



The Church of St John the Evangelist, Carterton

Annual Report and Accounts

of the

Parochial Church Council 2019

***This report covers the calendar year 2018
(January to December)***

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Foreword by the former Team Rector, The Reverend William G Blakey, BSc BA

I am privileged to make a final report following my formal retirement on 30 November 2018. Many have contributed to this Annual Report as St John's is a busy church which has a long tradition of being immersed in the local community.

As ever, there have been many encouragements as well as significant challenges as the Church community looks ahead. At the core of everything is a commitment to being followers of Jesus Christ of Nazareth. He has been, and no doubt will continue to be the guide and inspiration for the Christian Community here.

The Ministry Team forms a vital part of the leadership in any Church of England Parish. 2018 has brought a number of challenges. As the year ended, there were no full-time clergy as James Maddern had not been able to move out of the Team Vicar's house due to the slow pace of action from the Pensions Board. There is no prospect of his post being filled until my replacement is in post. Rev Ian Howard has had major responsibilities as a carer for his wife Rosie who died recently, although he worked hard to carry out parish duties. He is now a "House-for-Duty" Assistant Curate. Lyndsay Baker has given a huge amount of time as an LLM (Licensed Lay Minister). Prebendary Stephen Bessent, a retired former incumbent of Cogges and later Alphington in Exeter, has stepped in to help. There is much to do in parishes that are still rapidly growing and my thanks to all of them as they have given so much.

The Volunteers at St John's have been magnificent in keeping the life of the Church going as can be seen from the various reports. Thanks to our PCC officers and worship teams. More help is always needed. Note should be taken of the growing work of the "Inspire" team which has grown an important new ministry in the Church.

As you will see from the Treasurer's Report, the late Robert Keen left St John's a very large legacy which came as a huge surprise to us all and will give the PCC opportunities to develop ministry or other areas of church life that have not been possible before. It is good to see that freewill giving has not dropped so thanks to all who have so generously given to this Church.

The PCC has been looking to apply to the Charity Commission to be a numbered charity (all PCCs are charities but only need a number when income exceeds £100k) and a question on the form led to the realisation that the PCC owns the Church and its site. This has been checked and is being registered with the Land Registry. This is unusual and is because St John's is not a consecrated Parish Church which would otherwise be "owned" by the Rector.

Safeguarding improvements have been made in the light of further work by the national church to deal with the tragedy of improper conduct towards children and vulnerable adults.

During my time as Rector, we have learned a lot about the vital nature of welcome. When people come to church first impressions really count. God welcomes us all when we respond to his invitation to receive what Jesus offers. It is vital for people to feel genuinely noticed, and to experience real hospitality and a sense of being loved. Thanks to the many people who welcome others whether it be at the door, quietly in Church or through food and drink.

My wife Sue played a special part in ministry in St John's and there are many, along with me, who are very thankful to God for her quiet work among us.

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Finally, the appointment process for my successor is in hand and I wish every blessing for whoever takes over as Team Rector. Hopefully it will be soon. Please pray for them.

Yours as a fellow disciple of Jesus Christ,
Rev Bill Blakey

Background

History, Aims and Purposes

St John's Church began life in 1908 as a Mission Church in the Parish of Black Bourton. It was rebuilt in 1963 as a dual-purpose hall/church and developed again in 1994 with a new worship area and other facilities including an office. It first had its own minister in the 60's and the vicarage was built in 1962. Another phase of building was completed in 2010 to extend the church yet further by adding a small kitchen, a catering kitchen and storage.

As a result, the Church of St John the Evangelist is a now modern multi-purpose building right in the centre of Carterton. A wide range of activities take place here but in the end we like Jesus are about people and relationships. We seek to be the best human beings that we can and believe that this is best achieved by being disciples of Jesus Christ. We are not perfect but are always learning.

Without the generosity and sacrifices made by Carterton people over the years none of this would be here for us today and for those who come after us.

The St John the Evangelist Parochial Church Council (PCC) is the trustee body corporate responsible for working with the incumbent in promoting the whole mission of the church, spiritual, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical in the Parish of Carterton. It has a specific responsibility for the care and maintenance of the "Parish Centre for Worship" (the St John's Church building) in Burford Road, Carterton.

The Building

The "History" section has described the buildings that we are fortunate to have. There is a full fabric report later in this report. The last Quinquennial Survey Report was produced in 2017.

In addition to Church activities, significant use is made of the building through the hiring of its facilities to groups within the community – for example, uniformed youth groups such as Guides, Brownies and Rainbows; exercise classes; the U3A badminton group; as a meeting/training course venue for local organisations and end of term school services.

A regular offering is as a venue for families with young children who want parties. There are two ways in which this is done. One is a straight forward hire where a family books the space and provides their own entertainment. The second is known as "party packages" in which the church provides the use of the hall, play equipment (including a bouncy castle) in addition to the kitchen facilities as, in both cases, the families provide their own food. Two sets of church volunteers manage these bookings and for the "package" they set up and clear away the play equipment for these events. The charges are set at a very competitive rate so that families of most income levels are able to benefit.

A significant income is derived from hire of the building and therefore from the hard work of the volunteers who work hard to maintain this facet of our work in the community.

Unfortunately, we have not been able to afford to employ the services of a caretaker and so cleaning and general house-keeping of our facilities is carried out by volunteers.

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Objectives and Activities

Our vision is to be a growing vibrant church, rooted in Christ, that reaches out and serves the whole community.

The PCC is committed to implementing this vision and recognises that we have a responsibility as a charity to advance the cause of the Christian Religion in the Parish of Carterton and to work to enable the people of the parish to live as followers of Jesus Christ.

To facilitate this work, the PCC oversees the activities of the Church and maintains the fabric of the church building.

Achievements and Performance

Ministry

St John's is part of the Brize Norton and Carterton Benefice and Team Ministry which was formed in 2003. The two parishes are distinct entities and each has its own PCC. After eleven years in post, Reverend Blakey retired as Team Rector on 30 November 2018. Rev James Maddern also retired on health grounds in October 2018. This has left two vacancies, and hence the current ministry team comprises:

- The Reverend Ian Howard, part-time House for Duty Assistant Curate
- Mrs Lyndsay Baker, Licensed Lay Minister
- The Reverend Prebendary Stephen Bessent, a retired priest who has stepped in to assist in many ways.

