

ANNUAL PARISH CELEBRATION



AVON VALLEY
CHURCHES
FORDINGBRIDGE

Monday 19th October, St Mary's Church, 7:00pm

Opening Prayers

Apologies for Absence

Review of the Year

- What have been our highlights? Any lowlights?
- Photographic Memories

THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING (The Vestry Meeting)

1. **Minutes** of the Meeting of April 3rd, 2019
2. **Election** of two Churchwardens

THE ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

3. **Minutes** of the Meeting of April 3rd, 2019
1. **The Annual Report** of the PCC - *written*
2. **Finance** - Annual accounts – *circulated, for questions and approval*
3. **Churchwarden's Report** on the fabric, goods and ornaments of the Churches of St Mary's Fordingbridge and St Giles', Godshill – *written*
4. **Electoral Roll Report** - *written*
5. **Deanery Synod Report** - *written*
6. **Reports** from other groups - *written*
7. **Elections** (*All those who stand for election to PCC are required by the Charity Commission to have a DBS check as Charity Trustees*):
 - 3 representatives to the Deanery Synod - Every three years – next election 2020
 - Elect 3 Parochial Church Council Members and fill casual vacancies
 - Appointment of Independent Examiner
8. **AOB** – Questions for discussion or recommendations to the PCC

Behind the Scenes – Celebrations and Thanks

Looking forwards

Closing Prayers

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NB. Separate Document: The Annual Report and Accounts for 2019 including the Churchwardens report on fabric, goods and ornaments of St Mary's and St Giles

THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING (The Vestry Meeting)

Item 1. Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Parishioners to Elect Churchwardens, Thursday 3rd April 2019

Present	Rev'd Canon Gary Philbrick (Chair)	Ian Newman
	Judith Dowsett	Janet Newman
	Jane Calver	Martin Calver
	John Dowsett	Ruth Daykin
	Alison Steven	Janet Spratt
	Dorothy Ashford	Hazel Banham
	Pat West	Rev'd Mike Trotman
	Christine Pope	Sarah Perrelle
	Gillian Benfield	Peter Worthington
	Jennifer Craythorne	Chris Carter
	Barry Craythorne	Michel Gosling
	Ann Beynon	Pat Bloomfield
	Melvyn Beynon	Graham Fry
	Mark Ward	Christine Fry
	Pam Felton	Gwenda Moore
	Clive Jones	Carol Butt
	Mike Ireland	Edna Ross
	Jean Godden	Helen Tague
	Trevor Tague	Nigel Spratt (Minutes)

Apologies	Mary Melbourne	John Pye
	David Melbourne	Ann Pye
	Alan Moore	Tim Ruffer
	Margaret Ward	Sue Ledger
	Annette Young	Sally Johnson
	Mrs. J. Saltrick	Rev'd. John Towler

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Parishioners to Elect Churchwardens 2019

1.	Welcome and prayers: Rev'd Canon Gary Philbrick led the opening prayers and welcomed all.
2.	Apologies: were given and are recorded above.
3	<p>Review of the Year: Those present were asked to name their Highlights and Lowlights:</p> <p>Highlights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fordwick Village • Evensong • Jigsaw Festival <p>Canon Gary then showed 50 projected photographs of the huge range of different activities that had taken place in our parish in the last year, including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choir Party • Bishop Jonathan at Sandleheath • Commemorations at the War Memorial • Palm Sunday at Hyde • Music and Arts Festival – several photos • Choir at Salisbury Cathedral • Remembrance Sunday -several photos • Harvest Supper • Bishop's Visit. • St. Patrick's Day meal. • Rachel's Leaving. • And many more. <p>Lowlights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vandalism. • Rain coming into the church. • Day to Day finances
4	<p>Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Parishioners to Elect Churchwardens held on April 12th 2018</p> <p>These had been circulated prior to this meeting, were approved and signed without change Proposed by Ian Newman Seconded by Martin Calver. Agreed unanimously.</p>
5	<p>Election of Churchwardens: One nomination had been received, Ian Newman, There being no other nominations Ian Newman was duly elected. Rev'd Gary thanked the wardens and everyone on the team.</p>
<p>Signed Rev'd Canon Gary Philbrick, Chairman 19/10/2020</p>	

