



The Church of St John the Evangelist, Carterton

Annual Report and Accounts

of the

Parochial Church Council 2020

***This report covers the calendar year 2019
(January to December)***

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Welcome to the New Team Rector

The church family of the Benefice of St Britius and St John the Evangelist welcomed the arrival of our new Team Rector and his wife, Billie as a Licensed Lay Minister, at a service of induction, conducted by Bishop Colin of Dorchester, held at St John's on 5 August 2019.



Foreword by the Team Rector, Reverend Andrew Tweedy

I am writing this report exactly six months after the evening of my Institution as Team Rector and Billie's Licensing as a Lay Minister here - 5th August 2019. It was a joyful homecoming for us both, and also the day in the calendar that the Church remembers King Oswald of Northumbria. I draw inspiration from Oswald's example of humility and generosity, and by the way he ***set up the sign of the cross in his kingdom and turned his people to the light of Christ***. Oswald was confident and strong in faith but he also knew his limitations and recognized and promoted the gifts of others to advance the Gospel, especially the great missionary and evangelist Aidan, with whom Oswald travelled as interpreter. At our Institution service Bishop Colin preached on the feeding of the five thousand and emphasized two things: ***Don't underestimate the challenges*** but also ***Don't underestimate the resources***. With Colin's advice and Oswald's example in mind, certain priorities were made clear to me before I arrived here and others have become clear in the months that have followed. In this report I want to briefly comment on some of the most important of these priorities and where I think we are up to.

Priority 1. To build relationships with the Ministry Team and other leaders in our two Churches.

From my point of view we have made a good start in getting to know each other, to learn from, rely upon and support each other and to work as a team.

Priority 2. To fill the vacancy of Team Vicar.

It very quickly became clear that this should be a self-supporting rather than a stipendiary role and that our Assistant Curate, Ian Howard, would be most suitable for this position. Bishop Colin has already given his permission for Ian to be recognized as Team Vicar Designate and it is planned that he will formally license Ian as Team Vicar on 27th April.

Priority 3. To revive the Churches' engagement with and outreach to children and families.

This has been a struggle for both our Churches in recent years, in spite of the efforts and commitment of our Ministers and Lay Leaders. There are good foundations to build on, with Sunday Club, Messy Church, Drop In and school links. However there is also a growing consensus that we need to further strengthen our Ministry Team by bringing in someone with the expertise and focus to take the lead in developing this aspect of our mission. I am working hard with my colleagues to take this idea forward and will update you on progress at the APCM.

Priority 4. To help heal the divisions and strengthen the links between our two parishes.

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This priority is very clear to me and to all members of the Ministry Team and it is fair to say that we have seen significant progress during the last six months. I don't want to make light of the reasons why collaboration has been difficult but there are great synergies to be gained and I am determined that we shall pursue these.

Priority 5. To help all our members grow in faith and confidence as disciples

The kind of nurture and support which is necessary may be sparked into life by sermons and worship but primarily takes place in small groups and through one to one mentoring. The Personal Discipleship Plan programme recently introduced by the Diocese provides a structure within which this mentoring can take place. We have begun to use this system and have also expanded and relaunched the Discipleship Fund (previously Mission Fund) to provide financial assistance for relevant study, travel and mission resources and opportunities.

Priority 6. For our Churches to become truly inclusive so that all kinds of people can feel safe and flourish in our community

We would all probably agree on this as a principle when it applies to diversity of race, ethnicity, gender or disability, but for me it also has to include welcoming, including and supporting LGBTI+ people and their families. This may be a subject which raises concerns and anxieties and which we might prefer to ignore, but we need to work through it openly as a church for two reasons. Firstly because it directly affects members of our own Church family (the pastoral effect) and secondly because it affects how we relate to the wider community and society (the missional affect). My plan is not to enforce my view but to encourage study and safe conversation and to work towards an understanding of how we can be a more healthy and healing community for everyone. Some study materials are already available on the Church website and in the Church library and more will follow in the coming months.

Priority 7. Mission to residents in the new housing estates

Regular meetings have taken place in recent years involving representatives of all the local Churches, to consider how we can work together in outreach to the Brize Meadow development and other new housing. One of the ways we will be participating in this mission is the provision of housing (the Trefoil Way Vicarage) and practical support for a newly appointed Methodist Pioneer Minister to work as our ecumenical partner. I have been working on this proposal for several months with Bishop Colin and senior Methodist colleagues. The final details will hopefully fall into place in order for this Minister to join us in September.

Priority 8. Safeguarding

Last but not least, training has recently been completed to ensure that we are up-to-date with all the latest regulations and guidelines for the protection of children and vulnerable adults.

In Conclusion

I am a glass-half-full person and I feel very optimistic about what God is doing and will do in the future among us. I am grateful to all those who served here before me, especially to my immediate predecessor as Team Rector, Bill Blakey, for leaving everything in good order and for deferring decisions about how to use the Keen legacy until my arrival. I also thank God each day for all of you who serve alongside me in taking responsibility for the life of our Churches, giving so generously of your time, gifts and expertise. May we continue to learn from and encourage each other as we follow our Lord's call.

