

**THE PARISH OF ST MARY THE VIRGIN
WESTWOOD**



**AGENDA
for the Meeting of Parishioners
and
Annual Parochial Church Meeting
on 17 March 2019 in the Parish Room
at 1.30pm
with the**

**MINUTES
of the Meetings of 25 March 2018
and the**

**ANNUAL REPORT AND
FINANCIAL REPORT
FOR THE YEAR 2018**

THE PARISH OF ST MARY THE VIRGIN, WESTWOOD

**Agendas for the Meetings to be held in the Parish Room
on Sunday, 17 March 2019 at 1.30pm**

MEETING OF PARISHIONERS

1. Opening Prayers
2. Apologies for absence
3. Minutes of the Meeting of Parishioners held on 25 March 2018
4. Matters Arising
5. Appointment of Churchwardens

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the APCM held on 25 March 2018
3. Matters arising
4. Electoral Roll Report
5. Annual Reports and Accounts
 - a. Treasurer's Report and Accounts for 2018
 - b. Churchwarden's Report on fabric, goods and ornaments
 - c. Deanery Synod Report
6. Elections and appointments
 - a. PCC members
 - b. Sidespersons
 - c. Independent Examiner of the accounts
7. Rector's Report: 'The Year Ahead'
8. Any Other Business and questions

PARISH OF ST MARY THE VIRGIN, WESTWOOD

Minutes of the Annual Parochial Meetings held in the Parish Room on Sunday, 25 March 2018 at 1.15pm

Meeting of Parishioners

Present

Revd Canon Joanna Abecassis (Chair), David Chalmers, Lesley Chalmers, Betty Hancock, Ann Hawke, Anne Holt, Sue Lindsay (Treasurer), Mary Needham, Pat Osgathorp, Paul Slade and Sally Streeter

1. Opening Prayers

These were led by Joanna.

2. Apologies

Christine Dean, Rebecca Edwards, Elizabeth Luxton, Jill Ross (Secretary) and Sue Snailum.

3. Minutes of the Meeting of Parishioners held on 9 April 2017

These were approved as a true record and signed by the Rector.

4. Matters Arising

There were none.

5. Appointment of Churchwardens

Paul Slade: proposed by Anne Holt and seconded by Betty Hancock.

There were no other nominations, so Paul was therefore declared as having been duly appointed and Joanna thanked him very much for another good year.

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

Present (as above)

1. Apologies (as above)

2. Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on 9 April 2017

These were approved and signed by the Rector.

3. Matters Arising

There were none.

4. Electoral Roll Report

The new Electoral Roll had 48 members, down from 52 the previous year. Seven members were non-residents of Westwood.

5. Annual Report and Accounts (printed copies had already been circulated)

a) *Treasurer's Report and Accounts* for 2017 – this was presented by Sue, who referred to her written report. She commented on how extremely valuable was the GASD Scheme, which enabled us to recover Gift Aid on cash donations. The Diocesan Share was up by just

over £2000 for 2018, but Sue said that she didn't anticipate too many difficulties in us making the books balance. There were no comments or questions, and so Joanna took the opportunity to thank Sue for all her very cheerful and efficient hard work as Treasurer – not an easy task, by any means.

b) *Churchwarden's Report* - Paul spoke to his written report, pointing out that several projects – like the Church Booklet and tower stair-rail – were nearing completion.

David Chalmers asked about the plasterwork on the nave ceiling, and Paul said that he was seeking professional advice and so tests would be carried out. He hoped to be able to obtain grants from the Wiltshire Historic Churches Trust and (maybe?) the Allchurches Trust. And he congratulated Paul on the magnificent illuminated star on the church tower at Christmas. Sue asked about the state of the boiler? And Paul said it was fine.

Parish Room Report – David (as Secretary) spoke about what an amazing success this venture had been, and how the trustees had been working very hard, and there always seemed to be a volunteer to hand. New power sockets and glass doors at the South end were the next project.

c) *Deanery Synod Report* - Joanna commented on what had been a good and varied year, and highlighted especially the fascinating updates which were received from Sudan. She referred church members to the detailed written report which was prepared by the Synod Secretary.

6. Elections and Appointments

a) *PCC members*

Sally Streeter was proposed by Pat Osgathorp and seconded by Betty Hancock.

