

# **ST JAMES THE GREAT EAST MALLING**



**REPORTS FOR THE  
ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING  
7TH APRIL 2019**

## **A Message from your Churchwarden**

I am pleased to issue this booklet of Annual Reports in advance of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting on **Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> April 2019 at 11am** here at St. James the Great, East Malling. Please take time to read the reports before the meeting. If you have any queries or comments there will be opportunity to raise them at the meeting.

The PCC has complied with its duty under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 relating to the House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. The appropriate notice, duly signed, is displayed on the PCC notice board.

Finally, I would like to thank the PCC and the congregation for their support over the past year. I am privileged to serve this parish.

*David Chambers*

The Parish of St. James the Great East Malling

Annual Vestry Meeting & Annual Parochial Church Meeting

Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> April 2019 in the church at 11 a.m.

AGENDA

Annual Vestry Meeting

1. Presentation of Notice convening the meeting.
2. Minutes of Annual Vestry Meeting 15<sup>th</sup> April 2018
3. Vote of Thanks to Churchwardens
4. Election of Churchwardens 2019/20

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

1. Presentation of Notice convening the meeting
2. Minutes of Annual Meeting 15<sup>th</sup> April 2018
3. Electoral Roll Report
4. Annual Reports of the PCC (available online)
5. Accounts for 2018
6. Election of Independent Examiner for 2020
7. Election of
  - 1 representative of the laity to the Deanery Synod for a term of 1 year.
  - 4 representatives of the laity to the PCC for a term of 3 years
  - 2 representatives of the laity to the PCC for a term of 1 year
8. Election of Sidespersons
9. Any Other Business

The first PCC meeting will be held immediately after the APCM to appoint the PCC Secretary and the PCC Treasurer and to adopt the proposed dates for PCC meetings 2019/20.

Next PCC meeting

Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> May 2019 at 7.30 p.m. in the church.

**Minutes of the Annual Vestry Meeting**  
for the Parish of St. James the Great East Malling  
held on Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> April 2018 in the church

Present: Rev. Nicholas Williams (Chairman) and 33 members of the congregation.

**Y222** The Secretary produced the Legal Notice convening the meeting.

**Y223** The Minutes of the Annual Vestry Meeting 2017 were agreed and signed, proposed by Alan Bramley, seconded David Brooman.

**Y224** The Chairman asked for a vote of thanks to David Chambers as the outgoing churchwarden and also to Sue Payne as assistant churchwarden and Linda Bramley and Belinda Hunter as deputy churchwardens. This was proposed by David Brooman and seconded by Anna Ashbee.

**Y225** Election of Churchwardens

	<u>Proposer</u>	<u>Seconder</u>
Mr. David Chambers	Maureen Banfield	Mary Hicks

There being no other nominations, Mr. Chambers was unanimously elected Churchwarden for the ensuing year.

Dated this .....day of .....2019

Chairman.....

**Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting  
for the Parish of St. James the Great, East Malling  
held on Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> April 2018 in the church**

Present:- Rev. Nicholas Williams (Chairman) and 33 members of the congregation.

Apologies were received from Canon & Mrs. Carpenter, Mr. & Mrs. Dove and Mr. & Mrs. Gill.

**Z667** The Secretary produced the Legal Notice convening the meeting.

**Z668** The Minutes of the APCM 2017 were agreed and signed, proposed Denise Hynard, seconded Pat Ashbee

**Z669** The Electoral Roll Officer, Don Payne, reported that there were now 98 people on the Electoral Roll of whom 62 were resident in the Parish. 14 names had been removed from the register and 1 added.

**Z670** Annual Reports to the APCM were presented in a booklet which had been available to download from the parish website.

The Chairman invited questions for each section:-

Grounds and Buildings – The Vicar thanked the Grounds & Buildings committee for dealing with all the various matters they had reported on.

Apple Tree Room – Anna Ashbee reported that all of the demands of the DAC had been met but there was still one legal matter to resolve with the Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council. Once this had been sorted then tenders would be sought. The Chairman thanked Anna for all the work she had done on this project, commending her fortitude and persistence. He also thanked all those who helped her on the project team.