*See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?
I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland.*

Isaiah 43:19

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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.

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

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 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 significant income is derived from the hiring out of the building to outside organisations and private functions. Therefore a group of volunteers is needed supervise this facet of our work in the community.

A regular offering is as a venue for families with young children who want parties. There are two ways in which this is done. The first is known as "pre-school party packages" where the church provides the use of the hall, play equipment (including a bouncy castle) and kitchen facilities, the families providing their own food. Church volunteers manage these bookings and, as part of the "package", they set up and clear away the play equipment. The other offering is for a straight forward "DIY party" hire where a family books the space and provides their own entertainment. The hire of our play equipment is available to include in this package. The charges are set at a very competitive rate so that families of most income levels are able to benefit. Again, volunteers are needed to open and close the premises.

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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. Reverend James Maddern also retired in late 2018 on health grounds. This left two key vacancies in the ministry team for an inter-regnum period of nine months (December 2018 to August 2019).

During the period of inter-regnum, the Ministry Team comprised:

- 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.

We are extremely grateful for the hard work of the Ministry Team during the inter-regnum period. We would also thank other members of the Deanery Chapter for their willing support, together with Padres from the RAF Chaplaincy Team, as they stepped forward to assist in leading some of the services, particularly in the early part of the inter-regnum. This was a difficult period for Reverend Howard whose wife, Rosie, sadly passed away in January after a long illness.

At the start of the inter-regnum period, two formal Diocesan meetings were held to begin the process of recruiting a new Team Rector. In December, 2018, 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. The second meeting (Section 12) in January was chaired by the Bishop of Dorchester, the Rt Rev'd Colin Fletcher, at which representatives from the Benefice Patrons of Christ Church and Eton College were also present. A small sub-group formed from both Benefice PCCs produced a parish profile document which was formally agreed and adopted by Bishop Colin and the Patrons by the end of January.

The PCC elected two parish representatives (Michael Cox and Stephen Bostock) to work with the Bishop of Dorchester's team in recruiting a new incumbent to the post of Team Rector. The vacancy was advertised during February, applicants were short-listed in March, and interviewing of two prospective candidates took place in early April, after which one of these candidates was chosen. Our new Team Rector, Reverend Andrew (Drew) Tweedy, was inducted at a ceremony which took place on 5 August 2019. The Reverend Tweedy's wife, Hilary (Billie), has also been welcomed to the Ministry Team as a second Licensed Lay Minister.

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Following discussion between the Bishop and Reverend Tweedy in September, the position of Team Vicar for the Benefice was offered to, and accepted by, Reverend Ian Howard. With effect from November 2019, Reverend Howard became Team Vicar Designate. He will be confirmed into his full position following the completion of his curacy training in early 2020.

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 20 people, slightly down on the previous year as several regular attendees passed away and others have become unable to attend church due to long-term illness and frailty. The ministry team conducts regular home visits and communion for this latter group.

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. (It was found necessary to suspend this service during the inter-regnum because of restricted clergy resource, and thanks go those regular attendees for their understanding. Happily, we were able to resume this regular early morning service in November.) 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. All Age Worship or Morning Worship services take place on the second, fourth (and fifth) Sunday and comprises bespoke Morning Prayer which is made up of modern Church of England liturgy 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 2019 remained at around 80 adults. Sadly, the number of children attending regular morning services has shown a decline during the year down to around 6, as some families have moved away from the area.

A regular pattern of two one-hour prayer sessions per month (early afternoon and evening) was introduced by the Ministry Team during 2019 where members of the congregation can gather to pray for the life of the church. This pattern will continue in 2020.

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. The variety of music has been enhanced since the arrival of Reverend Tweedy who is an accomplished musician and, together with his step son, add guitars to the musical accompaniment. Reverend Stephen Bessent is also an accomplished organist, and able to add to the variety.

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,

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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

This year has been marked by a time of renewal and goodbyes. At the beginning of the year Susy Marshman took over the lead of Messy Church and working with a team of volunteers. Numbers attending remain slightly haphazard, as we never know how many families will turn up, which can be a particular challenge for the kitchen team organising food. There are a small but growing number of families that regularly attend Messy Church and see this as their main church. As usual, there were a number of families that moved out of area. Whilst it is always sad to see families go it is a great encouragement that all these families have sort out local churches and become members.

In September, we sadly had to say goodbye to Susy Marshman as she moved away from the area. We also said goodbye and thank you to Mike Cox who stepped down at the end of the year. I am delighted to say that Linda Cox has decided to remain on the team which is greatly appreciated. Lyndsay Baker briefly reappeared to run the October Messy Church before Billie Tweedy agreed to take on the bulk of the organising of Messy with Reverend Drew Tweedy leading worship, Reverend Ian Howard organising volunteers to help and Lyndsay supporting Billie in procuring resources. Stephen Hester has agreed to take on the sound and computer, his skills and expertise is a welcome addition to the team of volunteers. Billie has brought with her new life and a new format which is working very well. Bernice Needham has also joined the team of volunteers which has been a blessing.