Sue Lindsay was proposed by Betty Hancock and seconded by Anne Holt.

Both Sally and Sue were duly deemed elected, and warmly welcomed onto the PCC.

b) *Sidespersons*: Martin Higgs, Douglas Hancock, Julia Romain, Lesley Chalmers and Jill Ross. These were proposed by David Chalmers and seconded by Anne Holt, and duly appointed.

c) *Independent Examiner of the Accounts*

Mike Stillwell was proposed by Sue Lindsay, seconded by Mary Needham and duly appointed. Sue said that his 2019 Examination would be his tenth year, and therefore his last. We would need to think of a suitable thank you gift.

7. Rector's Report: 'The Year Ahead'

Joanna began by commenting on the written Annual Report, which gave a remarkably clear and vivid account of our life as a church family in 2017 and showed just how much had been achieved, and how far we had travelled! And this was of course due to our amazing team of (all too often) unsung heroes who had been working very hard. And so she offered a big thank you to them all individually, not forgetting those outside the parish: so Ali, who was such a great support and inspiration to us all, and Sally and Aylene who kept us all in order, again, behind the scenes.

And before moving on to the 'year ahead', she said that it was important to acknowledge the (far too) many friends who we had lost in the last year – those who in their different ways had enriched our lives, and often those of this community too, for many, many years. So we remembered before God: Vivian Hancock who died on 10 March at 89, Hilda Lovell who died on 13 June at 93 and after 71 years of marriage, Wally Cooper who died on 24 September at 97, Arthur Padfield who died on 12 October also at 97, and then Bernard Lovell on 11 November at 95. She said that our average age must have dropped dramatically – they had 471 years of life experience between them... But we bade farewell to each one with the care,

respect and in the manner which they deserved. And they had then been joined by Bernard Pendle and Rob Hill who had both died two weekends before the APCM, at 74 and 70 respectively – far too young and after struggling for many years with pretty relentless illness. We thank God for each one and for the blessings which they have offered us.
May they rest in peace and rise in glory.

And so to the year ahead... Joanna said that we would hopefully hear some more from our gifted young musicians – not least as finding organists was becoming harder and harder. We had lots of plans for the restoration of the building – funds permitting – and, most especially, to try and ease the damp in the church porch – and, as a part of that, to store as much as possible in the (now dry!) new vestry in the Parish Room. We looked forward to the publication of the new Guide Book, very soon, with many thanks to David and Sue for their hard work and patience on this (along with the PCC, Paul and Aylene) – and also to another about the Lily Window, which would all enhance the visitor experience. And then plans were already shaping up for another really special and creative Remembrance Sunday Service, commemoration and lunch, falling as it did on the 11th day of the 11th month.

Joanna also spoke of the PCC being able to gain some inspiration in the year ahead from the phenomenal success of the Parish Room, where we had even had a couple of very happy and fruitful Family Services a couple of weeks before, when the church heating was not working. So we now had between us a really exciting and 'alive' corner of the village. How to build on that in our mission was a real challenge for the year ahead. The trustees – not least with Caroline and her very successful Café and Community Lunches – had shown how, with enough vision and energy, a 'start-up' was really possible and that should give us great hope.

For God is good – and through the riches of his grace, the most unlikely things become possible. With prayer – vision – commitment – energy – anything was possible. And she left members with the reminder that all projects started small!

8. Any Other Business and Questions

- There was some discussion about Remembrance Sunday 2018 which would mark the centenary of the end of the First World War. Mary was planning a wonderful textile poppy display, and it was agreed that Joanna should talk to the Primary School about holding a special midweek School Service.
- And it was agreed that we should all encourage the young people and their music, especially for Mothering Sunday, Harvest and Christmas.
- Anne Holt then offered a word of thanks to Joanna.

The meeting ended at 2.20pm.

THE PARISH OF ST MARY THE VIRGIN, WESTWOOD ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2018

Administrative information

The parish is part of the Benefice of Bradford on Avon Holy Trinity, Westwood and Wingfield, within the Bradford Group Ministry, in the Deanery of Bradford, in the Diocese of Salisbury, within the Church of England.