Circle of Prayer – The Vicar said this was an understated but very important part of the church's ministry. He thanked Jenny & Mike for continuing to provide this service and invited anyone who would like to become involved to contact them.

Mothers' Union – The Chairman said the branch in the Benefice was very active and he encouraged people to join.

Deanery Synod – Alan Bramley reported that the Deanery Mission and Ministry Plan report and progress were uppermost in all discussions.

Children's Church – The Vicar thanked all involved with children's church activities. He had received positive comments regarding the provision of Sunday School activities from some visitors to a Sunday morning service. Not many churches offer Sunday School now.

Choir Report

Events Committee – Jacqui Brooman asked people to support Mark Francis, especially at the Christmas Market. The Chairman thanked the committee for all the activities they had organised during the year. He was particularly sad that David and Jacqui Brooman were leaving the parish, they would be greatly missed. They received a round of applause.

Flower Arrangers – The Vicar especially thanked the flower arrangers for the beautifully decorated Cross on Easter morning. The scent of lilies which had greeted the congregation at the 6a.m. dawn service on Easter morning had been almost as good as having incense.

Bellringers Report

Friends of St. James

Church Opening – The Chairman stated that although Mark Francis was not well he was doing his best to keep the church open regularly.

Disclosure and Barring Service and Safeguarding – report provided by Sandra Corby the Benefice lead recruiter and administrator. The Vicar stated this was a matter which would be of high importance especially to the PCC. Safeguarding was a matter for everyone to be aware of.

### **Z671** Vicar's Report

The Vicar thanked everybody who contributed to the smooth running of the church, many of whom were not seen by the congregation, e.g. cleaners, flower arrangers, repairers. It was a pleasure to work in a church which was kept in such good order. He offered particular thanks to the PCC members and to Derek Carpenter, Alan Bramley, David Chambers and Sue Payne for the advice and assistance he had received over the past year.

As the report was a retrospective, the Vicar referred to his report from the 2017 APCM when he had introduced various initiatives:-

Praying for Streets – unfortunately very few people signed up to pray for streets, even the ones they lived in.

Prayer walking – Lisa (evangelist), Nick and Jenny had done this for East Malling and it had also happened in Teston and Wateringbury.

Pilgrims' Course on Thursday mornings – part 1 had been completed and he planned to move on to the second part.

Messy Church – had not got off the ground at East Malling, he was still trying to find a venue with appropriate facilities which was close to the church. He would be glad to hear from anyone who would be interested in helping with this.

Deanery confirmation service – had taken place with Bp Michael Nazir-Ali presiding. The vicar had received favourable comments on the venue and the service.

Confirmation course at Wateringbury school – there had been no takers for this at the school so classes had been held at East Malling, although the candidates were from Teston and Wateringbury only.

To the future:

The Deanery Mission and Ministry Plan – he thanked everyone who had submitted a response and also the PCC for considering all the responses before making their own. He had submitted a response to Rev. David Green on behalf of the Benefice which reflected all of the responses received. All responses will be considered by the working group and a report issued to the Deanery Synod. As soon as he had further information he would let the congregation know.

Thy Kingdom Come (Archbishop of Canterbury's initiative for Pentecost) – A novena of morning and evening prayer had been planned for this and all would be welcome to attend.

### **Z672** Accounts for 2017

The inspected accounts, accompanied by a written report complying with Charity Commission rules, were presented to the meeting. The Treasurer (Michael Rogers), thanked Richard Dunn for inspecting the accounts and Nick Ashbee for all his assistance in putting the accounts into electronic format.

Questions were invited.

Anna Ashbee asked

**1) how much of the Parish Offer of £34,166 was parish share and how much would we be paying in the future.**

NA commented that the accounts were inevitably about past finances and it would be helpful to make some observations about what we could expect in the future.

He said that the Diocese now only looked at the total amount given by each parish, which it called 'Parish Offer'.