A big thank you needs to be said to those who continue to volunteer month after month for this ministry by cooking meals, setting up and clearing away, supervising children, welcoming, planning, resourcing, AV support etc. **THANK YOU** to all our volunteers both regular and occasional. Your contribution is very much appreciated by the ministry team and the families who see Messy Church as their church. (Lyndsay Baker)

Sunday Club

The number of children regularly attending remains low due to other family commitments. A space continued to be provided at the back of the church as a children and parent area with some quiet activities. The number of sessions we have been able to offer remained at two a month, with an All Age worship service on the second Sunday of the month.

Christmas

The Christmas Eve Service while well attended was down on numbers from the previous year. The 'no rehearsal nativity' initiative appears to have worked well again this year.

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.

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. Twenty baptisms were conducted at St John's during the year, one of which took place during Messy Church. There was also one thanksgiving service for a child. Baptismal visits are led by Lyndsay Baker, and a small team help at the actual services. Thanks go to Ian Griffiths, Stephen Hester, Janet Sayer and Doreen Trezise.

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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. There were no weddings in 2019.

Funeral services have also declined in number, again due to the increase in ceremonies conducted by non-religious celebrants. The Ministry Team conducted 27 services during 2019, of which five services took place at crematoria. Thanks go to Ray Goodson for his support as verger, and Glyn Edwards for helping with the technology.

Pastoral Care

Following Sue Blakey's retirement in November 2018, leadership of the team passed to Doreen Trezise during the inter-regnum. Billie Tweedy subsequently took over leadership and training for the team of carers and visitors at the end of the year. There are currently 11 team members who have pastoral oversight of all who regularly attend St John's, or church members who are housebound. The system is explained to newcomers and they are given the option to withdraw from this system. Team members have recently completed safeguarding training at C0 and C1 levels.

Our aim is to build a relationship with those assigned to our care, to note if they are absent and check if anyone is unwell or needs help. Our aim is not to make anyone feel guilty if they do not attend, but rather to make everyone feel valued members of the church. Members of the team look out for anyone who is on their own at coffee time and offer a friendly contact/introduction. Duties may include an occasional phone call, or a visit to someone who is unwell, but mostly it is about being friendly and getting to know people. New team members are always welcome, so if you are interested please see Billie Tweedy.

Regular meetings of the "Inspire" group have proved to be an enormous benefit for those who may be feeling lonely and in need of a friendly face (see separate report). The quarterly pattern of services of Prayer for Healing has proved to help in addressing a need in the community, providing comfort and support to others undergoing challenging times. A prayer shawl ministry is planned in 2020 to reach out to those newly bereaved, those who are terminally ill, new mums or anyone else who needs to feel God's love wrapped around them in the guise of a shawl.

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 out to others with the love of God. Actions are more powerful than words and we seek to earn a hearing for the Gospel. Actions in 2019 have included outreach events like Party Packages, local activities like Open Church night and our chocolate tombola stall at the Carterton Christmas Lights event to encourage people into the church, and attending fetes and fayres in 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 financing by way of revenue from the "Party Package" initiative. A small sub-group, appointed by the PCC, reviews and agrees applications to the fund. This group can refer back to the PCC for a final decision, should the need arise. Uptake of applications for funding was felt to need a boost and, in September, the fund was re-branded as the Discipleship Fund and re-launched to offer a wider selection of criteria for a grant with a view to helping individuals develop their

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faith journey. During the past year, support was again given to help with the costs for members of the congregation 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 aspect of evangelism since there is now no longer a church presence on the Base. The Chaplaincy Team have been assured of a warm welcome at St John's as a venue when needed. The Chaplaincy Team's support was greatly appreciated by the ministry team during the inter-regnum period, adding resource to lead worship at several services. We look forward to working and praying together in future as this relationship of mutual support is highly valued.

Ecumenism

"Carterton Christians in Unity", the operating name representing the group running Carterton's ecumenical activities, continued to hold a regular schedule of monthly committee meetings throughout the year, generally hosted by St John's. Several specific events targeted to reach out to the wider community were organised. These again included a monthly evening worship service, an Easter activities workshop for families, and an Easter Walk of Witness from Shilton Park to the town centre. Sadly, the Christmas carol singing event in the market square was cancelled at the last minute due to bad weather. Lyndsay Baker and Liz Wood represent St John's on the organising committee.

St John's CE Aided Primary School – Reverend Andrew Tweedy

I have thoroughly enjoyed getting to know the staff, pupils and governors at St John's School. It is a large, successful and happy school with a highly professional, focused and enthusiastic leadership team and with Christian values clearly underpinning all the work that goes on. Weekly visits by Reverend Ian and I for collective worship at the school are most enjoyable, the children invariably engaging with our Bible stories and songs with enthusiasm and insight. The governing body is very experienced and committed, with a wide range of skills and experience and with a close working relationship with the Senior Leadership Team. I am currently one of four Foundation Governors and the particular area of focus I have been asked to concentrate on is the Mental Health and Wellbeing of pupils. What I have seen, backed up by external assessors, is an exemplary degree of support for every member of the school community. As for the overall standard, an OFSTED revisit recently took place to evaluate whether the school has improved from 'good' to 'outstanding' and I hope to be able to announce the result of that soon. It was great to welcome the whole school into Church for the Christmas service and as I write this report we are planning a week-long prayer spaces event to take place towards the end of Lent, further strengthening the link between Church and School.