REVIEW OF THE YEAR 2018

Churchwarden's report on the Fabric, Goods of the Church and churchyard

Church Fabric

Paintwork

The repairs to the paintwork of the Nave and the repainting of the Chancel will be the main priority of planned maintenance for the coming year. The examination by the consultant recommended by the Church Architect was unfruitful as she deemed that the work was beyond her expertise. A new appraisal has been organized.

Stone flooring

The stone floor in the Chancel has completely dried following the removal of the carpeting and is in good condition.

Tower handrail

The handrail was installed in the summer. It is a good solid piece of work that looks entirely in keeping with the spiral stairs. It makes the journey to the ringing chamber, both up and down, much less of a challenge and the regular users are very pleased with it.

Annual checks

Fire Extinguisher, Lightning Conductor and PAT Tests have all been carried out and passed successfully.

Church Booklet

This was published last summer. Many thanks to David and Sue for their hard work in preparing it. Rather than making a fixed charge, visitors who take a copy home are asked to make a donation into the wall-safe. We will keep an eye on donations received.

Churchyard

The hedging around the oil tank has been tidied and trimmed. The intermittency of the mowing remains a constant problem and I fully sympathize with the Council with their lack of resources. They have agreed to pollard the trees but cannot say when. There has been a proposal that we pay for the Churchyard maintenance ourselves but I am reluctant to go down that path.

Parish Rooms and Vestry

A new storage cupboard in the main hall of the Parish Rooms is planned, which will enable us to take back full use of the Vestry. A new window is also to be installed. Many of the items in the cupboard by the West door will then be able to be transferred away from the damp conditions and we can look at re-arranging the cupboards and furnishings in the main entrance.

Paul Slade
Churchwarden

Parish Room Report

An independent charity holding a 99 year lease from the Salisbury Diocesan Board of Finance with Westwood PCC

This report covers the calendar year 2018. The trustees met five times during the year, including four ordinary meetings and one special meeting to resolve an informal complaint of late evening noise.

Trustees and Management Committee

Since its formation, the Parish Room Charity has been lucky enough and continues to benefit greatly from having a full and committed group of seven trustees and one voluntary member with broad capability and skills from marketing to finance management.

During 2018 there has been little change to the trustees and management committee, although one trustee, Russell Batten, stepped down at the end of the year. James Crawford has agreed to take on the publicity task in addition to his other responsibilities. Appointment of a trustee to fill this vacancy from various interested parties is being considered although there is no requirement to fill the role quickly, and now the rooms are refurbished a smaller group may be beneficial. There is likely to be a redistribution of responsibilities when a new trustee is appointed. In addition David Chalmers has indicated his wish to step down as Secretary, having been involved since the inception of the project in 2013, but is willing to wait until the Church PCC can nominate a replacement.

Improvements during the year

A number of enhancements to the property have been completed, funded entirely out of income. These include installation of blinds to all the windows, an internal glass door on the south side, and setting up broadband and Wi-Fi communications. Additionally the electricity supply has been enhanced to support all the new kitchen appliances and the water supply has been located and an official meter fitted.

A piano has been donated which has been put to good use on occasion, and shelving has been donated and fitted in the store and vestry.

Security has been improved with the fitting of an electronic key-pad entry system to the outside toilet lobby door eliminating the need for keys to be distributed to hirers.

Hiring and Usage

As part of their commitment to the community, the management and volunteers have provided a monthly community "drop-in" lunch in the six months of the year when Westwood Manor is not open. These have proved very popular in bringing people together with between 20 and 30 visitors each time. A modest charge of £2 is made for soup, a roll, cake and tea or coffee provided by Caroline Philpott and volunteers.

Westwood Manor (NT) was again open to visitors on three afternoons a week from April until the end of September and the trustees, led by Caroline Philpott and with other help from the village, provided teas for the visitors and indeed for anyone else who arrived. These are most successful and raise sufficient income to cover running costs for the period.

Regular monthly bookings are made by the Parish Council and the WI for their meetings.

The rooms continue to be a popular venue for regular Pilates and Yoga classes and for children's and other one-off parties. As owner of the property, the Church is granted an agreed number of free bookings and has made full use of them, especially over the Easter and Christmas seasons.

Management

Comprehensive Governance and Operational Procedures, completed last year, have had minor amendments in the light of experience. They now include a new section covering the Management's responsibility for GDPR which was debated and approved.