NA explained that since the East Malling, Wateringbury and Teston Benefice began, East Malling had been paying a higher proportion of the vicar's stipend and Benefice-wide expenses - some 54%. This

was based on each parish's parish share when the Benefice was set up in 2002 and reflected the fact that the other parishes were in much poorer financial health than East Malling at that time. Since this was no longer the case, for 2018 East Malling would be paying a reduced amount, based on the actual amount of time the vicar spent in the parish. This was about 43% of total 'vicar cost', as determined by the Diocese.

In addition, NA noted that East Malling had built up a substantial surplus in the Benefice account. In 2018, this would be used to pay Benefice expenses (administrator, vicarage costs etc). As a result, East Malling expected to break even in 2018. This depended of course on other income and expenditure being in line with budget.

## **2) how the PCC planned to use the c£45,000 shown in total unrestricted funds.**

NA said that the PCC's long-standing policy was to hold reserves of at least three month's expenditure (a prudent move supported by Jonathan Colvile's comments). Beyond that, the PCC had no immediate plans to spend this money and it was for the PCC, representing the wider congregation, to decide how this money should be used in future.

The inspected 2017 accounts were approved by the meeting, proposed David Chambers, seconded Michala Neaves, carried.

The Vicar thanked Michael and Nick for all their hard work.

### **Z673 Appointment of Independent Examiner for 2016**

The PCC has elected to subject the financial statements to independent examination and, therefore, having made appropriate enquiries, propose Richard Dunn as independent examiner until the next APCM. Proposed Alan Bramley, seconded Pat Ashbee, carried unanimously.

### **Z674 Elections to the Parochial Church Council**

Retiring members of the PCC were Pat Ashbee, Mark Francis, Belinda Hunter and Richard Yates. Additionally David and Jacqui Brooman had stepped down from the PCC, leaving 2 vacancies for 2 years.

The following people were nominated

<u>nominee</u>	<u>proposer</u>	<u>seconder</u>
Pat Ashbee	Sue Payne	Belinda Hunter
Belinda Hunter	Pat Ashbee	Sue Payne
Becky Prince	Sue Payne	Nick Ashbee
Susanne Canham	Sue Payne	Anna Ashbee
Angus Bennison	David Chambers	Belinda Hunter

There being no other nominations Pat Ashbee, Belinda Hunter, Becky Prince and Susanne Canham were elected for a term of three years and Angus Bennison was elected for a term of one year. Two vacancies for a 2 year term remained. The Vicar stated that additional members could be co-opted onto the PCC.

### **Z675 Election of Sidespersons**

The following persons were nominated and elected:

Maureen Banfield	Angus Bennison	Linda Bramley
Christine Burchett	Sybil Chambers	Barbara Crittenden

David Gill  
Don Payne

Pat Gill  
Lorna Readman

Allan Greenwood  
Jean Spinks

Proposed Alan Bramley, seconded Belinda Hunter, carried unanimously.

**Z676** Any Other Business

- a) Church Opening Sue Payne reported that Mark Francis was looking for more people to be ‘church sitters’.
- b) Rochester Link newspaper would only be available online from May 2018. Any comments could be emailed to the editor.
- c) David Chambers presented the Church Terrier, a record of the land owned by the church for inspection. The church owns the church and the churchyard. The Vicarage belongs to the Diocese.
- d) David Chambers presented the Church Logbook, a diary of maintenance and work, and a detailed Inventory for inspection.
- e) Changes to the Log Book for 2017-18
  - 1. Boilers serviced and Gas safety check carried out on 25<sup>th</sup> May 2017 (Godfrey Cheesman)
  - 2. Fire extinguishers serviced 6 July 2017.
  - 3. Upgraded church intruder alarm system installed 18 Sep 2017 (IDH Alarms)
  - 4. Church and records inspected by the Rural Dean 15 Aug 2017 (Rev. Matthew Buchan)

Inventory changes:-

**Additions:**

- 1. Purple fitted frontal for the High Altar. Thanks to Jacqui Brooman & Rev. Nick Williams
- 2. Three wired hand-held microphones
- 3. 34 books of Common Prayer with red covers
- 4. Two new VAX upright vacuum cleaners
- 5. Carpet for Sunday School use in the Vestry. Thanks to Christine and Dennis Freere.