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. The range of background tasks is vast: paying the bills; keeping our computer systems working; checking accoutrements in the facilities; putting out the rubbish; refreshments and catering social church family events; gardening and flower arranging; administering private hire bookings for the hall; leading home group meetings; men's and ladies' ministry; social groups and pastoral care; and also coordinating the worship music.

It is thanks to an improvement in church finances (a legacy donation) that the PCC have now been able to engage a church cleaner on a weekly basis to take over the strenuous duties that volunteers have been performing so faithfully for many years in order to keep the building in a clean and presentable condition. We thank this small group of people for their steadfastness and diligence.

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The PCC recognises and is also grateful to all those who have given so generously of their time during the past year and is specially indebted to:

- The ministry team: Reverend Ian Howard, Lyndsay Baker (LLM) and Reverend Prebendary Stephen Bessent (retired priest)
- Allister Holt and Mike Cox (Churchwardens); Linda Wooloff (PCC Secretary and office administration); Richard Matthews, Ray Goodson and Alison Ford (the Finance Team)
- The members of the Lay Pastoral Care team
- Home Group leaders
- Leaders of Men's, Women's Ministry and Family Breakfasts
- The teams that run Messy Church, Children's Work, Drop-In and Party Packages
- The Flower Arranging Team led by Jeanette Welsh (Hannah Cloete, Miriam Knight, Bernice Needham, Mariann Thompson, Vanessa Tinson)
- The team who look after general hiring of the church facilities to outside groups and individuals
- The Catering Team led and trained by Ian Harley (Sharon Harley, Doreen Trezise) plus the weekly rota volunteers providing refreshments after church services and the monthly fellowship breakfasts. A small team is also available to provide catering following funeral services on request
- IT expertise provided by Michael Watts, following the departure of Reverend Blakey.

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 and Men's Ministry.

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. Proceeds from the annual Harvest Service are also passed on to the Besom.
- 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 £482.70.
- 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. At the end of this year, the PCC was in a financial position to be able to start a regular monetary donation to assist the local area CAP office in Witney with their running costs.

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 sums are not shown as PCC income or expenditure.

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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.

PCC Membership in 2019

Team Rector: Reverend Andrew (Drew) Tweedy (from August 2019)

Assistant House for Duty Curate: Reverend Ian Howard (Team Vicar Designate from November 2019)

Licensed Lay Ministers: Lyndsay Baker & Hilary (Billie) Tweedy

Churchwardens: Michael Cox and Allister Holt

Deanery Synod Representatives: Alison Brown and Roy Morris (plus one vacancy) – Representative are required to stand down this year, following a three-year term, and apply for re-election

Elected 2017 Glenys Edwards, Ray Goodson (required to stand down this year and apply for re-election)

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

Elected 2019 Doreen Trezise (for a period of one year, required to stand down this year and apply for re-election)

Elected 2019 Andrew Monkhouse, Richard Matthews, Linda Wooloff (for a period of three years)

A total of nine lay members make up the PCC. 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.

PCC Officers in 2019

Chair: Reverend Andrew Tweedy (from August 2019)

Lay Chair: Michael Thompson

Secretary & Electoral Roll Officer: Linda Wooloff

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 2019. During the inter-regnum, the PCC co-opted the Reverend Stephen Bessent to act as advisor. He stood down in August 2019 and the PCC thank him for his wise counsel. The PCC has one principal sub-committee, its Standing Committee, which meets in advance of full meetings to prepare reports and agendas. The Committee provides a sounding board for the incumbent and is empowered by the PCC to make decisions on matters that are urgent or that the full council has delegated to the committee for action. Membership comprises the incumbent, the two Churchwardens, the Treasurer, the Lay Chair, the PCC Secretary plus one other lay member of the PCC. During the inter-regnum, Reverend Ian Howard and Lyndsay Baker (LLM) attended these meeting to represent the ministry team. Minutes of these meetings are circulated to the PCC for their information.

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

Deanery Synod – Roy Morris

There were three Deanery Synod meetings this year, each at a different parish within the Deanery. We were represented by at least one of our team at each. The format is basically the same at each meeting, except for the main address by a guest speaker where subjects have ranged from finance to ecclesiastical support in communities and the benefits which arise from them. The meetings are generally very sociable with plenty of discussion and conversation before the meeting starts, including on one occasion the provision of tasty liquid refreshment!

Electoral Roll - Linda Wooloff, Electoral Roll Officer

The Electoral Roll had a complete refresh in April 2019 in line with Diocesan requirements and the Roll opened with 76 members. At its close on 8 March 2019, five new members had been added. One member sadly passed away during the year, thus giving an overall current membership of 80.

