

# Annual reports of activities 2018

# Vicar's Report The Revd. Folli Olokose

In my report last year, I intimated the APCM of the ongoing reflection on our vision, mission and "raison d'être" as a church and people of God here in Oatlands. As I look back over the last year, I am amazed to see that so much has been done on this and the words of this great song comes to mind.

To God be the glory great things He has done So loved He the world that He gave us His son Who yielded His life an atonement for sin And opened the life gate that all may go in

Praise the Lord, praise the Lord let the earth hear His voice
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord let the people rejoice
Come to the Father through Jesus the Son
Give Him the glory great things He has done

As a church, much has happened and developed in our midst and looking back we cannot but see God's hand at work amongst us.

The year witnessed the launching of our vision "Loving, Serving, Growing", which flows out of 2017 Vision day. On this day, we identified three goals for which we should strive in the coming years.

- 1. Grow the church younger by encouraging and developing the ministry to children, families, and young people.
- 2. Equipping and developing all members of SMO to be prayerful, compassionate, and confident disciples of Christ in their daily lives.
- 3. Develop effective ways of communicating within and outside of SMO in a way that promotes a church that is visible, relevant, attractive and accessible to both members and all who live and work in the community.

Various members of the congregation worked tirelessly to turn this into a Church Development Plan and create the environment and strategies to achieve these. I am particularly thankful for the leadership and efforts of Brian Stickland, Mike Williams, and Hugh Montgomerie.

Ever since, we have endeavoured to lay emphasis on it in all our services and activities. This report will reflect the goals.

# 1. Grow the church younger by encouraging and developing the ministry to children, families, and young people.

The year 2018 saw the revamping of our Alive@10 service which we moved from the third Sunday to the first and the Family Praise Service to the last Sunday of the month at 4 pm instead of first Sunday at 11.45.

We believed this will make our services respond to the needs of families, especially those with school age and younger children. This change of dates and time has proved to be successful as we now have more families attending both. We have also witness continued growth in our relationship with our local schools. We take a monthly assembly at both Oatlands Infant and Cleve's School in addition to a session of Open The Book as Cleves. We continue to host and participate in Easter, Christmas, Remembrance Day, Welcoming and Sending Off Services for both schools in addition to Walton Leigh and Danefield Manor Schools. I am particularly grateful to Helen Stickland and her team of helpers and volunteers for "Open The Book", Sunday Juniors and Family Praise.

The area of growth that has been most impressive this year has been SMART, our Toddlers' Group that meets on Tuesday Morning during School Term Time. It has been a success without measure with an average weekly attendance of 30 families! This success would not have been possible without the continued efforts of Frida Chapman, Helen Stickland, Petra Hickman, Helen Penkethman, Jenny Rogers as well as

Mike Williams and Ray Newell that ensured that the hall was set up and ready for the group.

Although our children and families activities seems to be growing, we have been unable to sustain First Steppers, our second Toddler Group as Kim Groom after many years of services decided it was time to stop. We are grateful for her many years of dedication and prayers. This shows there is need for more involvement of our members in this ministry. As your Vicar, this area is of utmost importance to me and I would implore each of us to have this in mind as we pray for our church.

Looking ahead, as part of the Church Development Plan, it is proposed that we employ a Children and Families' Worker. It is hoped that the person will be in post in September 2019. We hope and pray that s/he will be a good addition to our existing team and contribute immensely to the growth of our church and help in achieving our goal of growing our church younger.

# 2. Equipping and developing all members of SMO to be prayerful, compassionate, and confident disciples of Christ in their daily lives.

As Christians, our first and most important calling is to be disciples of Christ. It is no wonder that the second goal of vision is to become more confident disciples.

Becoming confident disciples needs a lot of prayer, studying, and hearing of God's word preached and practiced. The values of welcoming, caring, family and Christ-based are what makes us unique as the body of Christ here in Oatlands. In 2018, the preaching team preached on these values and reinforced there importance to us not only as the Body of Christ but also as individual followers of Christ.

These values are also been reflected in all our services. We have developed new orders of services that are more inclusive, easier to follow and in modern and readable fonts.

The installation of the screens and AV System in the church has also been of tremendous help in uplifting our singing and creating a better worship experience for all of us.

Prayer is the bedrock of our relationship with God. It is for this reason that we are not just planning the vision, we are praying for its realisation through the mission prayer that is prayed every week at all services.

In 2018, we continue to have our weekly prayer meeting and I do hope many more will join us on Thursday morning when we meet. The year also highlights the need for us to develop more lay leaders that will be involved in our services. To this end, Ros Bins and Helen Stickland have been trained and authorised by the Bishop to lead Occasional Services. I am grateful for their courage and willingness and hope many more will follow suit.

We continue to have all our services and I am indebted to Hugh Montgomerie, Ros Bins, Brian Brown and many others for their tireless efforts in ensuring that our services take place and are well resourced. I will also like to thank all members of our Choir, Jonathan Bridger our Director of Music for their efforts in ensuring that our sung worship is diversified, inclusive and enriching as together we give glory to God. I am thankful to our group of welcomers, Sides People, readers, Intercessors and Communion Assistants. The year 2018 has been a blessing for us in many ways.

