Church Family and who form the basis of all we seek to do in God's name. Together we are a Family as we seek to encourage one another and pray for one another, to grow in our faith and in our confidence in the God who keeps His promise to be with us always. Especially I would like to thank my colleague Judith for all her work as Curate (Associate Minister), particularly for all she does when I am working elsewhere. I thank the Wardens Sandra Horsnall and Jane Smith along with Paul Dempsey (doing a job share with Jane) for their behind the scenes oversight of so much of what we do especially in preparation for the Renewal Project. I thank Rosie Harris our Parish Administrator who keeps us all (particularly me) organised and prepared in advance. I thank Simon Wills our Youth worker (and his wife Phoebe) for his work with and support for our young people. I thank our Organist Frank Harvey, our Choir, our Music Group, our Verger, our Bell Ringers and all those who do intercessions, Bible readings, flowers, welcoming (sidespeople), refreshments, and everyone else involved in our services and the maintenance, cleaning and use of our building. In addition I thank all those involved in pastoral roles and in conducting Extended Communion, and now many others who visit and support our Church family and wider community, including all those who support our work in St Mary's School and Ridgeway Farm School, the various Old People's Homes, and Sheelagh Hetherington as she liaises with those enquiring about Baptism. I thank those who have set aside time and effort to be trained for accredited ministry in the leadership of God's Church here in Purton. I thank all those who give financially and in so many other ways using their gifts in God's service, including all members of the PCC, Berta Legg our treasurer, the various working groups, and all those who are involved in the wider work of our Church across the community. I thank our brothers and sisters at Play Close and Wootton Bassett Methodist Churches (and their minister David Perkins) who work in partnership with us in many areas of our Church life (especially in both Messy Churches). And in particular, I thank my wife Celia and my children, George and Ruth (and her husband Jonny), for their support, love and prayers. I thank God for you all and trust in Him as the one who promises to be with us always. As we look forward to 2020 we all remember what God said through Peter, "Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you." [1 Peter chapter 5 verse 7] So as we look ahead to the challenges and opportunities of moving out of the Church building, and as we seek to engage a contractor to begin work on our Renewal Project, and as we face many other challenges for the new year; it is my prayer that God will enable us to cast all our anxieties and uncertainties on Him and that He will bless each one of us as together we seek to serve Him to His glory.

Revd Ian Tweedie-Smith

Curate's Report

Well this Covid thing has put a stop to all usual activities.

'All change', as they say on the buses!

As my years roll on from year to year - meeting, celebrating, preaching and so on I thought I'd tell you how things have changed for me...

Pram Service has been curtailed until we get the go ahead from the Methodist Church.

Deep cleaning between services would be a problem at the moment.

Junior Church is alternating with Messy Church on Zoom except on the first Sunday of the month when church is for all.

I did an assembly for all the St Mary's school leavers in July by Zoom with moderate success!

I've been asked to take more of these. I hope they evolve to keep our links with church and school zinging along.

We rushed to fit in the last wedding in December 2019 before the church was shut for renewal-and that was another glorious occasion!

Unfortunately, there have been the usual funerals of lovely Purton people who we all miss very much. In the Coronavirus pandemic we've held as near a church service as possible at the graveside and at the crematorium for our friends. We trust they all rest in peace and will rise in glory.

It's always an honour to take a funeral.

We haven't been able to visit the Care Homes yet but have used Facebook and the telephone to keep in touch with parishioners.

While the weather was good we've held a Holy Communion service for six in a garden and for others who couldn't make this service.

It was wonderful to see our friends again and celebrate this peaceful service together.

As the church remains shut we hold weekly Zoom services at 10.30 am.

They're a wonderful lifeline to worship with each other at this present time.

It's also been great to see friends who live away from Purton or abroad and those unable to come to church services for one reason or another.

I've managed to visit parishioners at hospitals by appointment and feel blessed that I've kept well.

That hasn't changed at least!

PIPS has reopened and I help with this café as it's fantastically worthwhile and another way of meeting people in the village.

After a few days of opening the church for people to have a nose around, we can see how ghastly it looks and how badly it needs renewing in many ways. The workman's vans have been spotted today outside the church!

Things are actually moving at last! We are going to be renewed!

How exciting to move forward into a new era of worship and to be able to encourage newcomers into a clean, warm church!

Much debate has taken place at how best to use this amazing space from a worship point of view.

I'm hoping there will be traditional services as usual and I'm looking forward to involving young people and their parents more in church. We've been praying about this for many years and are moving forward in faith.