**Deletions:** Three life-expired vacuum cleaners discarded (White Electrolux cylinder, purple & green Dyson upright, orange VAX)

f) Acknowledgements

David Chambers thanked everyone for their support. He thanked Alan Bramley for ensuring readers and intercessors were available, Sue Payne for her continued support and keeping him in contact with electronic communications and Linda Bramley and Belinda Hunter for acting as a Deputy Churchwardens. He thanked Alan Bramley and Derek Carpenter for helping to conduct services and Nick Williams for chairing the meeting and for the leadership he had shown to us all. Mr. Chambers expressed concern that the full complement of PCC places could not be filled and that only one churchwarden had been elected. He had been churchwarden for nearly 20 years and was considering his position in the future.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 12.05p.m.

Dated this .....day of .....2019

.....Chairman

## **Grounds and Buildings Committee**

*To be presented separately at the meeting*

### **The Apple Tree Room**

During 2018, we went out to tender for the Apple Tree Room, receiving quotes from various contractors for the total cost of the build. The purpose of this was to quantify the shortfall between funds required and funds currently raised so that appropriate fundraising (primarily grant applications) can be undertaken. Grant applications will be the key focus of the fundraising team during 2019.

*Anna Ashbee*

### **Circle Of Prayer**

The Prayer Circle is made up of members of the congregation who will pray for your personal request daily.

As we are given a name to pray for, we pass it on by telephone to the next person so it becomes a chain of people praying for the same persons daily.

We endeavour to have all the prayer partners praying at the same time, but because of peoples circumstances this sometimes is not possible, but it is still reassuring that we do have in the church community someone who is praying for somebody each and every day.

If you wish to add someone to our prayer list please ring Michael or Jenny 01732 841204. And if you wish to share the particular reason needed for prayer we can pray for that particular condition, but this is optional, a name is sometimes all that is needed.

The Lord Said; *“Come to Me All Who Are Heavy Laden, And I Will Give You Rest”* Matthew 12:28

*Michael and Jenny Latham*

## East Malling, Wateringbury & Teston Benefice Branch of Mothers' Union

- Our branch currently has 16 members, on average we have around 8-12 members at our monthly meetings. Visitors and new members are always welcome.
- We have been making blankets for babies in Malawi, Greece and "Home For Good" adoptees, and knitting for premature and stillborn babies
- We have raised funds for AFIA (Away From It All) caravan holidays for families in Rochester Diocese who are in need of a break from raffles, a cake & craft sale and a garden party
- We continue to support the work of Mothers' Union around the world with daily prayers and some fund raising.

We have had a number of interesting meetings in the last 12 months, some with speakers on a variety of topics:

2018

- Mar: (Meeting cancelled due to snow and ice)
- May: The Work of Mothers' Union a talk by Julia Jamieson Rochester Diocesan President
- June: (Meeting cancelled due to a funeral)
- July: Our annual garden party and fund-raising event at Audrey Allen's house, Larkfield with a talk by Maggie Mitchell on the charity "Starfish Malawi"
- Sept: Afternoon tea and visit to Hall Place, Bexley
- Oct: A talk by Billy-Jo O-Leary on "Home for Good" adoption services
- Nov: A talk from Revd Annette Hawkins (Vicar of Dibley) on her route to the priesthood

2019

- Jan: New Year's lunch at the North Pole Pub, Teston
- Feb: A talk on Safety in the Home by a fireman

My thanks go to Audrey Allen (Committee member), Liz Allen (Treasurer) and to Rachel Arundell (Administrator) for helping to plan and run our Benefice Branch of Mothers' Union. Also to all those who tirelessly help with opening up the churches and providing refreshments at our meetings.

*Frances Selman*  
*Secretary*

## Deanery Synod

The Deanery Synod meet 3 times a year.