However, it was during this year that our beloved friends Francie Mcllwraith, Andrew Sturgis, Toby Clarke as well as Ann Boyns were called to glory. They will always be in our thoughts and prayers and we look forward to seeing them in heaven. Our prayers and thoughts are with their families as well as others who are recently bereaved.

The act of remembering is not only powerful and helpful, it can be therapeutic as well, in helping us to show our love, gratitude to the departed and a hope of heaven. In 2018, the PCC decided to have a part of our garden dedicated as a Garden of Remembrance. The designated area is the open grassed space between the Lych Gate and the hall. We do hope this will give us a place where parishioners are able to have their ashes buried but also as a "tranquil" space to be still and remember. Please do speak with me if you will like to consider this for yourself or a member of your family.

Through the year, we have done some services differently and been able to maintain all our regular services and activities and have started new ones! At Easter, we had the Easter breakfast, many thanks to Lin and Ray Newell, Petra Hickman, Helen Penkethman and many others for this initiative. It was a success and we hope it will be continued.

We also now have a monthly film evening during which we are able to watch a film, have a meal, and together share our thoughts on the film. This has proved popular and well attended. If you have never been, please do come and invite your friends and family. It's a good night out!

We continue to see growth in numbers in many of our services. The



Family Praise service continues to attract new members in addition to those who now join us on regular basis on Sunday mornings especially at the Alive@10 on the first Sunday. There has been a considerable increase in our ministry to families' especially through baptism.

I am particularly grateful to Ros, Yvonne, Val Gadd and Helen Penkethman and many others that are involved in this ministry. Many of the families have been back to several of our services and we pray that they will continue to come and experience the joy and support that we find in God and each other here at Saint Mary's.

In Matthew 9:37-38 Jesus said,

"The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into his harvest."

He might have been speaking about us here in Oatlands. While we give thanks for the ministries and vocation of Hugh Montgomerie and Ros Bins. I would be glad if others could also consider becoming Lay Minister and Pastoral Assistants and may other roles in our church. As the only Priest in the parish, I have really enjoyed having Moni here with us as part of her placement. I am in discussion with the diocese to whenever possible, have another ordained colleague here. This does not mean I and other members of the team will be doing less but rather we will be able to do more and better.

This year, we have started through the efforts of Hugh and Joyce Montgomerie, a colouring group and with Janet Evans a knitting group, the Men's Curry and Conversation continues. All these groups are aimed at creating avenues for our members to meet and fellowship as well as share their faith. We hope members will be confident to invite their friends and families and make use of these avenues to share their love for Christ.

Early in 2019, we have started small groups which aim at fostering fellowship, having fun and most importantly developing our faiths. There are presently 4 groups meeting at various times and places. The feedback has been that it has been thoroughly enjoyed and immensely helpful to those who are attending.

Looking ahead, we hope to build on these groups and make them parts and parcel of the fabric of the church.

3. Develop effective ways of communicating within and outside of SMO in a way that promotes a church that is visible, relevant, attractive and accessible to both members and all who live and work in the community.

As we all know, we live in an age where not only the message is important, the means of communicating and models of communication are as important. The year has seen a vast improvement in our communication.

In my report last year, I mentioned the fact that some parts of our buildings are not fit for purpose and will need to be urgently addressed. Ever since, we have refurbished the car park albeit not to the standard we would like (due to cost). We have also addressed the lights in the hall, redecorated the hall, changed the lights in the chapel, as well as repair the roof in the Octagon.

Many of you would have also noticed that the back of the church has been repainted. The front of the church, especially around the organ pipes have been rearranged and will now be used as a Prayer Space (especially during the week).

All these have been done through the efforts of members of the Property Committee. I am particularly grateful to Mike Williams, Malcolm Groom, Brian Stickland, Helen de Fraine for all their hard work in keeping our fabric in good stead. Particular mention also to Ray Newell who has been a trustworthy handy man saving us cost and time on many occasions.

Many visitors and members have commented on the cleanliness and beauty of our church. I am particularly indebted to everyone on the cleaning rota and those who has helped during various cleaning days. I will also like to give a special mention to Jo Paines and her team of florists for making all our special services really special. I also want to show our appreciation to Ed Salter, Douglas Robertson, and Jane Evans for all their work in keeping our Church yard beautiful and tidy.

Over the year, we have reviewed the way we communicate within and outside of the church. Many of our notices boards have been redecorated thanks to Maxine Ferrari, Helen Penkethman, Liz Davies and Helen de Friane. Our website and social media pages are much better and I am indebted to Helen Pekenthman and Claire Goodfellow for all their hardwork.

Despite these improvements, there is still a lot to be done. We will continue to seek improvement to our fabric by the installation of a sound desk at the back of the church, reordering of our display boards and keeping all our communications up to date. The plans for moving the Parish Office unto the stage is ongoing and I do hope that by the end of the year these projects will be close to completion.

As we all know communicating the Gospel through the church is not just about our buildings and services. They include our work missional work and how we care for the world and the peoples therein. As of present, we mainly do this through our donation of 5% of our income to various charities and for this we are thankful.

Nevertheless there is a need for us to be more involved in this and also look closer to home and be more involved with our local community.