From November 2018, the Benefice began operating in a state of inter-regnum and the Diocese is currently in the process of recruiting a new incumbent to fill the post of Team Rector. The post of Team Vicar will be addressed once the Team Rector has been recruited. Thankfully, ministry in St John's continues to develop as more people are trained and become involved at a variety of levels from our much-valued volunteers. Padres from the RAF Chaplaincy Team have come forward to help us and further assistance in leading worship has been volunteered by clergy members in our surrounding parishes.

Worship, Prayer and Teaching

At the heart of our activities are worship, prayer and teaching about our faith. These are an essential part of our relationship with God and take place in the church building both on Sundays and some weekdays. In addition, smaller gatherings take place in private homes around the parish as home groups, study groups and prayer groups.

We want people to think for themselves and know the scriptures as a foundation for their relationships with God, others, the planet and ourselves and to express this in worship, prayer and action.

The main midweek service is that of said Holy Communion (Common Worship (CW) Order 1) at 10.30am every Thursday. The service is designed to be thoughtful and is followed by fellowship and refreshments. Attendance is strong averaging 24 people.

Sunday worship continues to include a Book of Common Prayer Holy Communion service at 8am, although the number attending is small - between three and eight per week. The main service is at 10.30am which has a basic pattern of Holy Communion (CW Order 1) on the first and third Sundays of each month. Morning Worship on the second and fourth Sundays is bespoke Morning Prayer which is made up of modern Church of England liturgy which is put together to suit the theme of the day. Use is made of a projection system for everything except the words of the Communion services. Average weekly attendance in 2018 was 80 adults and 8 children.

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Music is a vital component of our worship, and is modern in nature and great efforts are made by our musicians to integrate it with the thematic approach to our Bible teaching and worship.

Many people are involved in preparing and delivering prayer and worship and thanks are due to our musicians, readers, prayer leaders, technical staff and the front of house team.

Worship and Teaching for Children and Young People

There are a number of challenges that the children's team face. Recruiting volunteer helpers and leaders across the ministry is becoming increasingly difficult. Encouraging families to attend regularly, particularly on a Sunday morning, is particularly challenging and very time consuming. The nature of the work involves recruiting, training and supporting a high number of dedicated volunteers. The PCC is looking into the feasibility of employing a family worker to oversee some of this work and develop other areas in the future, but this is still a long way off and currently remains an aspiration. Lyndsay Baker would personally like to thank all the volunteers who give up their time and effort for this important ministry work. The children and their families are the church of the future who need encouragement and the nurturing of their faith.

Messy Church

We are continuing to build up a strong core of families who regularly attend this service. Numbers attending have risen over the year from 18 children to 41 children. There continues to be a steady trickle of new families attending. We know that there is a need to set up separate nurture sessions for the members, however capacity to address this at the current time has not been possible. It has become harder to recruit volunteers to supervise activities which has resulted in a reduction in the amount of activities being offered. Suzy Marshman has taken on a large portion of the organisation of Messy Church and has been gaining confidence in leading worship using the Messy Church magazine published by the Bible Reading Fellowship. Potentially by releasing Lyndsay from some of her other ministry work we could consider setting up a three-year nurture plan using resources from Christianity Explored, the Bible Society Bible course and a prayer nurture group.

Sunday Club

The number of children regularly attending remains low due to other family commitments. Children under the age of four years has proved to be difficult to cater for. The PCC has agreed for a space to be provided at the back of the church as a children and parent area with some quiet activities. We said goodbye in the Autumn to Dawn Hervin and thank her for her support over the years. This has reduced the number of sessions we have been able to offer to two a month. All Age worship has been reintroduced on the second Sunday of the month. Provision of Summer Holiday sessions was once again well received by those attending but, as mentioned above, this is unlikely to be offered in 2019 due to the difficulty recruiting volunteers and session leaders.

Christmas

The Christmas Eve Service while well attended was down on numbers from the previous year. This may be because of the change of starting time from 4pm to 5.30pm (Christmas Eve fell on a Sunday last year) and we try to take account of parents' commitments. The 'no rehearsal nativity' initiative appears to be have worked well again this year. A consideration might be to have the no rehearsal nativity on the Sunday preceding Christmas at 4.30pm in future to encourage more families to come along.

Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals ("Occasional Offices")

The Ministry Team has worked hard to offer a first-rate service for these events but we are unable to escape from national trends in what people want to do. The Ministry Team has continued to work closely in both churches of the Benefice to cover needs.

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The numbers of families requesting baptism continues to be much higher than the national average but is steadily declining in overall numbers from previous years in line with national trends. There have been 26 baptisms conducted at St John's over the last year. New workers to help prepare families for baptism are required and it is hoped that Janet Sayer be able to help in this work. Going forward, we are also considering the possibility of offering only one Sunday date for a baptism service per month at St John's where up to four children can be baptised. This, together with a joint monthly preparation class with St Britius' families, we hope to manage the workload of ministers in a more efficient manner.

Carterton is not a fashionable place to get married and the Church nationally is seeing reduced numbers of ceremonies due to the increasing popularity of civil ceremonies in all-in-one venues in beautiful locations. This said, there were two weddings in 2018.

Funeral services have also declined in number, again due to the increase in ceremonies conducted by non-religious celebrants. The Ministry Team conducted 24 services in the church during 2018, of which an additional eight services being conducted at crematoria.

Pastoral Care

In recent years a Pastoral Care Team was instigated and led by Sue Blakey who organised the training and deployment of this group to pray with people in church and visit people in their homes. Following Mrs Blakey retirement in November 2018, leadership of the team has now passed to Doreen Trezise.

A bereavement support group began work in 2018. Training was done by *Care for the Family* and we were delighted to welcome people from other churches to the sessions.

A quarterly pattern of services of Prayer for Healing was introduced during 2018. This has proved to help in addressing a need in the community and several testimonials have provided comfort and support to others undergoing challenging times.