The officers of the Malling Deanery Synod are:

Rural Dean	Rev'd Matthew Buchan (Vicar of Leybourne)
Lay Chair	Barry Fisher
Secretary	Sheena Stewart
Treasurer	Martin Gillespie

These meetings are a great way to meet up with representatives from the parishes within the Malling Deanery to compare how we approach issues and challenges and see what we can learn from each other.

The main discussions of our meetings have been:

### **Safeguarding**

There have been discussions over the year about the necessity of safeguarding children and vulnerable adults within the church. These have included how we promote and encourage the necessary training that the Diocese are offering, especially for those who feel that such training is difficult or they feel it unnecessary.

### **Data Protection**

This is another key area where we have had presentations and discussions about the need to protect the information that the church holds about people.

### **Deanery Mission and Ministry Plan (DMMP)**

This has been the main discussion point during the year. Malling Deanery Synod commissioned a working group to research, explore and come up with options for a new Deanery Mission and Ministry Plan (DMMP). A new DMMP was required to plan twenty to thirty years into the future because of a particular set of circumstances that we must face together, including large population growth and major staffing issues.

This group produced a plan which was discussed and sent to PCCs for consultation and feedback.

The result of the working group was a wide-ranging plan to re-organise our Deanery including new Benefices and Parish boundary changes.

The recommendations that affect us most are:

The break up of our current Benefice with Wateringbury moving to a new Benefice of Wateringbury, Mereworth and West Peckham. These arrangements are at an advanced stage and are likely to happen in October 2019.

Teston was to have moved to a new Benefice with Barming, but at this point in time it will not be happening. Teston Parish will remain for the time being with East Malling.

It was recommended by the working group that East Malling should join as a Benefice with Larkfield but this is currently under review and the future for this option is uncertain.

It seems that a time of change and uncertainty is likely to be with us for a while to come.

*Alan Bramley*

*PCC representative to the Deanery Synod*

## Children's Church

Sunday School has continued with a small but enthusiastic group of children and leaders, and continued to offer a range of crafts, activities and Bible teaching during the Sunday services. Sadly, due to a shortage of helpers, we are now only able to offer Sunday School on two Sundays a month but I am hopeful that we will be able to reverse this in due course. For the Sundays without Sunday School we have an activity table set up at the back of the church, with activity sheets, colouring and quizzes for children to help themselves.

In April 2018 we held a very successful Good Friday Project, welcoming around 50 children to a morning of craft, songs, Easter egg hunt and the telling of the Easter story. For 2019, we will revise the format to make it safeguarding compliant, and will be holding an Easter Craft Cafe instead.

*Anna Ashbee*

## Choir

### *The Choir Family and its achievements*

Our Choir is very much a Family! Everybody gets on and cares for others. We are always delighted to welcome new members, and at New Year, Tim Belcher-Whyte joined our ranks for the first time. He is an experienced singer and has happily joined the Tenor line! We continue to look out for potential new choristers! (They don't have to be experienced singers, but *it is* an added bonus if they are!)

Individual achievements this year include Constance & Sophie acquiring their Dark Blue Ribbons and Alexander being admitted to the Choir and proudly wearing his Light Blue Ribbon. Most recently we are especially proud of Shirley, who worked long and hard and has been presented with her RSCM Silver Award. No mean feat!

### *The Choir Through the Year*

The year has passed with all its usual events. This time last year, we were practising our "Patchwork Passion", which went extremely well and was enjoyed by all who came to listen & join in with the hymns. A huge thank you to Anna & Nick who spent much time & effort in binding the music, which means that we will be able to use it all again, and also made the contents *much* easier to handle! Thank you too, to our very good friend Joan, who was tireless in helping us to learn the music, but who has also given up much time to helping with those working for awards, and very recently accompanied for us when we performed a big anthem, sponsored by a Choir member.

While mentioning sponsorship, we are still more than happy for members of the congregation to sponsor Hymns: (£10.00) or Anthems: (£20.00) for the Apple Tree Room appeal!

This year, we are performing Stainer's Crucifixion on Palm Sunday! Please come!