As we look to the year ahead, I am filled with excitement as I envision what God has in stock for us. Nevertheless, we need to be aware of the challenges we might be facing. These include our finances. As I said in my letter earlier this year, we need to increase our income in whatever way possible.

I am grateful to all those who have responded to this appeal in various ways. Your efforts, financial and otherwise are very much appreciated.

The other challenge is that of making our church more than ever relevant by responding to the needs around us.

Looking ahead, we will be seeking to reform the mission group with the objective of involving more members and to seek ways of being more involved in local activities and charities such as the Foodbank, Rentstart, linking with our local schools and many others that cater for the less privileged in our community. I would be glad to speak with any one that might be interested in taking this forward.

Overall, the year has been a fruitful year and our prayer for growth has been answered in many ways, often beyond our expectations. We are thus thankful to God for blessing our efforts and making us bear fruits for His Kingdom.

I do pray and hope that we will continue to develop and grow not just in numbers but also in spirituality and our love for Christ and one another.

May the year be one of exponential loving, serving and growing. Amen

# Church Warden's Report Mike Williams

The Churchwarden's duties are varied but great assistance is provided by the Treasurer, Fabric Officer and the Parish office. The Vicar has done a huge amount too and we are very lucky in this respect. Maintenance is mainly handled by the Fabric Officer (see separate report) but we have not suffered too many incidents in the church itself. A faulty rainwater drainpipe allowed the west wall to get damp. The drainpipe was repaired and Ray Newell stripped and re-painted the inside wall in Feb/Mar 2019. We have improved lighting in the hall and in the Lady Chapel with LED lights. We re-located the hall lights switch to the hall itself so users do not need to come into the office to switch the hall lights on or off. This benefits everybody - hall users and the office. We have 3 faculties in progress. Faculties are the Church of England's way of controlling and approving works in the historic church buildings and its surrounds. It is time consuming but it does preserve the integrity of the buildings that we love and tries to avoid introducing bad practices. The first faculty is the permanent re-ordering of the children's corner. The current arrangement of the children's corner was approved temporarily in 2008 and we need to make it permanent. No further changes to what is there now is being proposed. This is in the Chancellor's office for legal acceptance. Our diocese has approved this which is a precursor for the legal paperwork. This has been introduced to the congregation and advertised since February. The second is to install a sound & video desk at the back of the church so that we can permanently wire in the laptop that we use to project the 10am services each Sunday and permanently locate the sound control box. Both of these systems are set up each time we want to use them and balancing the laptop on the pew is precarious during use. Two pews will be removed to make room for the lockable sound desk and

permanent wiring installed. Floor covering will be added as there is plain concrete under the pews. This is being reviewed by the Diocese before we can submit to the Chancellor.

Once Diocesan approval is granted, we advise the congregation and advertise the plans to allow for comments to be made as part of the legal approval by the Chancellor. The third is to install a garden of remembrance for the interment of ashes. This will be segregated from the lawn at the west side of the church along the Beechwood Avenue side. Again this is with the Diocese for their approval. Once we have that, we will publish to the congregation and apply for the legal permission to go ahead. The next faculty application is in the early stage of development to convert the stage into an office and store choir materials. This will free up the walkway between the kitchen corridor and the church. Where the current office is situated will become a potential meeting room. I am completing my ninth continuous year as Churchwarden, and next year will be my 10<sup>th</sup> and last! We will try to find people willing to rotate on a 2year cycle into this role: a senior and a junior churchwarden with an assistant always being trained to join the rotation. The role of Churchwarden is important but the main responsibility lies with the PCC nowadays so please do seriously consider being a Churchwarden in future. It is very rewarding to work with such a dedicated group of people as we have here at St Mary. I thank you all for making my role so easy.

# • Electoral Roll Mike Williams

Unlike most reports, the Electoral Roll covers periods between APCMs, not for calendar year, as it affects those eligible to stand for election and vote at the APCM. However, the numbers below are correct to the end of March in order to be included in other documents prepared for the APCM.

The Electoral Roll is closed for new joiners for the 2 weeks prior to the APCM but otherwise can be amended at any time. Every 6 years, the Electoral Roll is re-generated and anybody who wants to be on the new Roll completes a new form. From April 2019, the new Roll will take precedence but the old Roll (which has been amended with new joiners, leavers and deceased since the 2018 APCM) has been used prior to the 2019 APCM. Report was last presented at the APCM in 2018 at that time; we had 162 on the roll

Since 2018 APCM, the number of leavers and deceased has been assessed at We have had no new members join the roll in 2018. The old roll now stands at 158. The new roll will start from the APCM and is still open at the time of writing - many people who were on the old roll have not returned or re-applied and there have not been sufficient new people recruited. We need to get some that only come to Family Praise, for example, to feel that they are members of the church too.

#### • Fabric Malcolm Groom

There have been the usual fabric/maintenance issues; drip, locks, handles etc over the year. Also routine clearance of gutters and downpipes system initiated. More expensive items-replacement of Water Boiler in Kitchen, urgent unblocking of men's loos and replacement of codelock on Hall entry doors. On a positive note-extensive new lighting system and audio/visual system incorporated in Church and Hall.