As ever, we want to do more to meet the enormous needs in our church and community but resources are stretched, and thanks go to those who have given so much time and energy to this aspect of our church life.

Mission and Evangelism

In response to the Commission given to Christians by Jesus Himself (See Matthew 28 vv16-end), St John's seeks to reach others with the love of God. Actions are more powerful than words and we seek to earn a hearing for the Gospel. Actions in 2018 have included outreach events like Party Packages, plus attendance at local activities like Open Church and a chocolate tombola stall at the Christmas lights event, presence at fetes and fayres at the Recreation Ground and St John's School.

The Church also hosts an annual Civic Service in September on Battle of Britain Sunday which involves RAF personnel, and the town's Remembrance Sunday which is hosted and led by St John's. The Ministry Team also works in the background to support the civic life of the town.

The PCC Mission Fund grant scheme continues to receive its finances by way of revenue from the "Party Package" initiative. A small sub-group was appointed by the PCC to review and agree applications to the fund. This group can refer back to the PCC for a final decision, if the need arises. During the past year, support was given to help with the costs for congregation members to attend the Spring Harvest.

RAF Brize Norton Chaplaincy

For many years there has been a good working relationship with the Chaplains at RAF Brize Norton. This is an important of evangelism since there is now no longer a church presence on the Base. For several years,

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St John's has been helping a Chaplaincy initiative for an informal, café style worship evening service by providing a venue once a month. This service was hoped to introduce Christians among the service personnel an opportunity to meet with Christians "outside the Base" and was therefore, and has been supported by other churches in Carterton, was open to all to attend. In 2018, however, the Padres decided they were no longer able to organise this service. However, in view of its popularity and there being an obvious need to be met, the Ministry Team of St John's decided to continue organising this informal worship service. It is now led by Rev Ian Howard and Rev Stephen Bessent, and was relaunched it as "St John's at 7".

The Chaplaincy Team have been assured of a welcome at St John's as a venue when needed, and hosted a Christmas Carol Service here in December for RAF families to which the general community was also invited. They organised also a retiring collection in aid of The Besom in Witney. The Chaplaincy Team have also been extremely supportive during the inter-regnum period, by leading worship at several services during November and December. We look forward to working and praying together in future as this relationship of mutual support is highly valued.

Ecumenism

C Cell G, the operating name representing the group running Carterton's ecumenical activities, was changed in 2018 to "Carterton Christians in Unity". A regular schedule of monthly committee meetings took place throughout the year, generally hosted by St John's, and specific events targeted to reach out to the wider community were organised. These included an Easter activities workshop for families, an Easter Walk of Witness from Shilton Park to the town centre and Christmas carol singing in the market square. Lyndsay Baker is the representative on the organising committee representing St John's.

St John's CE Aided Primary School – Rev Ian Howard

The School is located on the Shilton Park housing estate and continues to go from strength to strength. With around 460 pupils and 85 teachers, St John's Primary School is our Church School (1.2 miles from the Church). Having come out of 'Special Measures' about four years ago, St John's is now thriving under new leadership: it is now recognised as both a 'Regional School' and a 'National School' (ie a model school, which helps other schools, both near and far); it was rated 'outstanding' in a SIAMS Inspection; and after a recent OFSTED Inspection (which was only able to confirm it as 'good' under the present system), it was agreed that OFSTED would return in the next 18 months and undertake a second Inspection. The hope is that OFSTED will then return and rate the School as 'outstanding'. Seven of the twelve School Governors are Foundation Governors (that is, from the Church), and as former Clerk and Governor of the School, I have to say I am enormously impressed by both Staff and Pupils. Not surprisingly, the School is now over-subscribed.

The challenge for us as a Church is to maintain and continue to build our links with the School. At present, they only come down to the Church for Christmas, the End of the School Year and some Governors' Meetings. Let us keep praying regularly for Staff, Pupils, Governors and Parents and do all we can as a church to support the School in an appropriate way.

Volunteers

St John's is fortunate to be able to call on a committed group of volunteers without whom our current ministry would be unsustainable. A debt of gratitude is particularly owed to Sue Blakey. During her time at St John's, Sue carried out an inordinate number of tasks, often behind-the-scenes on a daily basis, to keep the church running smoothly. The extent of these only truly became apparent when plans were being made to take these over after her departure. The range was vast: from checking accoutrements in the facilities; gardening and flower arranging; administering private hire bookings for the hall; to organising

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teaching such as Christianity Explored; leading home group meetings, ladies' ministry and pastoral care; and also playing the organ and supervising the worship music.

The PCC recognises and is also grateful to all those who give so generously of themselves during 2018 and is specially indebted to:

- Rev Ian Howard (SSM), Lyndsay Baker (LLM) and Rev Prebendary Stephen Bessent (retired priest)
- Doreen Trezise and Mike Cox (Churchwardens); Linda Wooloff (PCC Secretary and administration); Richard Matthews, Ray Goodson, Alan Carter and Alison Ford (the Finance Team)
- The members of the Lay Pastoral care team
- Home group leaders
- Leaders of Men's, Women's and Family Breakfast and Ministry Teams
- The teams that run Messy Church, Children's Work, Drop-In, Party Packages and MAD
- Cleaners
- Flower Arrangers
- Catering Team

Activities of Church Groups

There are many groups at St John's operating under the authority of the PCC some of which have been mentioned above. The following have reported on their activities and can be found in the Appendix: Charitable Support and Giving by St John's, Children's Ministry, INSPIRE, Ladies Breakfast, Men's Ministry, MAD.

Charities supported by the PCC and Church members

The PCC encourages members to give to others beyond our own church. As a Church there is a focus on a number of charities. There are full descriptions in the Appendices. The Charities are:

- Children's Society – giving is by collection boxes and through the Christingle service.
- Gatehouse Oxford – sandwiches are made monthly in church and delivered to Oxford. There is a retiring collection during Advent and a box where clothing donations are regularly placed.
- The Besom in Witney- donating non-perishable foods, toiletries and household products is a year-round effort and church members are involved in volunteering for the charity in several fundamental ways.
- Royal British Legion – the Church offers its facilities for Remembrance Sunday when the cash collection goes to the RBL Poppy Appeal. This year the collection raised £638.
- CAP (Christians Against Poverty) St John's is proud to have partnered with this charity. Members of the congregation now work with CAP as a Debt Coach or a 'befrienders'. It is hoped that this work will grow as there are many facets to CAP's national work that will meet the needs of people in Carterton.