THE ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING 2020

Item 1: Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting 2019	
1.	<p>Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held 12th April 2018 These had been circulated prior to this meeting, and on a proposition by Ian Newman, seconded by Janet Spratt, were approved and signed without change.</p>
2	<p>The Annual Report of the PCC 2019 including: Finance- Annual Accounts: The report had been audited and circulated. And copies were available at the meeting. It included a detailed account of the PCC proceedings during the year and reports under the headings Growth in Faith, Care and the Community, Mission and Outreach, Worship and Prayer, Maintenance of the church building, and finally the Financial Review, about which the treasurer Martin Calver stated that without the Lillington Legacy we were £17,823 in the red and his forecast is that we will be £20,000 in the red next year. We need to raise more money from fund raising and committed giving. The Stewardship Campaign was successful, 67 people have replied, which is about 1/3 of the amount of letters sent out. 40 of these increased their giving and 11 of the 40 signed up for the PGS scheme. In total this represents an increase of £7,200 in a full year. A good result. However, the parish share or Common Mission Fund (CMF) went up by 20% and will go up 10% p.a. for the next 3 years. Questions were invited by Martin, there were none. Alison Steven proposed that the Annual Report and Accounts presented to the meeting be accepted. This proposition was seconded by Melvyn Beynon and agreed by all present.</p> <p>Canon Gary said that the increase in staff numbers creates more work for Martin and the Office Staff. The office staff now have to manage the fees for four parishes in addition to their other work. We owe Martin an enormous debt of gratitude. Martin has given notice that he wants to give up the treasurer post and suggested that anyone interested in taking over should shadow him for a year. The Churchwardens were also thanked.</p>
3.	<p>To Receive the Annual Report from the Churchwardens concerning the Fabric, Goods and Ornaments of the Church of St. Mary's Fordingbridge and St. Giles Godshill (2018-2019) The report has been circulated and was received. There were no questions or comments.</p>
4.	<p>Report on the Electoral Roll 2018/2019 The Electoral Roll Officer Jackie Garratt had presented a report which was circulated. The information regarding the numbers on the roll for 2018/2019 was not available when her report was printed. The figures are recorded below: Last year the number of people on the Fordingbridge Electoral Roll was 155, this year there are 129. This figure will be reported to Winchester Diocese. This year there had been the CoE statutory complete renewal of the Electoral Roll, in that everyone must apply or reapply. Some people have not reapplied to renew their membership. The Roll has been displayed with those who have not reapplied highlighted. There were at the time of this meeting 41 people who had not re-applied.</p>
5	<p>To receive a report on the proceedings of the Deanery Synod (2018/2019): A written report by John Dowsett had been circulated and was duly received, there were no questions or comments.</p>

6	<p>Reports on the Parish Activities 2018/2019: All the written reports from the church organisations were received and accepted without questions or comments. There were two verbal Reports giving additional information:</p> <p>Puddle Ducklings - presented by Janet Newman. Janet said that families from the community are attending following the decision to change the time to 12.30 so that lunch is shared. There are now seven new children and because of the age range of the children now attending it was decided to zone the hall by age. To this end suitable games and equipment has been purchased for approximately £300 and it is intended to hold a fundraising event to pay for this.</p> <p>Boost – presented by Ruth Daykin, who made an additional plea for prayerful support during the transitional period that Boost is going through. They are now coping with a wide age range from babies to teenagers including some with special needs and it is very challenging. It is brilliant that extra helpers have come forward.</p>
7	<p>To appoint 3 members of the Laity to the Deanery Synod: There are 3 members of the laity to the Deanery Synod who were elected in 2017 for 3 years. Next election in 2020. No elections required this year. The members are: John Dowsett Ian Newman Mark Ward</p>
8.	<p>To elect members to the Parochial Church Council: Nominations had been received for 7 people: Gwenda Moore Michèle Gosling Judith Dowsett Jane Calver Janet Spratt (completed 3 year term, willing to stand again) Pat Bloomfield (completed 3 year term, willing to stand again) Martin Calver (completed 3 year term, willing to stand again) Peter Worthington is standing down. No further nominations were offered. All persons were elected unanimously, on a proposition by Jane Calver seconded by Nigel Spratt.</p>
9.	<p>Appointment of Sidespersons, including Vergers The following person was added to the list of sidepersons: Jane Calver Pat Bloomfield is deleted from the list. All other people on the original list were appointed.</p>
10	<p>Safeguarding Officer: Melvyn Beynon was appointed.</p>
11	<p>To appoint an Independent Examiner of Accounts: Fawcetts are happy to continue and were duly elected on a proposition from Martin Calver which was seconded by Ian Newman. It was noted that Fawcetts make no charge, and Martin was asked to pass on our thanks.</p>
12	<p>Questions and comments: Graham Fry: asked the P.C.C. to consider spending some of the legacy money on increasing the wardrobe storage space in the vestry. Alison Steven asked who is responsible for the linen - David Melbourne? There were no further questions.</p>