Car Park-a short term urgent pre-Christmas repair job was carried outit's largely been successful apart from initial entrance area which needs re-looking at. Several more expensive longer term options are currently being reviewed.

Ongoing: decoration of Main Hall (to be concluded end April to fit in with Hall bookings) repair of Belfry roof, and recoating of Octagon

/vestry/ Kitchen and Office roofs.

**4** Re new projects:

-the space above the Hall stage –plans are being drawn up for review to make meeting room space and better Church office facilities



-Octagon roof –alternatives to straight replacement are being considered such as enlarging building (to make more meeting space) subject of course to funding.

### • Deanery Synod Ann Blowers

The Deanery Synod met three times in 2018. The focus of the February meeting was on how parishes could work together on specific areas of church life, linking with the Diocesan 'Transforming Church, Transforming Lives' goals. Results from a Deanery questionnaire showed clearly that there was a need for cooperation on Worship, Children, and Youth Ministry. After discussion in small groups a number of suggestions were put forward about how this could be achieved, involving parishes sharing resources, expertise and offering help where possible. Parishes also shared news of what they are doing about ministry to the elderly and lonely. All parishes are doing something on a regular basis; lunch clubs in particular are well attended. In June, The Revd. Andrew Cowie of St Nicholas, Thames Ditton, was appointed as Area Dean to replace The Revd. Philip Johnson, who had moved to a parish in Worcestershire. The theme of the June meeting was about sharing stories of growth (discipleship, spirituality, serving the community). Six parishes gave a short presentation, demonstrating the variety of activities within the Deanery. In October the main item was a presentation from Matthew Frost, on "Setting God's People Free".

This is an initiative from the Church of England to enable the whole people of God to live out the Good News of Jesus confidently in all of life, Sunday to Saturday. The talk was followed by a discussion and it is hoped that there would be collaboration as a Deanery to put some of the ideas proposed into practice.

# • Safeguarding Anne Vrionides

Hugh Montgomerie and I continue to act as DBS Validators. In summer 2018 the diocese introduced the new online DBS checking service run by APCS [Access Personal Checking Service]. This is easy to use for applicants and for us, and much faster. During the last year, we have completed seven checks using the old paper system and eight using the online system. The criteria for DBS checks are more clearly defined, and there is good support for any queries. Safeguarding training has also become necessary for more individuals. In particular, all members of the PCC are expected to have undergone training to Core 1 level, and this will be mandatory very soon.

This is usually done by completing an online course, and almost all members of the PCC have now completed this risk assessments need to be carried out for certain Parish activities, and some of these have been completed. We will be completing our first Parish Safeguarding Self Audit in the next few months.

# • Health and Safety Mike Williams

The Health & Safety sub-committee did not meet in 2018 A practice fire evacuation is not required by our insurers anymore but we should still train certain people such as: sides persons, churchwardens, ministers, verger in fire evacuation procedures on a regular basis. The smoke/fire monitors are professionally checked twice a year.

These are located in the Halls. There were 0 incidents logged in the Accident Log Book for 2018. We should report any and all incidents in the log book (by the backdoor) so that we can learn from them. Routine visual checks are made of wiring circuits between 3 yearly formal checks.

The next formal check is now due. During the recent addition of new lights to the hall and lady Chapel some of the old circuits were replaced with more secure ones i.e. the damaged plastic ducting in the hall was replaced with metal ducting.

Failures to lock church premises properly still occur occasionally, largely through personnel failures rather than procedural failures. We will continue to monitor persistent 'offenders' and give them further training. A single worker Keyguard personal monitor is provided to Helen P in Parish Office to raise emergency alarms if necessary.

#### • Parish Office Helen Penkethman.

The parish office is a busy workplace providing support to clergy, parishioners and people from outside the church who come into our environment for various reasons. How the office might be made more private, less of a thorough-fare and a more practical and pleasant working environment is currently under review.

# Day to day working of the office

General office administration includes filing/post/emails/telephone calls/baptism & funeral admin - responding to all of these as necessary. (thank you to Douglas Robertson who updates the baptism register. Office cleaning is carried out on a fortnightly rotation by Val Gadd. Sincere thanks to Val. Edna Burrage continues to volunteer in the parish office each week for two hours. We are very grateful and thankful to her. Douglas Faulkner has kindly folded and stapled literature from home for us- prior to the new copier arriving- which now has this facility. Many thanks to Douglas for this help).

#### **∔IT**

A new photocopier was purchased in Jan 2019. This has greatly reduced the amount of time spent dealing with issues associated with the old copier. It should also prove to be more economical to use in the long term. Many thanks to Brian Stickland, Mike Williams and Revd Folli who carefully weighed up the pros and cons of the purchase. The parish office was re-configured slightly to accommodate the new copier and in turn the re-configuration resulted in a focus on the ergonomics of how other tasks were performed and small changes were made.

#### **4** Notice Boards

The notice boards have been made more visible by being given a makeover and are updated weekly. Thanks to Maxine Ferrari for casting her artistic eye over them, rolling her sleeves up and joining a small team to help jazz them up. Finally thanks to Folli for his continued support.