Note that the PCC Finance team process payments for the charities when they need to go through the PCC bank account. It needs to be noted that in accord with the rules these are not shown as PCC income or expenditure.

Parochial Church Council (PCC)

Administrative Information

The PCC address is, St John's Church, 6 Burford Road, Carterton, Oxfordshire, OX18 3AA.

It is part of the Deanery of Witney in the Diocese of Oxford within the Church of England.

It is a "Body Corporate" (see PCC Powers Measure 1956, Church Representation Rules 2017) and is currently an "excepted charity" which is therefore not registered with the Charity Commission (ie: it has no charity number). This would have to change if or when our annual income exceeds £100,000.

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PCC Membership in 2018 - 2019

Team Rector: Reverend Bill Blakey (until 30 November 2018)

Assistant House for Duty Curate: Reverend Ian Howard

Licensed Lay Minister: Lyndsay Baker

Church Wardens: Michael Cox and Doreen Trezise (*)

Deanery Synod Representative: Roy Morris (plus two vacancies)

Elected 2016 Andrew Monkhouse, Richard Matthews, Linda Woolloff – required to stand down this year and apply for re-election

Elected 2017 Glenys Edwards, Ray Goodson

Elected 2018 Stephen Bostock, Ian Harley, Michael Thompson (for a period of three years)

Elected 2018 Allister Holt (for a period of two years)

Up to three members can be elected each year to serve for three years and are eligible for re-election at the end of their period of office.

(*) Doreen Trezise announced that she would not be standing for re-election in 2019. We thank her for her diligent service and hard work as churchwarden for the past 15 years.

PCC Officers in 2018-19

Chair: Reverend Bill Blakey (until 30 November 2018)

Lay Chair: Doreen Trezise

Secretary & Electoral Roll Officer: Linda Woolloff

Treasurer: Richard Matthews

Structure, governance and management

The PCC operates under the law as stated in the “Parochial Church Council Powers Measure”. Membership and the appointment of members is governed by the latest edition of the “Church Representation Rules”.

The PCC is responsible for making decisions on all matters of general concern and importance to the Parish, including deciding on how the funds of the PCC are to be spent.

The full PCC met nine times in 2018. It has one principal sub-committee, its Standing Committee, which meets in advance of full meetings to prepare reports and agendas., It also provides a sounding board for the incumbent and to is empowered to make decisions which are urgent or which the full council has delegated to the committee following discussion.

As mentioned above, one other sub-group has been put in place the PCC which is responsible for handling applications to the Mission Fund grant scheme. This group currently comprises Lyndsay Baker (chair), Steve Bostock and Ian Harley.

Inter-Regnum

In preparation for the retirement of Rev Blakey, a working group was put together from both PCCs in the Benefice to create a parish profile document, the first stage required by the Diocese in the recruitment process for a new Team Rector. This document was formally signed off by both PCCs and passed to the Bishop’s office to accompany the advertisement for the vacancy.

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In December, a Section 11 meeting was chaired by the Area Dean of Witney, Toby Wright, as the first stage in the formal process of recruiting a new Team Rector. This was a joint benefice meeting also attended by members of St Britius PCC. As part of this process, two members from each parish were elected to act as their parish representatives to take part in the short-listing of candidate. For St John's, these are Mike Cox and Steve Bostock. They will participate on interviewing panel, along with the Bishop of Dorchester and Patrons.

Following the appointment of a new Team Rector, the position of Team Vicar will be addressed.

Deanery Synod – Roy Morris

Prior to the actual start time, there is a general get-together over refreshments giving assembled members the opportunity to network. The meeting proper starts with prayer and an introduction from the chairman. This is followed by a Bible study where people split into groups to study a short passage for about 15 minutes. There is then a short discussion on what has been learned.

Two meetings were attended during 2018, the format of which followed a common pattern. The speaker at the June meeting gave a presentation on church finances and the need to reform the system of Gift Aid. The aim is to persuade congregations to adopt the direct debit system (the Parish Giving Scheme) which will enable the Diocese to be more positive with its financial management. The speaker at the October meeting (Fiona Craig, Diocesan Director of Education) gave a very interesting presentation on religious instruction in schools. There are now just over 280 church-managed schools in the Diocese.

Electoral Roll - Linda Wooloff, Electoral Roll Officer

2019 has been a year when the Diocese required each church to carry out a complete refresh of its electoral roll, and everyone wishing to appear has been required to complete nominations forms. The old Electoral Roll closed with a membership of 83. The new Electoral Roll now has a membership of 76.

General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) - Michael Thompson

Following legislation which came into force in May 2018, St John's along with every other major organisation has had to grapple with the new Regulations which are far-reaching in their effect and carry very heavy punishment for a breach. A policy was drafted and agreed by the PCC which is available from the Church Office and a formal notice with details is displayed on the Notice Board. Under the new legislation, the Church will need to obtain consent from individuals before any personal data can be retained or used by them. A consent form has been produced and any members of a specific activity group will be asked to complete and consent for their information to be retained under the aegis of St John's. The revision of the Electoral Roll is covered under Diocesan rules by this legislation. The Regulations will however also encompass the inter-relationship between personal data and the media and internet, particularly where photographs are concerned, and everybody will need to use the greatest discretion when taking photographs at church events and not post them on public media without full informed consent from all people shown.

Safeguarding of Children and Vulnerable Adults – Steve Bostock

The Safeguarding Policy for St John's was updated significantly this year, with great work by Linda Wooloff to meet the recommendations of the Diocese. The policy was adopted by the PCC in May and will be reviewed and updated annually. The role of Safeguarding Officer has now been taken over by Jeanette Welsh with Steve Bostock continuing as Verifying Officer.

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The DBS checks are now being carried out by Access Personal Checking Services Ltd (APCS) using online methods; these are both quicker and cheaper than the previous method that used a plethora of forms. Safeguarding matters remain strictly confidential and will only be discussed by the appropriate persons.