We have sung at several weddings & at least one funeral during the year, and have taken part in extra Services of Commemoration etc.

Carol Singing didn't quite happen as usual this year, as for almost (if not *the*) first time ever, the second evening was completely rained off! Thank you to Linda & Alan though, who, for the few who'd made it to the start, provided lovely mulled wine and delicious nibbles, which cheered us up no end!

We sang carols outside Waitrose at Kings Hill for the first time, and this proved to be most enjoyable & helped to swell the Apple Tree Room fund by quite a large amount.

### **Thank You!!**

This, as many of you know, is the last time I shall be writing the Choir report for the APCM, so I wish to record here my enormous thanks to everybody who has given me such huge support & encouragement during the last 50 years! Too many to name, but you all know who you are.

I have enjoyed my time as Choir Director and Organist very, very much and know there will be a large hole in my life after April, but I'm pleased and proud that not a few choir members have gone on to make successful careers in music & hope that all will have had joy in their membership of this flourishing Choir.

Keep up the good work, all of you and I pray that St James the Great, may continue to keep its brilliant choir for many years to come!

*Belinda Hunter*

### **Flower Arrangers**

There are 16 arrangers in our group, although some are unable to commit fully to our rota and help out when they are able. One member who has moved away continues with support in the form of our on-line orders. We continue to hold twice yearly meetings in order to set our rota for the following six months. Our format remains much the same with one of our three groups on 'duty' each week with the exception of Lent and Advent. We provide a pedestal arrangement at the High Altar and a windowsill arrangement in the Lady Chapel; in addition if time and arrangers allow we place a windowsill arrangement near the refreshments area. Occasionally we are asked to provide a memorial or celebratory arrangement and this takes the form of a Welcome pedestal. The cost of flowers is provided by the sponsor and all monies received are spent on the flowers. At all times, the arrangers provide foliage without cost. All arrangers come together for Easter, Pentecost, Harvest and Christmas to provide floral decorations for the whole church. We remain fortunate in receiving a number of donations towards the flowers. The rest are funded either by our arrangers or from a small fund the group holds. This fund relies upon donations and a small amount factored in to the cost when wedding parties request our services for church flowers. This latter funding has not been forthcoming in recent years and we found our resources somewhat depleted. So a departure for us this year has been our own fundraising. In June we hosted the first session of afternoon teas held in church each Sunday during the summer. This was coupled with a sale of plants and fresh flower arrangements and homemade cakes all produced by our arrangers. The event was well attended and we were able to replenish our funds account. We plan to repeat this session. Our arrangers have continued to place articles in the church magazine 'In Touch' to highlight our activities and advertise our events. A further departure in 2018 was a decision to open and steward the church on the afternoon following our festival arrangements. We felt that the wider community should have the opportunity to see our festival displays. Our first opening was for Harvest and although widely advertised footfall was disappointing. It was raining heavily on the day but those who turned up were rewarded with a cup of tea. We have decided to try this again at Easter 2019. These are not fundraising events but an opportunity to put our displays on show. Throughout the year the arrangers support church events such as Mother's Day by making up daffodil posies for distribution following the Sunday service.

Our contact for requesting a special display is Elaine Welch 01622 719648

Our contact for administration is Barbara Trimmer 07946543017 email [barb.r@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:barb.r@hotmail.co.uk).

*Barbara Trimmer*

## Bell Ringers

### Ringers and Ringing

Sophie Tallon came during the winter/spring to learn to ring bells as her Bronze DofE challenge to learn a new skill. Her dad, Lee, came too and was keen to learn. Unfortunately, once Sophie had gained her DofE, due to pressure of school work and Lee's shift work, they were unable to continue.

Other people have also come to learn to ring but find they cannot commit to regular attendance.

On a positive note, Emily Corette, Liam's sister, is learning to ring and is making very good progress. Liam has become a confident ringer and is now ringing with the band of Kent Young Ringers and has achieved at least one quarter peal.