#### WORSHIP AND SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

# • Pastoral Team Hugh Montgomerie

There are three Pastoral Assistants at St Mary Oatlands. Their primary

task is to visit those who are unable to attend church. They are assisted by four trained helpers, two of which concentrate their visiting to Sunrise. The numbers of visits vary and currently, there are nine who regularly receive Holy Communion in their homes. Monthly services are taken at



Sunrise and Sutton Lodge where a carol service is held at Christmastide. The team meets regularly, under the direction of Folli, to keep everyone up-to-date. If you would like to consider joining the team please speak to Hugh.

#### Readers and Intercessors

# List of Readers for the Sunday and Thursday Services:

Richard and Frances Baker, Ros Binns, Brian Brown, Carola Brown, Bernard Day, David Erlam, Jane Evans, Janet Evans, Ian Ferris, Kim Groom, Petra Hickman, Sara Hollingshead, Ralph Humble, Diane Keith, Hugh Montgomerie, Ray Newall, Barry Railton, Douglas Robertson, Jane Ruddlesdin, Ed Salter, Sean Salter, Krystna Salter, Caroline Tapp, Mark Tapp, Anne Vrionides, Mike Williams, John Winterbottom, Robert Winterbottom and Joan Wisbey.

# **List of Intercessors for the Sunday and Thursday Services:**

Ros Binns, Brian Brown, Bernard Day, Kim Groom, Sarah Miseldine, Hugh Montgomerie, and John Winterbottom.

#### • Communion Assistants Rosalind Binns

8am – Rosalind Binns, Joan Gorton, Sue Webber, John Winterbottom. 10am - Frances and Richard Barker, Rosalind Binns, Liz Davies, Val Gadd, Diane Keith, Ray Newell, Sarah Miseldine, Anna & Vaughan Reading, Anne Vrionides, Janet Williams & John Winterbottom.

The roles of the server and communion assistants have been combined and all have received training in their new duties. New robes have been ordered to replace the old, now rather shabby, ones.

### Sidesmen Rosalind Binns

8am – Rosalind Binns, David Erlam, Ian Ferris, John Winterbottom. 10am – Rosalind Binns, Edna Burrage, Liz Davies, Yvonne Ferrari, Helen de Fraine, Helen Maloney, Malcolm Jefferies, Bernard Day, John Winterbottom, Petra Hickman.

#### Choir

Once again this year the choir has worked very hard. We now have four settings for the Sunday Eucharist, although some longer serving members of our congregation may remember the St. Mary Setting, which is the latest one that we sing, from many years before my time. I would also like to thank our extras who join us for Christmas and other special occasions; Frances, Rhiannon, Jane and Douglas. However, as you probably realize the choir is struggling to keep going. This year we have unfortunately been affected by ill health amongst some of our choristers and this has reduced our numbers quite considerably some weeks. I have asked from the front of the church on a Sunday morning, as well as writing in the pew sheet, several times, if anybody would like to join the choir or knows anybody who might like to join, either junior or adult. Maybe, just join us on a Sunday morning to road test us but no-one has come forward. If Thursday choir practices are the problem with work/school balance being difficult, the choir, Folli and myself are trying a new direction.

# Choir practice will now be on a Sunday morning only at 9.00 until 9.40 where we will practice the music for that morning and look at the music for the following week.

It is hoped that if anybody is interested in joining the choir but couldn't manage an evening, then they would be in church anyway on a Sunday.

The only time that we will practice on a weekday evening will be the weeks leading up to Christmas and Easter. I have also asked for instrumentalists (flute, oboe, violin and guitar to begin with) for the Alive @ 10 service each month, also no response.

I look forward, with hope, to meet anyone interested in any of the hilighted areas of need. As talked of in the media, singing and music can be

therapeutic and give a "feel good factor". It is also a very valued part of our worship.

St. Mary Oatlands has a long tradition of music but unless people come forward we will soon be joining the long list of churches that will not have a choir or any musical lead.

#### **Belfry John Burnett**

In 2018 we rang the bells for the ten o'clock Sunday morning service 46 times out of a possible 51 (same figures as in 2017). We also rang on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. On Remembrance Sunday we joined other churches throughout the country in special ringing to commemorate one hundred years since the end of the First World War. We were asked to ring the bells for seven weddings and did so. I reported last year that Bruce Rogers had decided it was time to retire after 26 years as Tower Captain. It took until July before we were able to get all the ringers together for a meeting. We combined it with a celebration dinner.

Bruce officially retired and I was elected Tower Captain. Felicity Hardman became Treasurer. Early in the year one of the Weybridge ringers who had recently moved into the area discovered that Oatlands



did not have a regular practice. This is something that most church towers do but we ceased some years ago through lack of numbers. Since May, Peter Hampson and his fiancée Cathy who are both very good ringers, have been running successful practices at Oatlands once month.

The lady who I reported was learning to ring last year decided not to continue but Andrew Fisher has been

teaching two more people and they were able to join in the Remembrance ringing in November.

An experienced ringer who lives locally was attracted by our monthly practices and now joins us regularly on Sundays. We could still do with one or two more.

Visiting ringers continue to remark on the dim light in the ringing chamber. A second quotation for improved lighting is in the hands of the PCC and I hope this will bring results.