The outlines of the Safeguarding Policy, together with important contact information, are displayed on the noticeboard.

Fabric – Michael Cox, Churchwarden

This year has been quite a busy year regarding the fabric with significant items of work completed (thanks to the Keen Legacy) and some unplanned emergency work. The building continues to be an incredibly important asset to the church community and to Carterton. Its regular use by numerous groups means that there is a constant need to be vigilant regarding the maintenance and cleanliness of the building and the furniture and fittings. Regular maintenance is ongoing, such as weekly checks of the fire alarm system and annual tests for all fire appliances. A new contract has been agreed with BH Doors to ensure regular checks are carried out of the automatic doors to ensure compliance. Portable appliance testing (PAT) continues to be carried out as required.

The church is kept in good order by the hard work of many members of the church assisting in the cleaning, repairs and gardening to keep things in order. An annual thorough Spring Clean took place in June carried out by a team of many volunteers. A thorough deep-clean of both kitchens, together with a stock-take audit, is carried out by catering team volunteers in August.

Specific works carried out during the past year have included:

- The installation of a new main pump to the heating system was unplanned in January 2018 due to the its sudden failure. The replacement pump was installed within a few days but due to the cold weather several worship services had to be held in the hall.
- Careful work to repair floor tiles in the worship area with colour matching resin filler was carried out on damaged tiles.
- Emergency work was needed to repair damage due to the blockage of a gulley on the foyer roof, following flooding during an excessively heavy rain-storm on 31 May 2018. This flooded not only the roof space above the foyer but also the foyer and hall floor. Repairs were carried out under the insurance policy once the foyer had been dried out by dehumidifiers.
- A new upgraded gas supply was installed. The new gas supply now meets the demand for both the boilers and gas cooker.
- Painting of all external wood and metalwork was necessary due to the deterioration over. The contractor took several weeks to complete the work which was finished to a high standard. Going forward, it can be expected that this work will need to be repeated on a five to ten year frequency.
- A new commercial under-counter freezer was purchased following the breakdown of the existing one originally installed in 2010. An additional fridge freezer, kindly donated by Rev Blakey, has been installed in the store room as back up.
- ACE Flooring repaired damage to the flooring in the hall from tape being put on the floor and pulled up taking with it the upper layer of varnish
- An external tap was fitted.
- New Altar Cloths, Frontals and matching clergy stoles, veils and collection bags were purchased following monies donated by members of the congregation. The table-coverings were also replaced, custom-made by members of the congregation. Thanks to a legacy from Brian Bloomfield, a handsome cabinet was purchased for their storage.

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Over the coming months, the toilet facilities will be re-decorated; lighting will be replaced under the eaves and external power sockets will be installed. There are also major projects planned for the coming year. Repairs will be made to the Old Chancel roof, expected to be completed by the end of February 2019. This work involves the installation of additional insulation to the roof as well as new waterproofing and flashing, plus new coping stones and repointing to the brickwork. Work will also be carried out to upgrade the electrical system to ensure improved safety. The Periodic Inspection Report from 2017 made a number of recommendations that are being followed up on.

As the PCC looks towards keeping the building and fabric fit for purpose for future generations, other projects have been identified which will need to be addressed in the short, medium or longer term, when funds are available. Those currently identified for consideration include:

- Repairing/filling the cracks in both the old and new parts of the church
- Rearrangement of the doors from the foyer into the hall
- Installation of curtains in the hall to the south facing windows and blinds to the east and west sides of the high lantern
- Replacement of the worktop around the sink in the small tea room
- Replacement of the Crittall windows in the old part of the building with double glazed units
- Replacement of the atrium glass roof in the foyer that has “blown “
- Replacement of the windows in the Charlie Luke Room and office
- Repair of the tarmac in the car park
- Replacement of heaters in the hall (as they fail)
- Completion of a full energy audit and study with costed proposals.

Thanks go to the kitchen team for purchasing all the consumables and keeping us legal, (allergy notification and training), and the many people who help maintain the standards of cleanliness and safety of the building.

Audio-Visual – Glyn Edwards

The changeover from two separate sections for the operators to a linear desk has been the most important change this year. It is now possible for one person to operate both the screen computer and the sound desk for “small” services. This is especially beneficial for baptisms and funerals where both are needed. For full services and “specials” at least two operators are still needed but the new layout will accommodate up to four (if recording and/or web use is required). The Hall screen with DVD and Laptop playout facilities was completed, together with VGA and two sound channels back to the main desk. A wall-mounted large screen TV together with DVD and Laptop playout facilities replaced the portable TV in the old Chancel. Improvements were also made to the wireless fed TVs. The old desktop computer was replaced with a much higher specification laptop.

The loss of a service provider for web streaming has been a big disappointment as it was used frequently by parishioners and others at fairly low cost. We are still hoping to find another provider so that we can resume the service, but at the moment options seem to be too expensive or unacceptable for various reasons. To partially cover this, services are archived to DVD using the same camera system, available on request. Copies of special services are often requested. New, higher quality cameras are awaiting installation. We also have a re-furbished laptop to replace the web computer when we get a new provider. Most of the above have been funded by donation.

Thanks go to all those who help with the audio, visual and technical support. We do need to train new operators for computer and recording/webcasts, and also to set up a rota to cover regular and additional services. Operation of the equipment must be carried out by trained personnel for safety reasons.

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Improvements are needed to the sound quality of the hearing loop. The system was not completely installed from the start and a solution is being sought.

Financial Review – Richard Matthews, Treasurer

All Church of England parishes are obliged to have a financial year that is the calendar year: 1 January – 31 December. This Finance Report and the accompanying Financial Statement covers that period and forms the base of the review of this church's financial position in the Annual Report for 2019. The financial statements of the Parochial Church Council have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 using the Receipts and Payments basis.