General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) - Michael Thompson

In the course of the year the necessary records have been completed to comply with the regulations. There is now a notice at the entrance to the church hall from the foyer that services may be recorded both in video as well as audio and there are provisions for those who need to avoid appearing on any video to be seated in a “dark” area of the sanctuary. Recordings are numbered to aid traceability. Please continue to be aware of the individual as well as the collective responsibility we have regarding personal data, particularly when collecting or sharing information or images on line and the need for permission. As people join or leave groups within the church, thought should be given to what happens to their personal information. It is proposed that the data we have will be stored securely in digital form.

Safeguarding of Children and Vulnerable Adults – Steve Bostock

The Safeguarding Officer for St John’s Church is Jeanette Welsh and her Deputy is Victoria Jackson. They can both be contacted via the Church emails or the website. The Verification Officer for the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks is Stephen Bostock, with administrative assistance from Linda Wooloff. Safeguarding training will be carried out by Jeanette in January for any members of our Church that require a better understanding of the issues. There have been four reported cases involving children that have been resolved and one involving an adult that has been handled by Jeanette. Overall, we believe that the Church is in a far better position regarding safeguarding than at any time in the past, especially with the number of people that will be trained.

Fabric – Michael Cox, Churchwarden

The church building continues to be heavily utilised by a large variety of groups. It is in a good state of repair. Considerable effort has gone into keeping the facility in a clean and good condition. We now employ a paid cleaner, the first time for a long time. This is making the job of keeping the church clean much easier.

Repairs & Maintenance: Apart from routine maintenance there have only been four significant items:

1. Drainage: Issues with the drainage were problematic in December but have now been substantially resolved thanks to the efforts of Thames Water. Drainage rods have been purchased and are now stored at the church for easy availability to promptly attempt to clear any future blockages.

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2. Living Accommodation (Rectory and Vicarage): A lot of effort this year has focused on living accommodation; getting the Rectory redecorated and repairs to the vicarage at 8 Trefoil Way. Both are now in a good state of repair and occupied. The Diocese has funded these works apart from a few minor items.
3. The Allendale Family Centre: The centre has been undergoing substantial renovation and improvement. This has required the erection of scaffolding on church property for many months and the removal of the fence, hedge and pine tree. Later this year we will see reinstatement of the fence and hedge.
4. Audio Visual: A new projector has been installed in the worship area.

Future Works: Preparations are continuing for planned maintenance and improvements including:

- Repairs and improvements to the AV equipment and Hearing Loop.
- Sanding and re-sealing of the Hall floor.
- Repairs to glazing in the foyer.
- Replacement of Crittall windows in the Old Chancel and Meeting Rooms 1 and 2 and possibly other windows.
- Re-carpeting of the Charlie Luke Room.
- Installation of blinds to the high lantern area on the East and West facing windows in the worship area.
- Installation of Blinds to the South and North facing windows in the Hall.
- Work to rehang the doors to the foyer from the hall and install new doors to the hall from the toilet corridor and to Meeting Rooms 1 and 2.
- Replacement of the door to the back garden from Meeting Room 2 with a fire door with a push bar.
- Repairs to the car park surfacing and improvements to the rainwater runoff drainage.
- Repairs to cracks in the building.
- Installation of hand dryers in the toilets.
- Installation of more emergency lighting and regulation compliance works.
- Installation of wall lights in the Hall.
- Replacement of the net curtains in the worship area.
- Redecoration of the internal and external walls.
- Other items listed in the Quinquennial Report (2017).

Fire, Health and Safety: There have been no fires in the church this year or major safety issues. Signs warning of hot surfaces have been put above the fan heaters in the foyer after an incident that had the potential to cause a fire. Regular checks are carried out on the automatic fire detection system, first aid fire appliances, and the emergency lighting. Statutory checks are carried out of the automatic doors.

The church building is an important and valuable asset that needs to be taken care of. It will continue to serve the church and the community well if it is well maintained and all users respect the fixtures and fittings. The fabric is holding up well but does need periodic redecoration and repairs/replacement. This is something all members of the church should appreciate. I encourage all members to take part in and support the Spring and Autumn Church cleaning sessions if they are able to do so.

I thank all those who contribute to the cleaning of the church and assist with its maintenance. Through careful and considered investment this asset will continue to be of great value to the community and all those who rely on it. Thanks also go to the kitchen team, led by Ian Harley, for purchasing all the consumables and keeping us legal, (allergy notification and training).