13	<p>Looking forward:</p> <p>Rev'd Gary: said that the Benefice of the Future project in which our Parish has been selected to take part, got off to a slow start but is now progressing. We have had help from Jon Whale from the Diocese to help us understand how to use the 'ChurchDesk' software which brings the data from all departments together. We are also evaluating Automatic Locking of churches and Contactless Giving. Rev'd Mike Trotman is working on a new style of worship which we will be hearing about soon. He is also working on new 'Branding', Website and name for our benefice which is supported by Benefice of the Future. We have to simplify the structure of the Benefice, having four PCCs is unsustainable.</p> <p>Melvyn Beynon asked if there is any financial benefit from being selected as a Benefice of the Future.</p> <p>Canon Gary said that we get £2,400 pa for three years to support our Communications Officer Rev'd Nicky Davies. We also get the ChurchDesk software paid for.</p> <p>Ian Newman agreed that having four parishes with their own PCCs with separate meetings, APCMs etc is unsustainable and we should be considering mergers.</p> <p>Canon Gary said that Breamore has been given notice that they should merge with Hale and Woodgreen, Hyde has been in constant change and it would be unfair to pressurise them to merge at this time. He is assessing a long paper on simplification. Fordingbridge has formed a group to look at how to reduce the number of meetings, and they have reported back with some proposals.</p> <p>Ian Newman proposed that we make it known that the present situation is unsustainable and that we are open to working with other PCCs. A vote was taken but it was inconclusive, Alison Steven was against the proposition.</p>
14	<p>Behind the Scenes: This year: The Garden of Remembrance Team.</p> <p>Ann Beynon reported on the work that has been done by the team to renovate the garden. It will be constantly maintained. It was a very satisfying task. Dorothy Ashford said that the garden now looks lovely and those with relatives remembered there will very much appreciate the work that the team have put in.</p> <p>Canon Gary presented certificates of thanks to the team members:-</p> <p>Ann Beynon and Melvyn Beynon John Dowsett and Judith Dowsett Jane Calver Sally Johnson Ruth and Tim Daykin.</p> <p>Gary went on to present certificates to the following people:</p> <p>The St. Aldhelm working group: this group have been working for 7 years to finalise the leasing of the St. Aldhelm building to the Sandleheath Village Hall Association, a long and difficult journey which has finished at last.</p> <p>Martin Calver Judith Dowsett Sue Ledger Andy Finch Ian Newman</p> <p>Grateful thanks were also extended to:</p> <p>Annette Young who has been in charge of rotas for sidespersons and readers for many years. Alison Steven who has been our first Safeguarding Officer.</p>

	<p>Ian Newman then took over the microphone to thank Judith Dowsett and Jane Calver who have retired as churchwardens. Ian said that Judith and Jane have both given service far beyond the call of duty and deserve our gratitude. He presented each of them with Viburnum shrubs. Martin Calver endorsed Ian's comments and thanked Jane for all the work she had done in preparing the Terrier which was available for inspection after the meeting and well worth a look.</p> <p>Ian then went on to thank Canon Gary, He does so much, both for our church, the Benefice and for the Community; far more than he was ordained to do. We are extremely fortunate to have him.</p>
15	Rev'd. Canon Gary Philbrick closed the meeting with Prayers

Signed by..... Signed by.....