Over the years, I've found Rosie's prayer group very helpful-a good way to start the week on a Monday morning.

Kenny's house group is excellent for learning about the Bible more deeply and Bob and Chris's Christianity Explored group was thought-provoking for beginners and others alike.

They've all given me the confidence to speak out about what the Bible says and what I've found I actually know!

I pray for those I meet in the Parish and have come to know. May we all stay well and above all come to know the importance and comfort of Jesus in our lives. Revd Judith Wells 770627

judithwells36@googlemail.com

O God, life-giving Spirit,

Spirit of healing and comfort of integrity and truth we believe and trust in you.

May we commit ourselves to work with you

and renew our world. Amen. (After Janet Morley)

Revd Judith Wells

Churchwardens' Report

Another year has passed and again we must give our grateful thanks and praise for the commitment and dedication of all who work so hard to support our church and community.

First and foremost, we must give our thanks to Ian and Judith for the time, well above their contracted hours; they give to the Church and community.

Normal weekly services continue to run plus baptisms, funerals and weddings, all requiring additional preparation. None of this would be possible without the time and devotion from the volunteers who help with our worship – Frank Harvey our organist; the choir; the music group; the bell ringers, especially Alan Woodward who retired as Tower Captain after 45 years of service; our servers; chalice assistants; readers; those leading intercessions; sidespersons welcoming people into church and those setting up for services and clearing away afterwards.

Thank you to those who serve refreshments, who regularly clean, sweep and polish the church; to our flower arrangers, ably led by Libbie Sheppard, who enhance the church for congregations and visitors alike. Thank you to all who help keep the notice boards and church tidy and for flying flags on the flagpole on the appropriate days. Special thanks go to Roberta Legg our Treasurer; Vivien Lawrence our Verger; Paul Dempsey our Gift Aid Secretary and Rosie Harris our Parish Administrator.

We must also thank the members of the PCC, a small team again this year, which means that they all worked harder, to support the wardens and the ministry of St Mary's Church. Guiding the church through the Renewal Project has been a major undertaking (see separate Renewal Report)

Finally, thank you to all who help financially, including the contributions received from the Friends of St Mary's.

Churchyard Maintenance

Monument testing that Purton Parish Council were to carry out is now on hold. PPC have carried out a visual inspection and fenced off those that raised concern.

Quinquennial condition report

This was received in December 2018. The church is generally in reasonable condition. Work recommended to be actioned within 12 months included several masonry repairs to the west tower pinnacles and parapet masonry and repair of the west tower sounding chamber floor. Work has been carried out to make the pinnacles safe in the short term though permanent reinstatement has been postponed. Similarly, work is planned for early 2020 to make the sounding chamber floor safe pending funds for full reinstatement. Internal plaster repairs will be included with the renewal redecoration.

Stewardship Invitation

A key commitment in our Creating Connections Action Plan was St Mary's Church Stewardship Programme. This took place during February/March. Our vision – knowing Christ and Making Christ known. We focussed on stewardship because being generous in using God's gifts to us, is central to this mission. The PCC agreed that the Stewardship Invitation should be a two - yearly event.

Renewal – a separate report will be provided. However, you may have noticed the doors to the south porch have been glazed – what a difference when you enter the church.

Services

We continue to run 8.00 am Communion; 6.00 pm Evensong (1st Sunday of the month); 10.30 am 1st Sunday Family Service and 3rd Sunday Family Communion (thank you to the teams who set up TV screens and microphones and move pews for these services); on the 2nd and 4th Sundays traditional Communion services are held.

Messy Church continues monthly (except for August), at St Mary's School and Ridgeway Farm Academy. Continuing to run two Messy Churches is proving challenging for both Celia and Ian. This is a plea for more helpers please, especially at Ridgeway Farm.

Over the summer holidays three Activity days were held at St Mary's School. The team provided activities for children in school years 2-6. They were able to do sport, drama, cooking, craft, music, and lots of fun & games as well as snacks & drinks. Look in the school notices, church notices & village magazine for times & dates for this year's events.

Impact - this is a weekly After School Youth Club, run at St Mary's School, during term time. This is proving successful and numbers attending are increasing. The children can access crafts, games, snacks and more! Thank you to Celia Tweedie-Smith and her team. More detail in the Youth Report. Ignite Services continue to grow and alternate months a service is held in St Mary's Church

or RWB Methodist Church. It is run by the youth themselves and is a jolly, informal service. During Advent an Angel Festival was held in church and proved very successful. It involved young and old alike from the village taking part. The church was full of angels, a marvellous display. At the same time we held a Renewal Exhibition with information boards, a video guiding us around the church, explaining why and how the renewal will take place in the near future. Jointly the Angels and the renewal exhibition brought more people into the church, wonderful.