# • Bible Reading Fellowship Petra Hickman

The Bible Reading Fellowship Group comprises of 6 members presently. The members follow a system of daily bible reading from their booklets accompanied by interpretations, prayers and recommendations for further readings. Members follow the course in their own time at home. There is an annual charge for the booklets of about £14. The course starts as from 1st May in any one year. Anyone interested to participate in the daily bible reading is most welcome. Please contact me via the parish office if you would like to join.

# • Caring and Sharing Rosalind Binns, Yvonne Ferrari, Lin Newell, and John Winterbottom.

We meet on the first Tuesday of the month at 14.30 in the chapel. Our intercessions are for those who are ill, bereaved or in need and for those who care for them. Also those in difficulty, those with marital problems and problem neighbours, for those who have recently died and their families, those who are to be baptized and those who are to be married. We would love more people to join us, we end our meeting by saying Compline together.

#### **CHILDREN AND FAMILIES' MINISTRY**

#### Children's Work in General

#### **Helen Stickland**

With part of our Vision Plan being to "Grow the Church Younger," I have been a member of the Children and Families Committee, chaired by our Church Warden Mike Williams. We have had some very thought provoking and interesting meetings and are in the process of making plans to employ someone to help with this work. In the meantime, apart from Open the Book, Family Praise and Sunday Juniors I have also enjoyed continuing my involvement with Cleves School on their visits to our Church for Class Activities and Church School Services at Christmas, Easter and End of the School Year. It has also been a pleasure to welcome Oatlands Infant School.



Year 2 have just visited us to learn from the four Holy Week Prayer Stations prepared for us by Ann Blowers. One new "Activity" this year which was very successful was our Pancake Day after school event. The families who came wanted to know if we could do the same thing every week!! There is obviously a need for

"after school" children's activities: all we need now is God's grace and guidance, plus some more willing volunteers, so that we may be able to implement these. It has also been wonderful to note that we are getting more babies and toddlers at our morning services. Our Sunday Juniors starts from around five years old: it would be wonderful if we could offer a Creche for those under this age. Again, any ideas or offers in this respect would be really welcome!! It has been a privilege to have attempted to coordinate our Children and Families work and I look forward to great things in the future with God's help.

# Sunday Juniors Helen Stickland

Sunday Juniors continues to offer worship, instruction and an activity on three Sundays in the month (four when there are five Sundays) from 10am until approximately 10.45pm when staff and children join the congregation to share in Holy Communion and the closing of the service. We do not meet during August or on Alive @10 All Age Worship Sundays, but offer supervision and activities in church as part of the 10 am Service. Weekly numbers vary from 2 to as many as 12 on some occasions. We continue to be blessed with regular leaders and helpers without whom this important, valuable work would not be able to continue. A massive "Thank you" to you all. *However*, we are in great need of a couple of new volunteer leaders, *please*, as it is often difficult to cover all the Sundays, especially at holiday times. We use the Roots Children's Sunday Material which usually coincides with the Gospel lectionary reading at the 10am service. If you might consider joining our Leaders Team, please have a word with either Rev Folli or me.

Patricia Olokose kindly leads Sunday Juniors on Family Praise Sundays when several of our "regular" children do not attend in the morning, but come to Family Praise at 4pm. She has worked tirelessly with two of our older youngsters in particular, using this opportunity to look at the weekly material in greater depth with fewer younger children present. Thank you Patricia.

Since September we have been joined by Emma, who, as part of her Community Work for her Duke of Edinburgh's Award, has been helping every Sunday morning. She has been a pleasure to work with and a real blessing to everyone. We shall be sad to see her complete her assignment. Thank you Emma!

I look forward to welcoming both child and adult newcomers among us in the next year or so. Please keep this work and those involved in it in your thoughts and prayers.

# • Family Praise Helen Stickland

Family Praise Services, with the exception of a break during August, have continued on a monthly basis, meeting at 4pm in the Hall for Activities related to the Theme of the Worship. At 4.30pm we move into the Church for Worship, hopefully involving the whole church family, not just the children, returning to the Hall for Tea afterwards, always a very popular activity! In December the Service was again combined with the Christingle Service with hot chocolate and mince pies afterwards.

From April to November we met on the last Sunday in the month, but we changed, yet again, in January this year, moving to the **third** Sunday in the month, in the hope of avoiding more school holidays. It is extremely difficult to accommodate every family's other commitments, but we continue to try and are being blessed with gradually increasing numbers at these Services.

None of the above would be possible without the loyal help and support that my wonderful team of helpers provide every month without fail. Without mentioning any names, I would like to thank

- those who assist in moving tables, chairs, cushions and props for the stories, before and after each meeting,
- those who provide and prepare the refreshments,
- those who help with the activities before and during our meetings and last, but not least, the adult members of the congregation who attend on a regular basis and are prepared to take a leading part in the Church Worship. If you feel you could help with any of the tasks above, please let me know. Many hands make light work!

If anyone would like to make a donation towards either the refreshments or the resources for the activities for Family Praise Services, our Church Treasurer, Brian Stickland would be very pleased to see you! I consider myself to be extremely blessed in the work that I am able to do among children and their families, as I endeavour to spread God's message of love. Please pray for the continuing expansion of this work.