Booking conditions and fees have been developed and updated when necessary. A new simpler system of fees has been agreed and is being implemented from 1 January 2019. Contact details and hire fees are now displayed on notice boards outside the building.

In Summary

The Trustees have been very satisfied over the year by the consistent level of usage which has provided more than adequate funds to cover normal running expenses. It is the intention to create a restricted fabric fund to be built up so as to pay for known high cost maintenance, especially repairing and lining the roof. Grant funding will also be sought as necessary.

David Chalmers, Secretary to the Trustees
Westwood Parish Room Charity

Deanery Synod Report

Synod met three times in 2018:

21 February @ St James, Trowbridge
14 June @ St Michael & All Angels, Melksham
17 October @ Holy Trinity Church, Bradford on Avon

Speakers throughout 2018

At the February meeting, Emma Heath of the Christian charity 'Recovery Two' spoke. This charity was established to reach those suffering from the effects of addiction. Emma spoke from her own first hand personal experience of addiction. Emma explained how the charity helps people with courses and practical support. Literature was available for those attending the meeting to take away with them.

At the June meeting, Sarah Keen who is the Programme Manager for 'Renewing Hope in Rural Ministry' spoke. The National Church is fully supportive of this mission. In the Diocese of Salisbury 90% of parishes and 50% of the population is rural. Rural Churches have a unique dynamic and are deeply rooted in the wider community. Sarah's PowerPoint was emailed to all Synod members.

At the October meeting, the Venerable Alan Jeans, Archdeacon of Sarum, spoke in his capacity as working for M4M – Ministry for Mission. Alan's PowerPoint was emailed to all Synod members as it contained really key and interesting information, and shared exciting developments and activities taking place across the Diocese.

Clergy comings and goings

Revd Shona Hoad	moved to a different Diocese
Father Oliver Learmont	welcomed to North Bradley, Steeple Ashton and Southwick
Revd Alastair Wood	welcomed to Upper Studley

Deanery Share

David Robinson the Deanery Treasurer was pleased to report that the 2018 share had been paid in full.

Elections

In June 2018, elections were held for the Diocesan Synod and Board of Finance. There were four lay and one clergy members who were nominated and appointed.

Sudan

Dave Lewis provided regular updates either in person at Synod meetings or via reports sent on email to representatives. These were very informative and up to date on matters of concern, funding, health care and education provision. A significant project for the year was to fund raise for the Peace Primary School, which is now being built. There have been a number of events and collections across the Deanery to help with this wonderful project.

Lay Worship Leaders

In 2018 sixteen lay people from across the Deanery completed a ten-session course to become Lay Worship Leaders. Revd Rob Thomas, Revd Ann Keating and Revd John Rees led the course with one session being led by Ben Jarvis, which was about "including music in worship". A commissioning service took place on 30 September 2018 at Christ Church, Bradford on Avon.

Lay Pastoral Assistants

In 2018, four lay people from the Deanery completed a Lay Pastoral Assistants' Course and were licensed for this role on 9 January 2019 at St. Katharine's Church, Holt.

Eco Church

A number of churches have been successful in gaining awards for being an Eco Church and a very successful "Greener Bradford on Avon" event took place on 8 September 2018 at Holy Trinity, Bradford on Avon with various stands, stalls and speakers. Congratulations to everyone.

Synod meetings

Synod is open to all those who wish to attend. Meeting dates and locations are arranged well in advance and every effort is made to meet on different days of the week. The intention is to share good practice around the Deanery, and for it to be a place where ideas can be shared.

Meeting dates and locations for 2019

13 February @ St Barnabas, Beanacre

11 June @ Holy Trinity, Trowbridge

17 October @ St Michael & All Angels, Hilperton

Dawn Farmer

Deanery Secretary

Ringers' Report

Another successful year's ringing for Westwood. We were pleased to ring for the Armistice Commemorations as well as for Sunday services.

We have two trophies hanging in the tower: the Devizes Branch Trophy for the best 6-bell tower band in the annual Striking Competition, and a trophy for winning the annual Devizes Branch Novices' competition. Winning the latter came with a price; we had to ring in another competition at Zeals against towers from all over the Diocese. The band, Anne R, David, Graham and Jane, together with Beryl and Petra from Steeple Ashton, acquitted themselves well and came third.