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Audio-Visual – Glyn Edwards

2019 has been a year of consolidation. The display computer has been cleaned up and will be kept clean, as best we can, with new procedures. A folder for these services has been created for archive purposes, with the actual service being available on the desktop for instant launching, being deleted soon after to keep the desktop as clean as possible. The new cameras have been installed and an extra one added to cover the entrance door, mainly for funerals. While there is still no webcasting, services are archived to DVD for congregation and family use. To comply with legislation, disks are numbered for identification and CCTV warning notices are being updated and replaced. Most services are also stored on the hard drive of the second laptop. Changes are being made to the monitoring system to make it easier to view both service camera choices and DVD/CD tracks as required. A new blu-ray/DVD/CD player has been installed. For most extra services it is now usually possible for one-person to operate which was the goal of the changes to the A/V bay and equipment. The old projector facing the dividing partition has recently been replaced and a powered screen will be fitted to match when support brackets have been completed and painted to match the décor. This will improve brightness and definition of the image. The above has been made possible by donations from the congregation. At long last, we have had to replace one of the headset mics which have lasted far longer than the expected time. It is worth noting the price has risen from below £25 to £47.

Sunday service “Easy Worship” and “PowerPoint” operators have been added to the weekly rota, with sound and cameras being covered by existing operators. There have been problems with the sound system, and we may have to investigate alternatives in the future. Allied with this, the hearing loop may need attention. Thanks to Stephen Hester for his participation in this area.

Thanks also go to all those who help with the audio, visual and technical support. New volunteers have come forward to help in this important area of our worship, but we do need to train new operators for computer and recordings, 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.

Mike Watts has kindly joined the administration team to offer his support and expertise in helping to run our office software and IT systems.

Financial Review – Richard Matthews, Treasurer

All Church of England parishes are obliged to have a financial year that is the calendar year: 1st January – 31st December. This Finance Report and the accompanying Financial Statement covers that period of 2019 and forms the basis of the review of this church’s financial position in this Annual Report. 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.

Financially 2019 has been an exceptional period for the fortunes of St John’s Church. The Legacy gifts bequeathed to our church from the estate of late Robert Keen in 2018 and 2019 and from Peter Keen during the current year provided an additional sum of £95,463.50 which was again primarily invested in CCLA Investment Funds. Including the return on investments of £19,618.50 throughout the year the Total Investment at Valuation at year end stood at £735,112.00.

During the course of 2019, the PCC made two decisions which have had an effect on the ‘Planned Giving’; planned giving being the ‘voluntary giving’ by the congregation through their personal giving, through for instance, a collection taken during a Sunday service. The first decision, early in the year was to introduce a method of giving called appropriately, the Parish Giving Scheme. The Parish Giving Scheme (PGS) is a direct-debit system, externally administered, which enables members of our church to commit to making a regular payment to our Church. To date 19 parishioners have signed up to give by PGS. Giving through the ‘Envelope’ scheme and banker’s standing orders have consequently seen a reduction in the sums realised.

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However, total income through 'Voluntary Giving', including tax recovered through the HMRC Gift Aid Scheme, saw an increase of just over 3.5%. The second decision taken by the PCC with regards methods of giving was to discontinue 'Envelope Giving' which does not seem to have had a detrimental effect on the overall giving by parishioners. Total receipts across all income activities amounted to £167,898.12.

Out of a total spend during 2019 of £99,042.43, the largest bill was the Diocesan Parish Share payment of £54,891. Meeting this bill in full before the end of year deadline does mean that we will receive a discount on the 2020 charge. Running costs during this period amounted to £30,337 and at its own discretion the PCC enabled £7,246.28 to go to 'Mission Giving and Donations'.

The net result for the year was an excess of receipts over payments of £88,480.42. The HSBC Current Account balance stood at £57,931.79 at year end and the Fabric Fund Account balance, also with HSBC, stood at £3,296.65.

Reserves Policy

Since 2018, it has been the 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 2019 this equated to about £13,840 and it was anticipated that this reserve would also cover emergency building work.

Although not formally discussed and formulated into a revised reserves policy during 2019, the Council, as previously reported in the Annual Report of 2017, resolved to continue to invest using the CBF Funds held within CCLA. On receipt of further sums of money from the legacy, the PCC also decided that they should be invested in an 'Income' generating CCLA Investment Fund to provide unrestricted reserves to cover running costs in the event of a major problem. In view of how the church's reserves have again changed during 2019, a fresh policy will be finalised and put in place by the Council during 2020 to ensure that these reserves are used to gain maximum benefit for the parish in pursuit of the whole mission of their church. Any increase in income likely to carry the account above the £100,000 threshold will be monitored for the likelihood of the PCC needing to apply in 2020 to meet the Charity Commission requirement for independent charitable status.

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.

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Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees (Parochial Church Council)

Independent examiner's report to the St John's Church Carterton Parochial Church Council

I report on the accounts of the St John's Church Carterton PCC for the year ended 31st December 2019, which are set out on the following pages.

Respective responsibilities of PCC and examiner

The PCC are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The PCC 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.

Having satisfied myself that the charity is not subject to audit under company law and is eligible for independent examination, it is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act; and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

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 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 no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

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 386 of the Companies Act 2006; and
- to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records, comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the Companies Act 2006 and with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities

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.