Friends of St Mary's – Friends are still making payments for the upkeep of the church for which we are very grateful. Sadly, at the time of writing we have no secretary or group to ensure the continued support of the Friends. It would be wonderful if we could encourage some new FoSM.

Communication

Safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults is of primary importance to everything we do at St Mary's Church. Our Safeguarding Policy is reviewed annually by the PCC, to ensure that any new legislation is incorporated in the policy. This is available for download from the church website www.stmaryspurton.org.uk

Please read the detailed Safeguarding report (see separate report).

Full PCC minutes are displayed on the notice board once they have been agreed at the subsequent PCC meeting.

Our church website continues to give detail of what is on in the parish. However, the PCC has agreed to have a new design of website in place for 2020. St Mary's Facebook page continues to be popular.

The village leaflet drop continued at Easter and Christmas. Thank you to all the distributors who 'posted' the leaflets through letterboxes.

We give our final thanks to all who so willingly volunteer to help St Mary's Church Family in whatever capacity, THANK YOU

Sandra Horsnall, Jane Smith and Paul Dempsey

Renewal progress in 2019

Summary

This has been a good year for the Renewal Project. Approvals have been granted and work to prepare a tender to appoint a construction contractor all but completed. Significant funds have been raised, although not yet sufficient to cover the full cost. The components of the Project have been prioritised so that work can start even before all the funds required are available. This success has been achieved through the dedicated work of many, and the generosity and support of the whole Church Family. Thank you.

Approvals

We started the year working with the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC) to improve our proposals for the Renewal of the Church building and developing the supporting material to give our application for a Faculty (the Anglican term for planning and listed building permission) the best possible chance of approval. This work included commissioning an archaeological and structural study of the wall through which we have proposed a new door to be cut for the toilets. We submitted our Faculty Application with the supporting reports in April and the Chancellor granted us a Faculty for all we proposed in June. The advice from the DAC was not to include the repair and redecoration of the interior of the Church in the Faculty but to apply for this through a less rigorous process as it was like-for-like maintenance and we successfully applied for approval of this work too. The formal approval of all we planned marked a major milestone in this ten-year project. We could now move on to getting the work done.

Preparing a tender for the construction work

Over the summer we recruited consultants to turn our proposals into a formal *Invitation to Tender* document required by contractors to bid for the work. The consultants appointed included our architect to carry out the detailed design work and provide drawings, M&E consultants to design the mechanical (mainly heating and plumbing works) and electrical aspects, structural engineers to make sure changes to the Church structure are safe, a quantity surveyor and tender writer both to

provide us with an estimate of the likely cost and to draw up the *Invitation to Tender*. By the end of the year the papers were ready to be sent out straight after the Christmas break, early in 2020. The detailed design work and the cost estimate led to some modifications to the project. Some changes were made to reduce the cost. These included a decision not to buy new cupboards but to re-use existing ones as far as possible, to scale back the work proposed to redesign the wooden West Screen and to delay the work to add more car parking spaces. The lighting proposals were also scaled back to save money. These changes brought the estimated cost of the construction work plus other cost to around £600,000. Other changes included reducing the number of fan-assisted radiators in the Nave and replacing them with more cast-iron column radiators, and modification of the new toilet block to accommodate the different floor levels discovered between the Nave and the existing toilet. In addition, a small group considered what appliances were required in the new kitchen and the information provided to the architect.

To oversee this work, the PCC set up the Renewal Management Team. This brought in Howard Smith and Jim Mosely's skills to support the work. The RMT remit is to oversee the implementation of the approved proposals for the Renewal Project.

Prioritisation

The PCC thought it prudent to develop plans for phasing the Renewal work so that clear options were in place should insufficient funds be raised in time to let a contract for the whole project. They asked Richard Harris to work with a subgroup of the PCC to prioritise the scope of the work. The workshops Richard ran identified those parts of the project that were foundational, i.e. required to be done whilst the church was shut. These were assigned the highest priority. Other items, the dais, kitchen-serverey and sound desk, were then selected as essential to the Renewal and so had the next priority. This left other important items, the glazing of the Ringing Chamber and the Lady Chapel and of lowest priority the addition of a mezzanine floor for storage in the Vestry. These priorities were accepted by the PCC.