2018 has been exceptional for the financial fortunes of St John's Church. In March, a gift of £400,000 was bequeathed to our church in a legacy from the late Robert Keen. In anticipation of receipt of these funds, the PCC carried out in-depth research into how best to manage this, with the aim of future-proofing the capital sum of money for long-term growth and to hedge, as far as possible, against the diminishing effects of inflation. Initial investigation led the PCC to seriously consider in principle to invest the money using the CBF Funds held within CCLA Investment Management. (CBF stands for "Central Board of Finance" of the Church of England and CCLA is one of the UK's largest charity fund managers. These funds have an excellent track record and would provide a useful income.) Further research included consulting other parishes, followed by a presentation from an investment consultant at CCLA Management Investments before the final decision was made.

The PCC instructed the Finance Team to deposit £350,000 in a CCLA Investment Fund with a long-term objective of gaining a regular return dividend. The dividend during 2018 has given a return of almost 3.5%. It was agreed that the remaining £50,000 of the initial amount of the bequest been used to finance much needed work on the fabric of the church building. These major works have included an upgrade to the church's gas supply; the repainting of the church exterior and repairs to the roof structure.

In September 2018, an additional £240,000 was received from the same legacy and the opportunity has been taken to invest further in the CCLA with the aim of gaining additional positive returns in line with the initial investment.

The 'Legacy' aside, Voluntary Giving throughout the year increased slightly in comparison with previous years, thus maintaining our finances in a relatively healthy position. The 'Planned Giving' through the 'envelope' scheme and banker's orders increased by just over 4% this year, but other collection offerings decreased in comparison with 2017. Total income, however, including tax recovered but excluding all but the set aside £50,000 legacy capital amount, increased by just over 9%. This was mainly due to a regular dividend income from the CCLA investment and amounting to £5,695.

Expenditure wise, £4,379 was spent from unrestricted funds for 'Mission Giving and Donations' as decided by the PCC. By making regular payments throughout the year, we have been able to meet in full our church's Diocesan obligatory payment of £51,230, under the 'Parish Share' scheme. Meeting this payment enabled us to take advantage of the Deanery discounts offered for timely payment. A further £68,761 from unrestricted income was used to meet all other church expenses. This higher cost, in comparison with previous years, stems from paying for the major Fabric works mentioned above. Planned capital project work is almost complete apart from a much-needed upgrade to the church's electrical system.

The net result for the year gave an excess of 'Receipts' over 'Payments' of £9,041. The Church's bank Current Account stood at £29,638 at year-end with an additional £3,110 in the Fabric Fund Account. In light of an anticipated increase in income above the threshold of £100,000, it is likely that the PCC will need to submit an application in 2019 to the Charity Commission for independent charitable status.

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To sign off, I would like to thank the rest of the Finance Team – Ray, Alan and Alison for all their hard work throughout the year.

Reserves Policy

During 2018 it was the continued policy of the Parochial Church Council to seek to maintain a credit balance on 'Unrestricted Funds' equivalent to two months' average payments. At the start of the year this equated to about £12,720 and it was anticipated that this reserve would also cover emergency building work.

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Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees (Parochial Church Council)
Basis of Independent Examiner's Report and Certificates

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees/Members of
St. John the Evangelist Church, Carterton Parochial Church Council.

I report on the accounts for the year ended 31st December 2018 which are set out on pages 16 and 17. Respective responsibilities of the Trustees/Members and Independent Examiner:

'As trustees of the charity, the members of the PCC are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. They consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- Examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011;
- Follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 act; and
- State whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of Independent Examiner's Statement

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission.

An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the management committee concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in a full audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the accounts.

Independent Examiner's Statement:

In connection with my examination, no matters have come to my attention:

1. Which give me reasonable cause to believe that in material respect the requirements
 - To keep accounting records in accordance with s.130 of the 2011 Act; or
 - To prepare accounts which accord with these accounting records 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.

Rory Baker-Johnson FCA
Granchester,
Homefield Road,
Saltford.
BS31 3EG
18th March 2018

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**CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES**

**Independent examiner's report
on the accounts**

Section A Independent Examiner's Report

**Report to the trustees/
members of**

Charity Name
St. John the Evangelist Church, Carterton Parochial Church Council

**On accounts for the year
ended**

31st December 2018

**Charity no
(if any)**

Set out on pages

(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended **31/12/2018**.

**Responsibilities and
basis of report**

As the charity trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

**Independent
examiner's statement**

The charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 and I am qualified to undertake the examination by being a qualified member of The Institute of Chartered Accountants in England & Wales.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect,:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:

Date: 25/03/2019

Name:

Rory Baker-Johnson

**Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):**

Institute of Chartered Accountants in England & Wales
(membership number 8304531)

Address:

Grantchester, Homefield Road, Salford BS31 3EG

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Statement of Accounts

FULL ACCOUNTS		<i>As at 31 Dec 2018</i>											
	See Note No:	M Unrestricted Funds	Designated Funds	SR Messy church (reserved)	All Restricted Funds	F Fabric (restricted)	D Donations (restricted)	X Fees (restricted)	Y Youth (restricted)	S Messy church (restricted)	A Mission Fund (restricted)	R Other (restricted)	Total 2018
		£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	
RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT													
INCOME													
Voluntary receipts													
Tax efficient planned giving		34,087	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	34,087	
Collections at services		6,790	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6,790	
Gift Aid recovered		9,038	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	9,038	
Legacies received (capital value)		640,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	640,000	
Voluntary receipts - Total		689,914	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	689,914	
Receipts from activities for generating funds	1	16,068	467	-	3,890	-	-	-	252	273	920	-	20,426
Loans/Grants (including recurring and one-off)		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other Receipts	2	16,281	-	-	7,635	-	649	3,909	-	-	-	3,077	23,917
Petty cash		779	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	779
Total Receipts		723,043	467	-	9,081	-	649	3,909	252	273	920	3,077	735,035
Payments													
Mission giving and Donations	3	4,379	404	-	1,350	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6,134
Capital expenditure	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Church Expenses	5	68,761	51,230	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	119,991
CCLA Fund Investments		599,870	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	599,870
Total expenditure payments		673,011	51,634	-	1,350	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	725,995
Excess of Receipts over Payments		50,032	-	-	7,731	-	649	3,909	252	273	920	3,077	9,041
Transfers between funds		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total excess of Receipts over Payments		50,032	-	-	7,731	-	649	3,909	252	273	920	3,077	9,041
Bank current and deposit accounts 1 st Jan		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bank current and deposit accounts 31st Dec		648,184	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	648,184
<i>Difference</i>		<i>598,151.40</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>(7,730.55)</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>(648.95)</i>	<i>(3,909.00)</i>	<i>(252.00)</i>	<i>(273.42)</i>	<i>(920.00)</i>	<i>(3,077.45)</i>	<i>639,142.98</i>