Name: David Cuthbertson ICPA Cert(Acc) Open
Shilton Accounting Services
4th March 2020

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Statement of Accounts

St John's Church Carterton
Receipts and Payments year ended 31st December 2019

Receipts	Unrestricted Funds
Activities	£
Planned Giving	19,196.50
Cash Collections	12,992.19
Parish Giving Scheme Receipts	10,168.75
Gift Aid Recovered	9,270.68
Bequest/Donations	95,463.50
Statutory Fees	5,552.03
Other Receipts	15,254.47
	<u>167,898.12</u>
Investments	
Investment Income	19,618.50
Bank Interest	6.23
	<u>19,624.73</u>
Total Receipts	<u>187,522.85</u>
Payments	
Parish Share	34,891.00
Visiting Clergy Fees	727.42
Heat and lighting	4,203.50
Insurance	1,730.34
General admin	1,049.58
Subscriptions	351.73
Printing and stationery	674.68
Cleaning	589.00
Clergy Expenses	1,134.40
Diocesan Statutory Fees	2,212.00
Mission Media	123.00
Refreshments	1,528.02
Repairs & Renewals	15,241.49
Damage deposit refunds	60.00
Church Activities	650.92
Waste disposal	384.55
Fire & Safety	528.00
Books	49.93
Telecommunications	634.13
Church Supplies	166.94
Maintenance/Supplies	146.15
Mileage	181.26
Legal fees	734.50
Fellowship Events	204.08
Mission Giving & Donations	7,246.28
Childrens Society	2,425.89
Asset Purchases	973.64
Total Payments	<u>99,042.43</u>
Annual surplus	<u>88,480.42</u>
Adjustment in valuation of Investments	<u>106,432.28</u>
Total annual increase in assets	<u>194,912.70</u>

Richard Matthews
Responsible Financial Officer

Date:

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St John's Church Carterton

Statement of Assets at 31st December 2019

	Unrestricted Funds	
	£	£
Cash accounts		
Opening Balance	32,748.02	
Movement	28,480.42	
		61,228.44
HSBC Current Account Closing	57,931.79	
HSBC Fabric Fund Closing	3,296.65	
Total Cash accounts		61,228.44
Investment Accounts		
Opening Balance	568,679.72	
Movement	166,432.28	
		735,112.00
CCLA Deposit account	60,185.00	
CBF Investment Funds	674,927.00	
Total Investment at valuation		735,112.00
Total assets		796,340.44

Richard Matthews
Responsible Financial Officer

Date:

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 in September were also passed on to Besom. In 2019, the local team were able to deliver over 100 food parcels to support people on a low income in Carterton and the surrounding villages. Donated furniture and houseware items have also been passed on by the Besom volunteer team to those with specific needs who have been referred to the charity by various support agencies and key workers. 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, and our thanks go to all those who have continued to support this work of Christians in action. (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 2019 was £2,158.65. In support of a "greener Christmas" initiative from members of the congregation, rather than sending individual cards to each other, the church family were encouraged to write general Christmas greetings which were displayed on a paper Christmas tree and broadcast on an electronic slide at the Sunday services during December. Voluntary donations from this raised a sum of £221.50 also donated to the Children's Society. Linda Cox took a stall at the Carterton Street Fayre in November selling table decorations. This raised £180.

The annual Christingle Service was held on Sunday, 15 December 2019 and was again well attended. The oranges for the Christingles were kindly donated by Asda supermarket in Carterton and again assembled during the service. £215.12 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 £2,775.27 was raised during 2019. Thanks go to Linda Cox who continues diligently to organise the collection boxes and count the takings, as well as being fundamental in organising the Christingle event. (Linda Wooloff)

Christians Against Poverty (CAP): It has been an interesting year for the whole of the CAP organisation in the UK as well as the Centre in Witney. At the start of the year, Margaret Biddlecombe stood down from the post of Centre Manager and Gary Pizzey stepped into the role. Margaret has remained a Debt Coach in the Centre. We also have an Administrator, Alan Thornton, and if you were involved in the Christmas hampers, you will have heard from him. Through the year, the caseload rose to a peak in August of 48, but thereafter fell back with a number of clients not engaging with the system or providing the necessary information.

A new National CEO, Paula Stringer, was appointed and Matt Barlow stepped back after nearly 20 years in the post. It became apparent that CAP had become the victim of its own success (they reached the milestone of 20,000 clients becoming debt-free) and that there were delays and backlogs in the system with more and more clients seeking help and an increasing complexity in those cases. The National Board took the tough decision not to take new Clients from October onwards to clear the backlog and to have time to properly consider the changes that needed to be put in place to make the organisation fit for the next 20 years. The Centre had been on the point of asking CAP to allow us to increase the number of cases we take, but in the event this decision has been postponed indefinitely. The good news is that as I write this, the phone lines in Bradford have re-opened to accept new referrals and by lunch-time on the first day there were over 200 calls seeking help and 79 new appointments booked for the UK.

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It is clear that the need is as great if not greater than it has ever been and the prayer is that CAP under God's guidance and direction will continue to meet that need.