Preparations for the construction phase

In our first meeting with our architect after the Faculty was granted it became clear that there would be significant extra costs if we tried to keep the Church open during the construction stage. Therefore, very reluctantly the PCC agreed that the Church would have to close for about 6 months in the second half of 2020.

It was also agreed that we would arrange to clear the Nave ourselves, selling off the pews to raise funds.

The Quinquennial Inspection of the Church during the year identified urgent electrical work that needs to be done so that the building is safe when it is handed over to the contractor to start the construction. The Inspection also identified that the floor of the Sounding Chamber above the Ringing Chamber needs to be made safe. These will be carried out early in 2020.

An asbestos survey has also needed to be commissioned to ensure there is no legacy asbestos in parts of the building where building work will take place.

As soon as the Faculty was approved, arrangements were made to have the inner South Doors glazed. This work was completed in time for Christmas services and made a more welcoming entrance.

The Wardens are also reviewing all that is currently stored in the Church building, and what will be required after the Renewal is complete and removing items that are no longer required.

Fundraising

Following the approval of the Faculty, letters were sent to all those who had pledged money for the Renewal work in 2018. By the end of the year 98% of the pledged money had been confirmed and the Renewal Account had a balance of £193,000 with a further £127,000 promised including recovered Gift Aid. This shows the amazing generosity of the Church Family.

In addition, during the year the PCC committed £85,000 from its reserves to the Renewal Project.

Two grant applications to the Landfill Community Fund for a total of £30,000 were successful. A grant application has also been made to the National Churches Trust.

Members of the Church Family have or are planning fundraising events.

Dave Nettleton, Chair Renewal Group

Deanery Synod

Themes running through Synod meetings over this year have been the Diocesan Uganda Link, the new Deanery Academy and Engaging with Scripture. In October, a group of Ugandans visited – staying in the homes of Church Members across the Deanery. The party included The African Youth Choir who performed a number of concerts.

The Deanery Academy opened in September – taking in its first year of pupils. Synod met there in November enabling members to see some of the ‘state of the art facilities’ such as the large raked lecture theatre in which Bishop Viv addressed representatives.

At each meeting of synod during the year the account of the two on the road to Emmaus was read several times over along with personal and group reflections. Our Bishop gave hers – sharing a little of her own journey from student mission involvement through qualification to become a Deacon - on to her present ministry.

St Mary’s took its chance to host synod during a long Purton June evening. Your representatives led worship and the gathering was addressed by a speaker from the J Arthur Rank Organisation who have recently opened a national resource centre for churches – based centrally in Warwickshire. The theme of the evening – Mission in a Rural Context – our parish being seen as a fitting venue to reflect upon the relationship between the urban and the rural in ministry and mission – food for thought and further challenge as we seek to develop new areas of service.

David Martin, Deanery Synod Representative

Gift Aid

Gift Aid continues to make a significant contribution to St Mary’s income each year and we are hugely grateful to all our taxpaying donors who ‘gift aid’ their donations. *Under this scheme, HM Revenue and Customs gives the church an extra 25p for each pound given by taxpayers.* To make this tax reclaim possible, individuals need only fill in their name and address on a declaration form - which I would be delighted to provide!.

In 2019, through gift aid, St Mary’s was able to claim tax refunds of £10,060 for general donations, £360 for donations from the Friends of St Mary’s and £400 for donations/fundraising for the Youth Worker fund. In addition, donations to our Renewal fund were boosted by £18,600 through gift aid.

Most of our general donations during the year come in through regular giving - by standing order, by the envelope scheme and, more recently, by direct debit through the Parish Giving Scheme. We started using the Parish Giving Scheme in 2018 and *we encourage our regular givers to move to this scheme if possible.* One benefit of the scheme is that gift aid monies can be collected more efficiently and promptly. Please contact our treasurer Berta Legg if you would like to join the Parish Giving Scheme.

Paul Dempsey

Purton Junior Church

We have continued to meet in the Millennium Hall from 10.30 to 11.30. At present the age range of the children is 4 to 10 years. Parents of the younger children usually stay with them. We continue to include a range of music, games and craft activities to support the bible-based teaching. After a whole group session, when the bible learning is introduced, the children move to two groups according to their age.

We participated in the Anniversary service in December when the children received their JMA certificates in recognition of their fundraising collection boxes.