Appendix – Group Activity Reports & Wider Links with the Community

Charitable Support & Giving at St John's

The Besom in Witney: Members of the congregation have continued their support throughout the year by donating non-perishable food items, toiletries and household cleaning goods into the "Besom Box" in the church foyer. Cash donations have also been gratefully received which go to support families in need with crisis food parcels and house-furnishing. Proceeds from the Harvest Service were also passed on to Besom. In all in 2018, the team were able to deliver over 100 food parcels to families in Carterton and the surrounding villages. Furniture and houseware items have also been passed on by the Besom volunteer team to those with specific needs referred to the charity by various support agencies. The Besom in Witney covers an area roughly seven miles around Witney, so families in Carterton and the surrounding villages have benefitted directly through this giving. (Linda Wooloff)

The Children's Society: The Children's Society is an organisation long supported by St John's. Many members of the congregation steadfastly fill cash collection boxes throughout the year. The amount collected through the boxes in 2018 was £2,005.19. A further sum of £152 was raised for the Children's Society at the May Day Fayre in the Recreation Ground.

The annual Christingle Service took place on Sunday, 16 December 2018. The oranges for the Christingles were kindly donated by Morrison's supermarket in Carterton and again assembled during the service. The Christingle Service was well attended this year (100 people). Numbers were up probably due to having it on a third Sunday of the month (Messy Church Sunday), bringing Christingle back into the advent season. (Because of the many clashes with other events, we tried an alternative last year by holding Christingle in January.) £343.30 was raised on the day for the Children's Society and via the collection candles. St John's continues to be a keen fund-raiser for this charity and a magnificent grand total of £2,500.49 was raised during 2018. Thanks go to Linda Cox who continues diligently to monitor the collection boxes and count the takings, as well as being a fundamental in organising Christingle event. (Linda Wooloff/Lyndsay Baker)

Christians Against Poverty (CAP): It has been a year of progress for the Witney Centre. At the start of 2018 the Centre started to look for a new Debt Coach to join the team and after consideration of the applicants, Gary Pizzey joined the team and was trained by CAP. This coincided with an increase in the number of client bookings and the Centre has been able to meet the needs of clients without them having to wait too long. A number of clients have become debt-free during the course of the year including one client who had persevered for several years to achieve the goal. Sadly, there have also been a number of clients who have, for whatever reason, been unable to commit fully to the process and we have reluctantly had to let them go. We have an average on-going case load of over 30 family units we are helping. Of those, 6 are in Carterton itself.

The parish churches of Burford and Swinbrook have joined in supporting the Centre this year and have already contributed to the number of support workers we have available to aid us in our work. Local Agencies have also been very supportive in referring appropriate clients to us for help and national coverage in the media of the work of CAP has meant that more people know of our existence and the main switchboard in Bradford has been taking record numbers of calls for help.

At Christmas we were able to bless each of our clients with a hamper most generously provided by Groups including St John's and the churches in Carterton. Many of the clients were amazed that strangers could be so loving towards them. The love of Jesus, indeed! We value the continued support both in terms of support workers and in prayer by those on the list for the weekly prayer points.

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Finally, thank you all for your continuing support for this vital outreach into the community and if you would like to know more about how you could give practical help, please speak to me. (Michael Thompson – Debt Coach)

The Gatehouse Project: The Gatehouse is situated in the St Giles Parish Rooms on the Woodstock Road and provides an open door for Oxford's homeless community and anyone in need, who is aged 25 or older. Most of the guests are homeless or are vulnerably housed and the Gatehouse provides shelter, a non-judgemental space, internet access and food. Sandwiches, cakes, fruit, tea and coffee, (plus soup in winter) are offered for 2 hours a day, six days a week at the drop-in cafe.

The PCC has continued to fund the monthly 'sandwich making' from church funds supported by voluntary gifts of cash, tuna, mayonnaise and eggs. We are grateful for the above donations, which keeps the cost to church funds at approximately £27 - £32 per month. Sandwiches of cheese, ham, tuna and egg mayonnaise are made and a variety of cakes are purchased, providing food for approximately 100 guests each month.

Sincere thanks go to the volunteers who shop for the food, make the sandwich fillings or deliver the sandwiches to the Parish Rooms in Oxford. Grateful thanks to David and Sue Edgar, who have continued to provide leadership for the sandwich making when I have been away. Thanks also to the members of the congregation, young and old, who continue to make the sandwiches after the 10.30am service once a month. We are also grateful for the donations of tins of tuna in brine and mayonnaise that are regularly given by members of the church. In addition sleeping bags, hats, gloves, tee shirts and underwear are always appreciated and can be left in the new box in the foyer marked 'The Gatehouse'.

The retiring collection taken during advent resulted in £217 being donated to The Gatehouse which was wonderful. This money was used towards the purchase of hats, scarves, underwear, gloves and chocolate for Christmas presents for the guests.

Further information about the Gatehouse in Oxford can be found on the website -

www.oxfordgatehouse.org

(Lyn Bostock, Co-ordinator Gatehouse Sandwich Making)

Friday Drop In – Lyndsay Baker (LLM)

This outreach ministry continues to flourish. Numbers of families attending remain high at between 36 and 60 adults and children each week, with an average of 50 in attendance. Pastoral care and prayer ministry are offered as required. An encouraging result has been that a number of families have requested baptism from this group.

We said goodbye to Sarah from the Family Centre, giving thanks for her hard work and dedication. We wish her well in her new job. We have noticed a slight drop in numbers since the opening of the Family Centre next door. However, this has had a positive effect too since we were previously overly busy with the numbers coming. We are now actively looking for someone to come on board to take on the running of this work and help set up on a Thursday evening. This would free up Lyndsay to concentrate on ministry work.