Our deputy tower captains, Robin and Albert, have both attended courses to teach ringing. Robin is teaching Emily and, at the same time, he is being assessed on his teaching.

The tower captain and deputies are all DBS checked and have completed C0, C1 and C2 safeguarding training. Under national bell ringing guidelines other ringers have completed the C0 safeguarding training 'for their own information'.

Regular practice night ringers from other towers are Chris Foggon and Paul & Denise Cook from West Malling, Geoff Searle and Bob Bishop from Mereworth, Terry Barnard and Callum Clark from Aylesford.

On Remembrance Sunday the bells were rung half-muffled before the service, including whole pull plain hunt on 5. During the service the muffles were removed from the bells so that at 12.30 they could be rung open (unmuffled) to mark 100 years since the Armistice in 1918. Church bells were rung at this time all over the country for this special occasion.

We received several favourable comments on both sessions of ringing.

We had eight ringers to help ring in the New Year.

East Malling ringers are Barry Allen, Joy Barnard, Liam Corette, Albert & Joan Gordon, Robin Hughes, Catherine Kitchen, Andrew & Katy Millgate, Don Payne and Emma Tilston.

### Visitors

Ringling tour visitors came to us from St. John's Higham on 21<sup>st</sup> April, Speldhurst on 21<sup>st</sup> June, Cambridge UCR on 18<sup>th</sup> August, Coots on 11<sup>th</sup> September and the Ladies' Guild on 29<sup>th</sup> September. Leybourne Cubs came on 11<sup>th</sup> September and Blacklands Beavers on 2<sup>nd</sup> October.

### Weddings

Only two weddings required bells this year, but one of those had bells before and after the service.

*Sue Payne*

*Tower Captain*

## **The Friends of St James**

The Friends committee has continued to work very hard during the year.

Our current committee is:

President	Rev Nick Williams
Chairman	Alan Bramley
Vice Chairman	Clive Spinks
Secretary	Jean Spinks
Treasurer	Shaun Gurteen
PCC rep	Denise Hynard
Church Warden (Ex Officio)	David Chambers
Elected Members	Michael Latham, Jenny Latham, Christine Burchett and Audrey Allen

A big thank you to all those who have served on the committee over the year.

Jean Spinks is due to step down as secretary at our AGM and I thank her wholeheartedly for all her hard work over many years.

We currently have a membership of 134 people and I'm very grateful that people continue to support our work of looking after St James the Great church.

We continue with our very successful coffee mornings on the first Saturday of each month. These are very popular and many people who are Friends but not necessarily regular church attendees come along and enjoy the morning.

Our fund-raising for 2019 includes a wide range of events.

We held a Valentine's Dance on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> February which was greatly enjoyed by everyone and is a very good fund raiser.

On Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> May we hold our more or less annual Quiz Night. Again, usually a great success.

On Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> September 2019 we will be holding another Starters and Puds evening. This time we have invited as our main course, Tom Hart-Dyke of the World Garden in Lullingstone. A very interesting and fascinating speaker.

The main project that The Friends are funding remains the installation of the glass doors. At the time of writing this (February) we have now secured a recommendation from the DAC that our application is approved. We are now displaying the public notice for 1 month and then we can obtain a faculty from the Diocese. We are in the process of getting firm quotes for the work. By the time of the APCM, work may well be under way, you never know.

Although it is not our intention to hang on to funds unnecessarily, we've only been able to make limited donations for other church projects until we have detailed and firm costs for the provision of the doors.

The Friends have recently agreed to donate the sum of £10,000 for window guards to be put on the stained-glass windows on the north side of the church to match those already fitted to the south side.

We have also told the PCC that any work needed that costs up to £100 will automatically be funded by us.

Thank you for your continued support.

*Alan Bramley*  
*Chairman*

## **Church Opening**

Unfortunately, the beginning of the year of 2018 was fraught with ill health amongst many of the Church sitters, partly due to the extreme cold weather, and it was agreed by the PCC that the Church openings would slim down from four sessions a week (16 each month) to that of eight sessions in the first two weeks of each month beginning March 2018.