The children enjoyed making a large collage angel to display at St. Mary's Church for the Festival of Angels and being 'the stars' in the annual Christmas Eve Nativity service. Junior Church children also attend the monthly Messy Church sessions at 4pm on a Sunday.

We have welcomed a new family to Junior Church this year. 12 children attend on a regular basis.

Mary Hodges, Jean Bamford and Mary Smith

Friends of St Mary's Church

It is satisfying to see the increased use of St Mary's Church, as a place of worship, a venue for baptism and marriage celebration and a setting for community benefits. The excellent booklet in the Church – History and Guide, enlightens visitors on the important part St Mary's has played in the history and heritage of Purton. Many visitors take advantage of the 'open door policy' to spend time in viewing and enjoying the peace of our church. It is hoped that the appreciation engendered will encourage new supporters for Friends of St Mary's.

Loyal commitment is inherent in our contributors and Friends of St Mary's continue in their generous sponsorship. The PCC is extremely grateful for their contribution which helps in maintenance and the preservation of this wonderful Grade 1 listed building.

Sadly, at the time of writing there is no Secretary or group in post to ensure that the 'Friends' keep supporting!

Sandra Horsnall

Youth Work

We have much to be thankful for in our youth work. COURAGE (the oldest youth group, under our Youth Worker Simon's dedicated leadership) has met fortnightly to enjoy friendship and enthusiastic exploration of their Christian faith. Their contribution to our morning church services has been much appreciated as has IGNITE

As we looked at the 'whole picture' we were aware that although the 'young' youth were well served by Pram Service, UJC, School Assemblies (and all Glenys' work in St Mary's School) and Messy Church. And the 'older' youth had COURAGE, there was a 'gap' around the 10-11 year olds.

Therefore, this year we've run an afterschool club – IMPACT - for years 4-6. Many thanks to Simon, Marie and Chris Seals for turning up on Thursday afternoons to engage an often rather lively bunch of children with the truths of God's word in a thoughtful and fun way.

We continue to thank God for the privilege of relating to so many young people who have links with the church in our village. Please pray with us that we will be faithful and effective in making disciples in our work with them.

Celia Tweedie- Smith

St Mary's School Governors

Our Church of England Primary School continues to be a school to be proud of and it deserves our support for the important role it plays in our village life.

The number of children on roll was 362 in January 2019 increasing to 369 in November 2019.

The school's focus remains on ensuring the children achieve their very best through the very best teaching, appropriate and timely intervention and keeping them safe. The school has robust pastoral support and safeguarding procedures and is committed to safeguarding, having a culture of vigilance in all aspects of Safeguarding and Child Protection.

At the start of the school year preparations for a SIAMS (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools) began, the Worship lead, Glynis Stevens, is very busy collating the information required to, hopefully, result in a good report (the option of excellent is no longer available for SIAMS inspection).

Visitors from Purton Churches attend and lead school assemblies on a weekly basis. The school has termly worship themes that form the basis for the school and class worship. These themes enable pupils to discuss and learn about important moral, religious and social ideas together as a whole school community. The school takes opportunities to seek out the spiritual in their learning.

The Governing Body usually meets 11 times during the academic year, dividing the meetings between full governor meetings and focus meetings. There are positions for two Foundation Governors appointed by the Bristol Diocese Board of Education through the PCC. As well as other aspects of being a school governor, the particular role of a Foundation Governor is to form a strong working link between the church and the school. This involves attending meetings regularly, visiting the school on other occasions and working closely with the Worship Lead at the school to help promote and maintain the school's Christian ethos.

I reported, last year, that we were in need of a new Foundation Governor and I am very happy to report that Julia Knowles has accepted the challenge and has been in role for a while.

We were delighted to welcome the whole school to St Mary's Church for special services during the year – the Year 6 Leavers Service, Harvest Festival and the Christmas Carol Service.

The Senior Leadership Team at the school remains the same as last year, Mrs Naomi Clarke as Head Teacher and Mr Russ Payne as Deputy Head, both are committed to St Mary's and the children in their care.

Marie Dempsey, Foundation Governor

Pram Service

Pram Service January 2019 – December 2019

We meet in Playclose Methodist Church on Thursday 2.20pm to 3.00pm term time only.

On average we have 10 children plus adults. Staff from Pear Drops Preschool lead the singing and Marion Hobbs tells the bible story with a variety of props, always finishing with a prayer. They usually have a bible story picture to take home and colour. We sometimes have a game and craft. Over the year the children's pennies amounted to £38.79p which has been donated to "Action for Children".