We are now trying to ring for every Sunday Service, though this is not always possible, and is sometimes on less than six bells. Occasionally Eli is able to join us which is a great pleasure. We have also rung for the Church Fête and the Village Flower Show. We enjoyed the Harvest Lunch with you all, and sharing our Christmas Dinner with Joanna and Paul.

The new stair rail is now installed and is so much safer and more comfortable than the previous tatty rope. Thanks to everyone who made this possible. We still hope for a secure, draft-proof door to the belfry.

Our regular Thursday practices have been well attended with everyone continuing to make progress thanks to regular help from Bob from Melksham and Geoff from Bradford.

Westwood now hosts a Monthly Minor Practice (ringing methods on six bells) and there has been considerable progress for those attending.

As ever, thank you for your continued support and encouragement. New, returning and visiting ringers will always be welcome. Please contact Sue Lindsay or westwood@sdgr.org.uk

Anne R, Anne W, Barry, David, Di, Eli, Francis, Graham, Jane, Kiloran, Mike, Noah, Sheila, Sue

Treasurer's Report

Planned Giving together with cash collection has remained virtually the same as in 2017 despite the loss of two regular givers. Income tax recovered is less. The reason for this is that in 2017 GASD for both 2015/16 and 2017 was claimed and for the first time GASD was claimed on the contents of the wall safe. A bequest of £1,000 was received from Arthur Padfield.

In the 'Receipts from Church Activities' section the Christian Aid collection was the result of the Harvest Lunch and service – it is not possible to enter it twice. Money received for Kadugli, £233, was not sent until January and the PCC augmented this sum to £250. And so the actual sum of money collected during the year was £883.20 - already sent – plus the £250, making a total raised of £1,083.20. This is less than 2017 by £580.

Share for the year was £17,100. This was paid in full, but the final payment of £1,100 was not sent until January. The increase in Share over that of 2017 of over £2,000 goes a long way to explaining the down turn in the General account of £2,713.00. Increases in Benefice costs and Church running expenses account for a further £300, whilst Fees for Weddings and Funerals brought in £800 less than in 2017.

The Music Fund was finally closed and £673 was paid into the General Fund.

The Fabric Fund, despite paying for most of the handrail in the bell tower, is in a better position than it was in 2017, but that of the bell ringers is seriously depleted having paid £300 towards the handrail and nearly £180 for servicing the bells.

When compared with the figures of 10 years ago, one has to realise that the church in Westwood, along with the rest of the Church of England, has considerably changed. In that year our receipts in the General Account were £28,447 compared with £20,378 today. Our allocated Share in that year was £16,362 whilst in 2018, with fewer receipts, it was £17,100. We are still able to pay our way and Share will be paid in full this year as always, which is a real achievement but we are now fewer in number and so need to be mindful of the challenge.

Mike Stillwell, who has patiently audited the Westwood Accounts for the past 10 years feels that he needs to retire from this task and therefore a new auditor will be required for the future. He deserves huge thanks for all the work he has put in over the years.

Sue Lindsay
Treasurer

Westwood Church, Bradford-on-Avon
Financial Statement for the year ended 31 December 2018

General (Unrestricted) Fund Receipts and Payments Account

	2018		2017	
	£	£	£	£
Receipts				
Voluntary Receipts				
<i>Regular Giving</i>				
Planned giving	8,909.00		9,288.00	
Collections	3,573.60		3,375.40	
Income tax recovered	1,841.99	14,324.59	4,871.11	17,534.51
<i>Other Voluntary Receipts</i>				
Donations	1,066.56	1,066.56	480.90	480.90
Receipts from activities for generating funds				
Summer Fete	1,786.02		1,584.16	
Safari Supper	295.00	2,081.02	435.00	2,019.16
Receipts from Church Activities				
Sudan Advent Collection	-		794.80	
Harvest Lunch	-		182.00	
Refugees Advent/Nativity sets	233.00		-	
British Legion	333.00		-	
Remembrance Sunday	-		120.50	
Water Aid collection	267.10		264.20	
Christian Aid collection	283.10		70.00	
Fees	1,117.00		1,914.00	
Transfer from Music Fund	673.00	2,906.20	-	3,345.50
Total Receipts		<u>20,378.37</u>		<u>23,380.07</u>
Payments				
Church activities				
Diocesan parish share	16,000.10		14,974.00	
Charitable giving	883.20		1,665.70	
Church running expenses	3,238.78		3,065.59	
Bradford Deanery	10.00		10.00	
Cost of services	41.28		90.98	
Buildings maintenance	797.00		494.23	
Benefice costs	1,925.00		1,765.00	
Organist gifts & pay	195.00		40.11	
Transfer to Fabric Fund	-		20.00	
Total Payments		<u>23,090.36</u>		<u>22,125.61</u>
Excess (Deficit) between Receipts and Payments		<u>(2,711.99)</u>		<u>1,254.46</u>