So far as the Centre in Witney is concerned, we remain grateful for the financial and prayer support we continue to receive and in particular the additional support we now have from St John's. As always, we continue to seek people with a heart for the poor to work alongside us. We currently have 19 active befrienders but will welcome those who feel a calling and have the time to give to this work.

(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, but they must be age 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 and mayonnaise gratefully received from members of the congregation. Brize Norton Primary School staff also donated tuna and mayonnaise instead of giving each other Christmas cards. We are grateful for all of the above donations, which keep the cost to church funds at approximately £30 per month. Unfortunately, due to ill health, Glyn and Glynis Edwards are no longer able to provide the egg mayonnaise for the sandwiches. They supported the project for many years for which we give our thanks and gratitude.

This year The Gatehouse has requested that we provide corned beef sandwiches instead of egg mayonnaise. We now make sandwiches of cheese, ham, corned beef and tuna and a variety of cakes are purchased, providing food for approximately 100 guests at The Gatehouse each month. Sharon Harley regularly donates cakes or cookies which are always much appreciated. 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. Donations of sleeping bags, hats, gloves, tee shirts and underwear are always appreciated and can be left in the box in the foyer marked 'The Gatehouse'.

The retiring collection taken during Advent resulted in £198.60 being donated to The Gatehouse which was wonderful; this money was used to purchase hats, scarves, underwear, gloves and chocolate as Christmas presents for the guests.

Further information about the Gatehouse in Oxford can be found on www.oxfordgatehouse.org
(Lyn Bostock - Coordinator Gatehouse Sandwich Making)

Friday Drop In – Liz Wood

The Drop In Toddler Group continues to be very popular, with lots of new and existing families. At Christmas we gave out each of the children a copy of "a very noisy Christmas" a lovely retelling of the Nativity story. We continue to see Drop In families move into Messy Church.

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 resources for the children's ministry work at St John's. Total income for the year January to December 2019 was £1,019.13 with total outgoings of £653.37, and the bank account has remained in credit with an opening balance of £353.84 and closing in December at £593.10.

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“INSPIRE” Group - Mariann Thompson

2019 has been another blessed year for “Inspire”. To God be the glory! The team of a dozen people have worked hard to make it enjoyable for the folk who attend the two hours twice a month on a Wednesday afternoon. The team still meets for prayer the day before “Inspire”.

We have changed from fortnightly meetings to the second and fourth Wednesday each month throughout the year. We have kept the same format. We open the sessions with prayer, serve drinks and biscuits. We alternate between quizzes and craft and have included poetry, written and read by a lady who attends regularly. In November we had a “Save the Children” stall and were entertained by a ukulele group. At half-time, we serve more drinks and homemade cakes. We end the afternoon with hymn singing and prayer.

We are greatly encouraged by the number of people who attend on a regular basis. We saw more new people coming during the year and have averaged 40 people and 48 altogether on the last Wednesday before Christmas. We do not charge, but receive donations towards refreshments and craft expenses. People have been so generous that we have been able to donate to the church for use of the hall and have also been able to give small amounts to charity.

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. We have also been pleased to welcome friends from St Britius Church. Catering is organised by Doreen Trezise, Sharon Harley and Deborah Pearce (in the kitchen), together with Lyndsay Baker (who organises the spiritual aspect).

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 Knight 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 aim to provide events where men can get together for fellowship, friendship and food. We aspire 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 remain the most popular events in our calendar, with regular attendance averaging 27. The superb quality of the ‘full English breakfast’ prepared by Ian, Bob and Allister Holt is definitely the main attraction for all the men. Our thanks go out to all the other men that help with setting up the tables, especially Ray Goodson and Stephen Hester, and for clearing away and tidying up after the event. We continue to enjoy a variety of speakers, last year including a talk by Roy Tarbox, an LLM from St John’s in Burford, who brought along his radio control model aircraft; there was much interest in flying the simulator afterwards! We also got to know more about our new rector, Reverend Drew Tweedy, who gave us his story and ministry experiences. Breakfasts take place every 2 months in the church, with a Breakfast Barbecue in July, held in the back garden of Mike and Linda Cox, weather permitting.

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 use a track that best replicates a Formula 1 Grand Prix circuit from a race near to the date of our event. The curry is sourced from our local Indian restaurant, Aangon. It is a pure outreach event so we judge the success by the number of non-practising Christians who come along. Average attendance is 20 which is actually 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 continues to be

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fascinating as we watch the competitive nature emerge during the Scalextric races, especially between the elder members of our fellowship!

The Men's Bible Study takes place each month, meeting at the home of Steve and Lyn Bostock, led by our curate, Reverend Ian Howard. Last year we completed a study of the Gospel according to Mark, using a DVD narrating the NIV version with a depiction of relevant events. Towards the end of the year we used the Principles of Deep Water Fishing course written by Bishop Steven. Numbers vary with an average of six.

We continue to gain our inspiration and resources from Christian Vision for Men (CVM). Last year Mike, Reverend Ian and Reverend Stephen Bessent 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 recognise the need for continuity, contingency and refreshment, so we are urgently seeking volunteers to join our team. Please remember our work in your prayers.