# • Open the Book Helen Stickland

We began going to Cleves School for Open the Book in October 2013 and together with my Open the Book Team we have continued to lead a monthly Lower School Assembly (Years 3 & 4 with 360 children!) The stories all come from the Lion Story Teller Bible and the format of the presentation is provided by the Open the Book publishers. I am blessed to be supported by a wonderful team of volunteers who present the dramatized stories, usually assisted by one of the classes, always eager and excited to help!! Tea-towel head-dresses feature regularly in our dressing-up costumes and we are fortunate to have the use of the Performance Hall Screen and Projector on most visits.

On a personal note, I get enormous pleasure from this activity and I feel very blessed to enjoy a good working relationship with staff and pupils alike. The Reception Staff - Jill, Debbie and Denise, Deputy Head Craig and Caretaker Pete – are always there to help me out when I need it: I don't know what I'd do without them.

We are dependent on the school for the timing of our Open the Book visits which, this academic year, have been on a Monday, Tuesday & occasionally Wednesday afternoon. It is so wonderful to hear the children say things like "Oh, good, it's Open the Book Assembly today" or for them to introduce members of the team to their parents if we meet in the street. I have so many smiling young friends greeting me now as I go about from day to day – it is a real tonic!!

If you would like to attend one of these Cleves Assemblies yourself and experience an Open the Book Assembly first-hand, please let me know. I am sure you would feel really uplifted, as I do each time, and you just *might* want to take part on another occasion? In conclusion, I would ask you all please to keep this work in your thoughts and prayers.

# SMART Helen Stickland and Frida Chapman

SMART Playgroup has continued to meet during term-time. Sadly, we had to say "Good-bye" to Camille in July and we wished her well for the future. We are very grateful to her for her leadership and hard-work and already miss her and young Zac. One of our most regular and most helpful Mums, Frida, volunteered to take over the Leadership role and SMART Club has gone from strength to strength. Thank you, Frida. We shall urgently need a new Leader in September 2019 when Frida's youngest attends Nursery more regularly. Frida has kindly agreed to help where she can, but we will not be able to continue without a new regular leader. If you know of anyone who might be interested or persuaded to consider this position, please let me know. Frida and I will provide as much help and support as we possibly can. Without a new Leader we would have to stop meeting. As I hope you know, SMART is now "officially" a St Mary Oatlands organization and we are blessed with the support of Rev Folli and everyone at SMO. Thank you to you all!

# Playgroup Sessions and Activities



The format of the playgroup sessions remains unchanged and we continue to offer a mix of free play and craft activities with singing at the end of the session. Refreshments for parents and children are always available and we are indebted to

Petra Hickman for organising this vital part of our term time weekly meetings. We are also grateful to former SMART Leaders, Kay Roberts and Claire Goodfellow, for stepping in to help out whenever Petra or I are able to attend SMART, which is a very rare occurrence!

Parents and carers regularly comment on the friendly and welcoming atmosphere at SMART and we are delighted that families seem to really enjoy attending the group. I thoroughly enjoy running it and will be sad to leave when my son starts doing more hours at nursery in September as it will be an end of an era for us!

# **♣** Revenue and Expenditure

Our weekly charge remains £2 per session per family with surplus after expenses and donations to charities being paid into Church Accounts.

# Donations paid out during 2018

St Mary Oatlands Church (Spring/Summer £400, Autumn £350)

Crisis at Christmas £100
Sands £75
Salvation Army £100

TOTAL £1,025

#### Mission Partners Ann Blowers

# **The Leprosy Mission**

We supported World Leprosy Sunday in 2018; the theme was 'Breaking the chains of leprosy in Africa', focusing on Niger. In May we welcomed our Leprosy Mission Regional Manager, Jarrett Wilson, who spoke about the physical and emotional damage caused by this dreadful disease and the ongoing work to see a world without leprosy. Speakers in September were Kristin Stevenson from **Bible Society** and Nicholas Lebey from **Church Army.** We continue, with other local churches, to collect food for the **Walton Charities Food Bank** which was also the recipient of the donations of food from our Harvest service. The ever popular Christingle Service in December raised funds for the **Children's Society.** We supported **Samaritan's Purse** annual Shoe Box Appeal, with the local schools joining in.

In September a **MacMillan** Coffee Morning was held in the church. Thank you to everyone who donated to the appeals for the Mission Agencies and charities during the year. Our Outward Giving figure is 5% of income to a specified formula. Currently we have no mission partners so our donations for 2018, as agreed by the PCC, have been allocated to specific projects as below.

# Donations for 2018

Bible Society	£ 800
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Church Army	£ 700
The Leprosy Mission	£ 1100
Mission to Seafarers	£ 500
United Society Partners in Mission	£ 500
Total	£3600

**Bible Society** - the distribution of bibles to children in Malawi, one of the poorest countries in the world. **Church Army** - supporting the Greenwich Centre of Mission to help the youth of South East London away from drugs and knife crime.

**The Leprosy Mission** - contributing to the *Heal Nepal* campaign especially at Anandaban Hospital. This donation will be doubled by the government under the UKAid initiative. **Mission to Seafarers** - helping those on merchant ships abandoned by their owners around the world. **United Society Partners in Mission** - providing a programme teaching students in India about the importance of safeguarding the environment.