**Westwood Church, Bradford-on-Avon
Financial Statement for the year ended 31 December 2018**

Church Fabric Receipts and Payments Fund - Restricted Fund

	2018	2017
	£	£
Receipts		
Restricted Donations	420.00	740.00
VAT Refund	770.60	-
Interest	-	-
Transfer from General Fund	-	-
	<u>1,190.60</u>	<u>740.00</u>
Payments	522.00	3,717.60
Excess / (deficit) of Receipts over Payments	668.60	(2,977.60)

Bell Ringers Receipts and Payments Fund - Restricted Fund

	2018	2017
	£	£
Receipts		
Restricted Donations	134.00	331.00
Payments	779.09	100.00
Excess of Receipts over Payments	(645.09)	231.00

Westwood Church, Bradford-on-Avon
Financial Statement for the year ended 31 December 2018

BALANCE SHEET

	2018	2017
	£	£
Bank Balances		
Treasurer's Account	7,541.09	10,254.30
Fabric Fund	5,646.07	4,976.25
Bell Ringers Account	174.95	820.04
	<u>13,362.11</u>	<u>16,050.59</u>
Funds	2018	2017
	£	£
General Fund - Unrestricted		
Balance at 1 January	10,253.08	8,998.62
Surplus/(deficit) for year	(2,711.99)	1,254.46
Balance at 31 December	<u>7,541.09</u>	<u>10,253.08</u>
Fabric Fund - Restricted		
Balance at 1 January	4,977.47	7,955.07
Surplus/(deficit) for year	668.60	(2,977.60)
Balance at 31 December	<u>5,646.07</u>	<u>4,977.47</u>
Bell Ringers Fund - Restricted		
Balance at 1 January	820.04	589.04
Surplus/(deficit) for year	(645.09)	231.00
Balance at 31 December	<u>174.95</u>	<u>820.04</u>
Total Funds	<u>13,362.11</u>	<u>16,050.59</u>

Independent examiner's report to the PCC of St Mary The Virgin Westwood

This report on the financial statements of the PCC for the year ended 31 December 2018 set out on the attached pages is in respect of an examination carried out in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 ("the Regulations") and section 43 of the Charities Act 1993 ("the Act").

Respective responsibilities of the PCC and the examiner

As members of the PCC you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements. You consider that the audit requirement of the Regulations and section 43(2) of the Act do not apply. It is my responsibility to issue this report on those financial statements in accordance with the terms of the Regulations.

Basis of this report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 43(7)(b) of the Act and to be found in the Church Guidance 2006 edition issued by the Finance Division of the Archbishops' Council. That examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the PCC and a comparison of the accounts with those records. It also includes considering any unusual items or disclosures in the financial statements and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

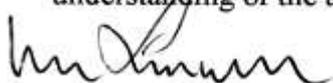
Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- (1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 41 of the Act; and
 - to prepare financial statements which accord with the accounting records and comply with the requirements of the Act and the Regulations

have not been met; or

- (2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



M I Stillwell
Snarlton Farm, Wingfield, BA14 9LH

19 February 2019

Rector's Report

It has been a quiet but positive year for us in Westwood, with the undoubted highlight being our amazing Remembrance Sunday Centenary Commemorations with that quite remarkable community display of poppies. The Summer Fête in July proved to be another successful and happy community occasion, and we were very grateful for the incredibly hard-working and efficiently run team who enabled it all to happen so smoothly, under the very able and highly organised leadership of Lesley Chalmers. And then of course the church always plays an important part in the Flower and Vegetable Show in August, with Jenny Maggs and her incredibly gifted team of flower-arrangers, who lay on for us all a veritable Flower Festival. Yet of course we share in the enjoyment of magnificent flower arrangements throughout the year, for which we are always very grateful.