However, this was unsustainable as many of the sitters decided, due to ongoing adverse health problems, to stand down from Church sitting altogether. They were thanked for their commitment by me personally.

After asking the PCC to consider the fragility of other sitters, particularly the huge weight of responsibility of accidents and falls getting to Church and/or within it, it was then decided by the PCC that the Church would be open on the first Thursday morning of each month only, as there were even fewer sitters available.

The remaining sitters had family responsibilities and personal issues (including my own ill health where I was hospitalised several times in early 2018). Despite several requests for new sitters to come forward, I was unable to 'fairly' distribute the Church sitting rota amongst the very few remaining sitters.

The last Church sitting was held on the first Thursday of August 2018 by Mr & Mrs (Tom and Mary) Hicks and I rang them to personally thank them for their staunch commitment to Church sitting over the past years.

It may be possible to resume Church sitting if sufficient sitters come forward and I would still be prepared to draw up a rota for this.

The number of visitors throughout the Church sitting year from March 2018 to August 2018 was none (taken from visitors book) and one visitor on 19<sup>th</sup> October 2018.

Again, my sincere thanks to all the St. James the Great Church sitters throughout the years for your care and commitment.

*Mark Francis*

## **Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) and Safeguarding**

My role as Lead Recruiter is to ensure that DBS applications are carried out according to Diocesan guidelines, that DBS applications are submitted and checked online via ThirtyOne:Eight (formerly known as CCPAS) as quickly and efficiently as possible, always with best practice, and that all relevant Safeguarding courses are completed in good time.

I am responsible for ensuring that the 33 volunteers across the Benefice, who regularly work with Children and/or Vulnerable Adults, have current and valid DBS in place - 13 of those are here in East Malling. Added to that in 2018, there were 14 PCC Members across the Benefice who had to apply for a DBS, 5 here at St James. At the time of compiling this report, some of the PCC applications from across the Benefice are still outstanding as the paperwork has not yet been returned, or the online application not completed.

In addition, I keep a database of the 120+ volunteers in the Benefice, so at a glance I can see who has/has not completed the relevant safeguarding training, who needs to renew their DBS, and who is applying for the first time.

And as predicted in last year's report, 2018 was a very busy year.

I think it is safe to say that there were mixed reactions to the C0 & C1 online safeguarding courses. Some found the courses relatively easy to access/complete, others found them more difficult and frustrating, and of course there were a number who were unable to take the online course as they do not possess, or were not comfortable in using, a computer. Thankfully, we had the wonderful Debbie Bond (Safeguarding Rep for Wateringbury) who stepped in to help those who needed it, by presenting the C0 course at her home over a number of months, and then a one-off presentation at the St Benedict's Centre, West Malling in January 2019. Without Debbie's help, giving up her Saturday mornings, the Benefice would be way behind with the training, so a huge thank you to Debbie for all her hard work.

As it stands, all but 5 volunteers across the Benefice have completed their C0 &/or C1 training, and 3 are due to take their C2 course in the not too distant future. Hopefully by the time the APCMs take place, all the volunteers will be trained accordingly, but, disappointingly for me, it has taken over twelve months to get where we are now. The volunteers' safeguarding training is valid for 3 years so if volunteers are still in their roles in 2021, refresher courses will have to be taken.

In addition to the DBS & Safeguarding, February and March 2018 involved me notifying and collating information from everyone who holds data in the Benefice, to ensure that we complied with the new General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) which came into effect on 25th May 2018. The information compiled showed how data was being held, who had access to it, and whether necessary consent forms were in place. With some advice here and there, measures were adopted to ensure that data was kept securely.

2019 should be a slightly easier year in relation to Safeguarding and there are only 7 DBS renewals to carry out. However, we have the break up of the Benefice looming which will be a big change and challenge for us all.

Finally, I would to say a big thank you to our Benefice Safeguarding Reps, Debbie Bond, Michala Neaves, and Linda Hoskins, for all their help and support throughout the year.

*Sandra Corby*  
*Lead Recruiter and Administrator for the Benefice*