We planted flowers to display outside the Playclose Church for Open Gardens. The planters were also part of St. Mary's Church Harvest Festival decorations. Each child decorated an angel for St. Mary's Angel Festival, which were placed around the font and the children took their angel home afterwards. They each planted a hyacinth bulb in a mug and took them home at Christmas. Follow us on facebook@pramservicepurton

Marion Hobbs

St Mary's Bell Ringers

During 2019, St Mary's Bell ringers rang for 37 10.30am Sunday services, six other Sunday services, four weddings, and one funeral. The average attendance for Sunday morning services was six ringers. We held 35 Friday evening practices, with an average attendance of seven ringers. We have welcomed numerous casual visitors dropping in from other local towers this year, as well as arranged visits by groups from further afield.

Special ringing last year included five quarter peals. We rang one for the confirmation service and to celebrate the birth of a new grandson for Mary and Dave Nettleton; it also marked 45 years' service to the tower by Alan Woodward. We also rang a quarter peal for Remembrance. Visitors from the Salisbury Diocesan Guild rang a quarter peal here, also *in memoriam*, and a visiting band from our

own Guild rang a quarter peal of Cambridge Surprise Major. In November, we rang a quarter peal for All Souls and in memory of Dr John Belt. Quarter peals are longer set-pieces of ringing which on St Mary's bells usually takes around 50 minutes. They are a test of concentration for all the ringers involved!

Sadly, we tolled the tenor for Notre Dame Cathedral, Paris, in response to the terrible fire. All of this regular ringing and these special events require co-ordination and also maintenance in the belfry. This is a good time to thank our small team, especially Tower Captain, Secretary and Treasurer, for their work over the year.

We have a number of learners at the moment, some just beginning and others who will soon be ready to ring for Sunday services. They are all doing really well. However, we will soon be visiting other towers to continue practicing during the re-ordering. We will look forward to moving back into the tower, which will be a good opportunity to do some more celebratory ringing!

Katy Whitaker

Coffee and Chat

Coffee and Chat has had a successful year.

We continue to make the rent most weeks although the Age Concern outings clash with us. Our Christmas carols and chat with mince pies etc. was well attended and with the raffle was a useful contribution to the funds.

Sadly, some of our regulars are becoming older and more frail but everyone enjoys the chat and games - dominoes, scrabble or rummicub.

Val Walker

Social Committee

Many thanks to everyone who has supported our social and fundraising events during the year (Period - Jan 19 to Dec 19)

Sat 05 April – Murder Mystery Evening with PADS in the Village Hall. An exciting and enjoyable evening

Sat 14 Sept - Ride & Stride for Wiltshire Historic Churches – Refreshments were provided for visiting cyclists and walkers to St Mary's Church.

A total of £530 was raised for Wiltshire Historic Churches Trust by members of the congregation. We received a cheque for £265 for St Mary's Church funds.

Sat 28 Sept – Thamesdown Ladies Choir and Purton Pealers Handbell Ringers held an evening concert in St Mary's Church.

Sun 03 Nov - Refreshments served after All Souls Service

Sat 23 Nov - Christmas Market (lunches and refreshments served) at the Village Hall

Sun 24 Nov - Saxophone Choir and Purton Village Voices in afternoon concert at St Mary's Church

Sun 08 Dec - Classic Christmas Carols – pies and punch served afterwards

Sun 22 Dec - Nine Lessons and Carols – refreshments provided afterwards

We had another busy year and we hope that you had an enjoyable time at the events you attended. Our focus this year was to raise funds for the Church Renewal project. The Committee's aim is always to be social and provide refreshments when needed in both the church and the community. Refreshments were served after the 10.30 am service each Sunday, giving people a chance to chat and catch up with friends, neighbours and visitors alike.

Sadly, we did not run the Harvest Barn Dance in October. Numbers in the previous year had fallen considerably! If you feel that it should be resurrected in 2020 please let me know!

More enjoyable events are planned for 2020. As always, we welcome new people with new ideas and enthusiasm to the Social Committee.

Sandra Horsnall

St Marys' Fellowship of Women

St. Mary's Fellowship continues and 2019 was another good year hearing interesting speaker's and thought - provoking Devotional meetings at Easter and Christmas.

At present we have 23 members and hoping to have a returning member in the next month.

Unfortunately, 2 of our members passed away during the year and both are very sadly missed.

Any ladies who would like to join us once a month on a Monday afternoon will be most welcome, the meetings are held in the Methodist Church in Play Close.