Worship

This has continued faithfully according to our monthly pattern which works well. And, as ever, we are very grateful to all those who both play the organ and minister at our Services. Their smooth and seamless running is very much thanks to the small team who faithfully open up and attend to all the very necessary details week by week. And we are really grateful to Muriel Freeborn (91) who has been playing the organ more for us this year, and very beautifully and sensitively too.

We have again enjoyed some very special seasonal Services, and especially the very moving, beautifully crafted and greatly appreciated Remembrance Sunday Service. Unfortunately the School Christingle Service in December had to be re-located to the school hall very hastily due to heavy rain. But, as ever, the Nursery Nativity provided us with a happy, if smaller than usual, occasion and we were all grateful for the refreshments afterwards kindly provided – for the last time – by the Fellowship Group (formerly Mothers' Union). And then the Carol Service was another memorable occasion, brought to life by Mary's dramatic piece and Annie Slade's loving co-ordination of our young musicians.

Here are the 2018 statistics for worship (2017 in brackets).

- Church attendance on a 'normal' Sunday (adults): 20 (20)
- Marriages: 1 (6) *NB church marriages are down by 22% in the last 4 years*
- Baptisms: 1 (3)
- Funerals: 6 (3) + 1 (2) at the Crematorium
- Easter Day: 55 (35) communicants and 72 attending
- Midnight Mass and Christmas Day: 30 (35) communicants and 124 attending

The PCC

The PCC met four times in 2018 (apart from the APCM) for a time of good and open discussion at the homes of various members, and always with a good rate of attendance. The Standing Committee (Rector, Churchwarden and Mary Needham) liaised from time to time, but didn't have any formal meetings. As the Treasurer has reported, our financial position has continued to be strong, against all the odds, and so we owe a very big thank you to all our incredibly generous givers, and to Sue Lindsay herself for looking after us all so well. Once again the Safari Supper was a great social occasion and provided a welcome boost to PCC funds of £295. And we were able to donate an impressive £283 to Christian Aid, £333 to the Royal British Legion and £267 to Water Aid – whilst having also raised £250 for the Kadugli Diocese of Sudan. Most of this was raised by retiring collection.

We have considered a wide range of ideas, actions and proposals and both 'worship' and 'mission and the community' (not to mention Churchwarden and Treasurer Reports, Safeguarding and Health & Safety) are on every Agenda, as we toss around ideas for the future as well as discussing and deciding upon all the current issues to hand. During the year we committed to becoming a Fairtrade Church, and to this end we started serving only Fairtrade refreshments and had a special Creationtide Harvest Service.

Church family

Of our seven funerals in 2018, two were of members of the church family: Rob Hill who died after many, many years of ill health in March, and Sylvia Higgs who died in September - both were in their 70s. We thank God for them both, and may they rest in peace.

And we enjoy the life and spirit, and faith, of our young people as they come and go. It is very special to see how that relationship with their 'church family' develops as the years go by. Meanwhile I continue to visit and take Holy Communion to the housebound, including Betty Hancock and Pat Ashbourne, which is a lovely way of maintaining the connection.

Children and young people

As we continue to have a faithful group of children and young people in church, together with their families, so we have sought to adapt and respond to their developing gifts and skills and interests. And we are incredibly grateful to Mary Needham for leading us through this with such wisdom. We have certainly really enjoyed witnessing their musical gifts blossom in our worship, and Jemima played the Last Post for us on Remembrance Sunday for the first time with great skill.

I still enjoy my routine of leading fortnightly Assemblies at the Primary School, where I also serve as a Governor, and so feel very much a part of the place, and it is good to be known by all the children. Jill Ross and Mary Needham went out of their way to include the school children and other young people in our village Remembrance events, and we held a memorable School Remembrance Service, written by them, in church.

So a huge thank you to everyone who has worked so very hard and really given of themselves to contribute to yet another positive and happy year!

Joanna Abecassis

The Revd Canon Joanna Abecassis, Chair of Westwood PCC
13 March 2019