The voluntary contribution has remained at £1 per family unit remains for a number of years. The income derived has not only funded Drop In but also provided revenue for the majority of the children's ministry works at St John's. Total income for the year January to December 2018 was £725.96 and the bank account has remained in credit with an opening balance of £225.58 and closing in December at £353.84. However, the team has decided to put up the cost to £1.50 starting from January 2019 to ensure we can continue to cover costs.

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INSPIRE Group - Mariann Thompson

“INSPIRE” celebrated its first birthday in October 2018. In November, we organised a coffee morning with a craft stall (the majority of the crafts made by INSPIRE), to raise money towards buying more small tables. We raised an amazing £570 which means that we were able to purchase four tables at a cost of £468, leaving us enough money to buy more table cloths. Save the Children were also able to attend this coffee morning to sell Christmas cards in aid of their charity. On resuming in January, we were full to bursting, with 43 people attending (amongst which were six newcomers and eight regulars missing). We open the afternoon with a prayer, then enjoy chatting over a drink and biscuits. At 3pm, we serve more drinks and homemade cakes. We will continue to meet fortnightly and alternate between having a quiz one Wednesday and a craft the next. The afternoon closes with a few hymns and choruses and a prayer.

A few of us meet regularly the day before each session for prayer. Our aim for this year is to introduce the Bible in a gentle and non-threatening way to the twelve non-Christians who attend INSPIRE on a fairly regular basis.

Ladies' Breakfast - Linda Wooloff

Ladies' Breakfast is held on the second Saturday of alternate months throughout the year and continues to average 25 participants, mainly made up those who attend church but also from family members and friends also joining us on a regular basis. Ladies' breakfasts have been organised for many years by Sue Blakey. However, in September, the group said good-bye and thanked Sue when she stood down, prior to her and Bill's retirement from the Parish. Organisation has now been taken over by Doreen Trezise (in the kitchen) with wonderful support from Deborah Pearce and Sharon Harley, together with Lyndsay Baker (who now organises the spiritual aspect).

Several speakers were invited to events during the course of the year. These have included Vicky Jackson and the manager of the Family Centre, which moved into the neighbouring property, who both gave insight into how they support vulnerable families, and also Janet Sayer who gave an interesting talk about her time in Cornwall and national recognition through a fund-raising with a pet charity supporting children with special needs.

Thanks again go to the regular kitchen helpers: Doreen, Deborah, Sharon and Glenys for their reliability and cheerful support in preparation, and also Linda W and Miriam for their competent undertaking of clearing up, along with others who lend a hand, including Margo who often washes the tablecloths.

Men's Ministry – Steve Bostock, Mike Cox, Glyn Edwards, Ian Harley & Andrew Monkhouse

The Men's Ministry Team at St John's comprises Steve Bostock, Mike Cox, Glyn Edwards, Ian Harley and Bob Monkhouse. We provide events where men can get together for fellowship, friendship and food. Our aim remains to bring more men to Christ, with opportunities at the Men's Breakfasts and the S.T.I.G. nights to invite male friends into our church and develop relationships so that they may, eventually, become committed Christians and that they will bring their families to worship in our fellowship.

The Men's Breakfasts are still the most popular event, with regular attendance averaging 28; numbers have dropped slightly which is disappointing. The quality of the 'full English breakfast' cooked by Ian, Bob and Allister Holt is definitely the main attraction for any man. Our thanks go out to all those men that help with setting up the tables and clearing away after the event. We continue to enjoy a variety of speakers, mainly from home-grown talent, including our recently retired rector, Rev Bill Blakey, and the other recently retired rector in our midst, Rev Stephen Bessent. The Breakfasts take place every two months in church, with a Breakfast Barbecue in July, held in the back garden of the Cox's; this is a more casual event with no speaker.

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The Scalextric Track and Indian Grub (S.T.I.G.) nights are a continued success with the mix of fellowship members and non-church-goers working well. We get great reward from the number of non-practising Christians who come along, including members of the model aircraft flying club in Witney. Average attendance is twenty. This is an ideal number due to the format of the evening and the number of races that we need to get through, including the race-offs. It's always amusing to watch the competitive nature emerge during the evening, especially among the elder members of our fellowship!

The Men's Bible Study continues each month, meeting at the home of the Bostocks, led by our curate, Rev Ian Howard. The study has focussed on the Gospel according to Mark, using a DVD that narrates the NIV passages alongside an excellent depiction of the relevant events. Numbers vary with an average of six, although we had to cancel a few meetings this year due to sad circumstances.

We continue to gain inspiration and resources from Christian Vision for Men (CVM). This year Mike and Rev Ian attended 'The Gathering' event in a field near Swindon. We thank the PCC for the payment of our annual CVM affiliation fee. CVM promote our events nationwide and we get calls from other men's groups asking for ideas, suggestions for speakers, and help with their ministry.

We are considering new ideas, such as days away including walks in the local countryside. More importantly, we continue to seek willing volunteers to join our team. Please remember all of us in your prayers.

MAD (Make a Difference) Group – Sharon Harley

2018 was a fairly quiet one at MAD. With an insufficient number of youngsters, it was not possible to run a summer camp again. It also proved difficult to a suitable day when enough of them were available in the summer holidays to have a day out.

We have had some good Bible studies looking at creation and advent and have really enjoyed putting a display up on our board. There were games nights, movie and pizza nights along with cake icing evening's. A great afternoon was spent on the base at the pantomime at the end of January, followed by a fish and chip supper at church which was enjoyed by all.

We have had a decline in children attending with several leaving us, and regular numbers have dropped to only four or five children. On some evenings, the leaders have out-numbered the youngsters. With two of the children turning 18, this had led to a joint decision by the leaders to stop MAD from March 2019. This has not been an easy decision to make but, with no children transitioning into MAD, there currently seems to be no alternative.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Ian, for his support whilst I have been doing MAD, and to the others who have joined me each week: Bob, Vicky, Michele and Stephen. We have had some great fellowship together and learned lots along the way. We are hoping to be able to book the church for an occasional get together.