Susan Berry

Lent Lunches

Lent Lunches took place last year every Wednesday for four weeks from 6 until 27 March at Purton Methodist Church and were very successful. Approximately 180 people in total came to the lunches. £1,100 was raised and sent to Mercy Ships, a medical charity, who work in some of the poorest countries of the world delivering vital, free healthcare to people in desperate need.

Sylvia Freemantle/Heather Hunt

Floodlighting Report

St Mary's provides Floodlighting of the Church on request. This has been an on-going service for over sixteen years now and costs just £20 per night. In 2019 this provided a gross income of about £850 which goes towards running costs and equipment maintenance with any surplus being used for the general maintenance of the Church.

Most bookings are repeats each year. Although we encourage people to consider floodlighting for all sorts of celebrations, usually they are for 'in memory' and for special dates in the Church year. We encourage people in the village to use the facility, using the Village Magazine. We feel this is a useful way of 'creating connections' with the village.

We try our best to make sure the lighting commitments work, but occasionally there are power cuts and other complications, so we apologise and offer another night of their choice, for free.

We would like to thank Purton Magazine for setting out the announcements so carefully each month. This costs us nothing and is very much appreciated.

Libbie Sheppard & Paul Dempsey

St Mary's Purton Safeguarding Report

Your Parish Safeguarding Officers are:

Kathryn Bartlett: 01793 778059 or 07811583286 kathryn.m.bartlett44@gmail.com

Marie Dempsey: 01793 770826 or 07455046815 marie.dempsey@live.co.uk

The PCC have adopted a Safeguarding Policy that takes account and follows the policy and practise guidance from the House of Bishops and of 'Promoting a Safer Church', the Church of England's Safeguarding Policy for children, young people and adults. It can be found on the church noticeboard or on the church website.

Safeguarding Recruitment, Training and DBS checks

We are in the process of ensuring everyone who works as a volunteer for the church with children or vulnerable adults is safely recruited and has received safeguarding training and if appropriate has received a DBS check. The Church of England and Bristol Diocese have detailed guidelines on this and we are currently looking at all the new guidance and looking at who needs to be safely recruited, who needs to have a DBS check and who needs safeguarding training & then we will contact people accordingly.

Reporting present and historical Safeguarding Concerns

Ian, the church wardens & Marie Dempsey & Kathryn Bartlett (the Parish Safeguarding Officers) have been asked by the Bishop to sign a document saying that we have reported all safeguarding concerns to the Diocese, both present & historical cases, which we have done.

Lone Working in Church

We have had a parishioner who has highlighted that working on your own in the Church, could potentially leave you in a vulnerable position. There are a few things that can help to keep you safe:

- Only be alone in the church when absolutely necessary. When at all possible go with another person.
- If you have to work alone in the church, make sure someone knows where you are, that you are alone and what time you will be home.
- Take a mobile phone with you, make sure it is on & kept with you at all times.

If someone comes into church and makes you feel in a vulnerable situation:

- Try to move to position yourself near the door so you can try to attract the attention of someone passing by
- make your excuses & leave, saying that you are meeting someone and you need to leave now as they're waiting for you
- Pretend you have an incoming call and go outside to take the call saying the reception is better outside (don't worry that your phone isn't ringing, you can say it's on silent!) If necessary pretend to answer the phone.
- If necessary call 999

We are currently looking into the possibility of purchasing an alarm, which we could keep in a central location in the church so lone workers can have access

How do I report a Safeguarding concern?

Over the page is a sheet for you to keep which takes you through who to contact with a safeguarding concern.

St Mary's Purton Safeguarding Report

If the situation is urgent/an emergency

i.e. there is an imminent risk of harm: contact the police on 101 or 999 as appropriate

If it is not urgent/an emergency and you have a concern about church safeguarding

Inform the Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) of your concern:

Kathryn Bartlett: 01793 778059 or 07811583286 kathryn.m.bartlett44@gmail.com

Marie Dempsey: 01793 770826 or 07455046815 marie.dempsey@live.co.uk

If the concern is about the people named above or if you can't contact the people above and if advice is needed contact **Our Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (DSA): 0117 906 0100**

If advice is needed on a church safeguarding issue and the PSO or DSA are not available, the **Thirty One:Eight¹ (a Christian Charity) provide a helpline can be contacted on 0303 003 11 11**. Please state that you are calling from a Diocese of Bristol church and contact your PSO as soon as possible to report that you sought advice from Thirty One:Eight and the action you have taken.