# • Churches Together Helen de Fraine

This comprises of St. James Weybridge, Christ Prince Peace, Weybridge Methodist, United Reform, Wey Christian Fellowship and St. Mary Oatlands. All churches have ministers and we continue to meet and support one another with current events in Weybridge. The Methodist Church continues to run a Bedding Bank once a month. The main event is The Walk of Witness held on Good Friday through Weybridge up to the Monument. We also celebrate Woman's World Day of Prayer and a Pentecost service in rotation.

# • Meeting Point Jane Ruddlesdin

January: Paul Whittle STEAM TO MANDALAY

February: Gillian Grinham 'AN AFTERNOON WITH JOYCE GRENFELL'

March: War zone SURGEON DAVID NOTT's Desert Island Discs podcast

April: Ellie Birney and Shelley Gray HAM HOUSE and its gardens.

May: NOT JUST TRAVEL - Kamal Sandhu holidays in UK and abroad

June: Helen Stickland MY LIFE IN PIANO PIECES - Part 2

July: Summer Party – 'SINGING FOR PLEASURE' with choir and BUPA

LUNCH

August: STRAWBERRY TEA collaboration with SMO PCC

September: Jenny Rogers QUIZ as Amy

October: Talk postponed/train strikes –Dr Dutta PAIN MANAGEMENT

November: Peter Thompson, YOU THE JURY

December: BROOKLANDS CATERING COLLEGE CHRISTMAS LUNCH

#### OUTINGS

IN SPRING – 20 members MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING at the Rose Theatre, Kingston

IN AUTUMN – Funded by the Pargiter Trust at the Community Foundation for Surrey, 50 members Ham House. Garden tour, lunch, house visit, tea and coach each way.

Another full year for Meeting Point members, each monthly buffet luncheon was well-attended with an average of 35 members in the hall. We held a couple of raffles for our funds and Joan Ewing organised sale of special SMO greeting cards, which proved very popular. Last minute changes to the agenda were unavoidable – but we hope to rebook those speakers in 2019. We are grateful to the Community Foundation for Surrey's Pargiter Trust and BUPA Sutton Lodge for their continuing support and sponsorship.

A special thank you to all the helpers who buy, prepare or serve the food and clear up afterwards, also those who organise the finances and card-signing – all of them make Meeting Point a successful and enjoyable date in the calendar.

# • Not Just Sundays Liz Davies

This social group continues to meet every two months outside the church

environment. We have been on walks and to see around a pottery. A good crowd visited Sandhurst Royal Military Academy kindly arranged by Hugh. By the time of the APCM we should have had a tour of Lambeth Palace.



We again found the meeting up to share lunch or even just coffee and cake drew the largest numbers! We have several interesting things planned for this year so come and join us and bring your friends.

# • Winter Fair

#### **Janet Evans**

The 2018 Winter Fair once again involved a huge amount of work from a lot of people. As well as our own stalls, we were pleased to welcome our friends from Christ Prince of Peace, with the Olive Wood carvings, and we had three visiting independent stalls who made a donation to our funds.



This year saw the successful launch of our own Christmas cards. Ed Salter produced three beautiful designs, and I hope this stall will continue to be a feature. We also introduced a more child friendly lunch option in the hope of encouraging families with small children to eat with us. The change of entrance

from the back door to the main church resulted in a much better use of space and also gave access to the prayer area in the chapel set up by Ann to mark the centenary of the end of the First World War. Next year, the format will need to be a little different, as the stage space will no longer be available for the lengthy preparations or to rent out. Some of our stalls and activities have reached their "sell by date" and some new ideas are needed, so will the next Winter Fair Organiser please identify themselves and step forward! Overall, the fair was slightly up on funds raised, which represents a magnificent effort from all the helpers at every stage. Thank you!

#### • Flower Team:

# **Josephine Paines**

Once again the flower team have been busy decorating St Mary's Oatlands with beautiful flower arrangements for the Easter & Harvest Festival Sunday's and Christmas. We are now a very small team and would welcome more help, so far we have not been asked to do any wedding flowers as most couples use their own florists. We would like to thank the members of the church who help us to buy the flowers via donations.

# • Sunday Morning Coffee Petra Hickman

Sunday morning refreshments after the 10am service offers a great opportunity for members of the congregation and newcomers to St Mary's to meet for a chat after the service; and continuous to be well attended. The little extras offered on occasions such as buttered toast, bananas and cakes together with the usual biscuits are much appreciated. Also the refreshments are now free of charge. Previously we had requested a donation towards expenses. It is hoped members of the congregation might make an annual gift towards the costs instead. We very much appreciate the many regular helpers who give of their time so generously, so we can enjoy a social get together every Sunday. I would like to extend my personal thanks for all the assistance given by our stalwart group of regular and occasional helpers.

# • Hall Management and Lettings Helen de Fraine

The total revenue received for the year under review was £32,406 a slight loss of £2000 from last year. The revenue mainly came from regular users Baby Sensory, Slimming World, A Cappella Singers, Monkey Music, Toddler Tango, Move a Muscle, after the bell homework club and London Karate. We have lost Helz Belz Dance and do have some sessions available for hire at the moment; some are filled with internal church bookings and also for children's Party's.