if it is not urgent/an emergency and is NOT a concern about church safeguarding

Contact the Local Authority that the person you are concerned about lives in
CHILDREN (Under 18 years)

Swindon Borough Council

Non emergencies office hours: Monday-Thursday 8.30am-4.40pm & Friday 8.30am-4.00pm

Telephone: 01793 466903

Email: swindonmash@swindon.gov.uk

Non emergencies (out of office hours) Call 101

Wiltshire Council

Office hours [Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub \(MASH\)](#) 0300 456 0108

Out of Office Hours 0300 456 0100

ADULTS (over 18 years old)

Swindon Borough Council

Office Hours Monday to Friday inclusive, 8.30am to 5.00pm

01793 463555 E-mail: adultsafeguarding@swindon.gov.uk

Out of Office Hours Emergency Duty Service

For reporting safeguarding concerns that require urgent action-01793 436699

Wiltshire Council

Office Hours Monday to Thursday, 8.30am-5.20pm Friday 8.30am-4.20pm

Adult Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) 0300 456 0111

Email: adviceandcontact@wiltshire.gov.uk

Out of Office Hours If you need urgent help or advice 0300 456 0100

Police: 999 (emergency) or 101 (non emergency)

Not sure whether to report a concern? Please do! It is better to report/get advice about something that you didn't need to, than to stay quiet about something that turns out to be important.

¹ Formerly known as Churches Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS)

Diocesan Synod annual report (for inclusion in PCC Annual reports)

The Diocesan Synod, which is the primary, elected representative body drawn from across the Diocese of Bristol, met three times in 2019: in March, June and November. As well as hearing about and discussing a wide range of areas of the Church's work, it helps formulate and approve policy and the diocesan budget and debates important local and national issues affecting the Church.

Environment and Climate Justice

The Diocese's response to care for creation (the fifth mark of Anglican Mission) and climate change started and ended the synod's year. In March, Sarah Wiggins, Global Advocacy Leader with Tearfund, talked about what individuals and churches can do to care for creation and the Synod commissioned a new Environmental and Climate Justice Policy.

The policy, which forms a framework for activity ranging from worship to buildings to campaigns, was brought back for debate and approved unanimously at the November Synod. The November Synod also debated a motion from City Deanery to declare a Climate Emergency and commit the Diocese to net zero emissions by 2030. In passing the motion, Bristol Diocese became the first to make both commitments and subsequently influenced the General Synod to do the same.

bristol.anglican.org/environment

Pastoral Principles for Living Well Together

Ed Shaw, Licensed Lay Minister at Emmanuel Bristol and General Synod member on Pastoral Advisory Group, presented and led a facilitated session on the Pastoral Principles, a resource which invites church communities to consider and discuss their life together as a diverse community. The resources focus on LGBTI+ issues but apply to wider issues of diversity that the churches find difficult to discuss. The Pastoral Principles were commended for use and the Synod will discuss Living in Love and Faith later in 2020.

Churchofengland.org/PAG

Diocesan finances

The Synod's role approving the financial plans of the Diocesan Board of Finance was part of both the June and November meetings. In June Andrew Lucas, Chair of the Diocesan Board of Finance, presented the 2018 Annual Report and Financial Statements and gave an update on the Financial Plan. In November, he presented the 2020 Budget for approval.

Over the last few years, the Diocesan Board of Finance has increased its investment in ministry and support as part of the Creating connections vision and strategic plan that supports it. This has included a significant growth in ordinands and curates to lead the Church of the future. As a result, the Synod approved budgeted expenditure of £10.2m in 2020.

However, as Parish Share has not increased as planned, operating deficits have increased from £291,000 in 2018 to a budgeted deficit of £658,000. If the Diocese is to sustain ministry, Parish Share will need to increase in 2020.

Other reports and discussions included:

The **Bristol-Uganda Link** celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2019 and Synod heard from Revd Chris Dobson in March about the continuing ministry between the two places, with contributions from those who had experienced it.

Giving the **Annual Safeguarding Report** in June, Mal Munday, Interim Independent Chair spoke passionately to synod about the need to move to a culture within our churches where everyone understands how vital safe practices are in order to get to a place where abuse stops happening.

Meeting at the newly opened Deanery CE Academy in Swindon in November, Liz Townend, newly appointed diocesan Director of Education invited discussion about **Engaging younger generations through schools**. Synod then reflected on how the diocese as a whole can value and support its church schools further and how the church community can increase its impact in schools.