Date: 19/10/2020

Item 2: The Annual Report (see Separate Document)

Item 3: Finance (see Separate Document)

Item 4: Churchwarden's Report on the fabric, goods and ornaments of the Churches of St Mary's Fordingbridge and St Giles', Godshill (see Separate Document)

Item 5: Electoral Roll Report

The total number of people on the Electoral Roll as of the APCM, 26 March 2020 is 131. This compares with 129 reported at the APCM, 3rd April 2019. Since the last APCM, three names have been added to the Roll, and one name has been removed, leaving the total at 131. Sadly one person has passed away. 110 people live within the parish and 21 live outside the parish.

Jackie Rowe, Electoral Roll Officer

Item 6: Deanery Synod Report

There were 3 meetings of Synod during 2019. At the first meeting in February, the pMAP 2019 process was discussed and details given of the resources available in support. Parishes were urged to progress the review and updating of their pMAPs and share the outcomes even as work in progress. In her report, Gill Tybjerg said that the Deanery had contributed nearly £10,000 in 2018 to the activities in Kinkiizi and 4 Deanery members had recently paid a successful visit to the Diocese. The Deanery treasurer informed the meeting that the target CMF contribution for 2019 had increased by some £130,000. Since the Deanery had failed to meet the previous year's target, he encouraged members to discuss this year's targets with PCCs early and flag up any issues.

The main topic at the second meeting of Synod in May was a presentation by Dave Pegg, who is a Schools Work Leader with PACE (Programme for Applied Christian Education). PACE is a small charity established in 1994 which partners with local churches in Poole, Bournemouth and Christchurch to provide learning opportunities in schools. PACE's aim is to visit every school, meet every student in 6 assemblies a year, and give talks with a leader and teams which they would build from the churches around. A specific initiative planned for six weeks in November/December is to park a 'Jesus Lives' lorry in a number of primary school playgrounds. The Synod meeting also heard an update on Kinkiizi which included details of 'Kinkiizi Sunday' on 2nd June and the visit to the Diocese planned for May 2020 to coincide with their Silver Jubilee celebrations.

The final 2019 Synod meeting took place in September. Two items of urgent Deanery specific business were dealt with:

- 1 (i) agreeing a motion to go to Diocesan Synod urging the Diocese to organize a Diocesan-wide Stewardship campaign. The aim would be to encourage and enthuse generous giving across the Diocese,
- 2 (ii) agreeing to set up a charity to enable the Kinkiizi Action Group to claim Gift Aid on personal donations.

It was also reported that the Revds Eric and James from Kinkiizi had a successful visit in June. They were mainly here on behalf of the water and sanitation charity, WATSAN, to go on a sponsored walk in the Brecon Beacons. This raised around £17,000, enabling completion of the projects in the schools around Kihiki.

The new Bishop of Southampton, Debbie Sellin, spoke to Synod about her personal journey of faith. She also advised the meeting that the New Milton Church Plant would no longer be eligible for funding and extra support from the Diocese would now be sought. The closing session of the meeting focused on supporting dMAP priorities, particularly the use of print and digital tools to communicate well.

John Dowsett, Deanery Synod Member

Item 7: Reports from other groups

St Giles, Godshill

We continue as a Festival Church having one service a month at a fixed time, but on varying dates depending on the specific festival. We also organise a coffee morning every other month in Godshill Village Hall with computer/laptop help and a Traidcraft stall. These start with a short 15-minute service.

We are grateful to St Giles Farm, opposite the church, for kindly allowing us to use their gravelled parking area when we hold services.

We continue to aspire to making St Giles 'visitor-friendly' and thereby attracting the wider community. The church is open for visitors, particularly from Sandy Balls where we advertise our services and coffee mornings.

A comprehensive inventory has been completed. Essential repairs to doors have been done and the guttering renewed. The Quinquennial Inspection, carried out in September 2019, showed the building to be in sound condition and a schedule of minor works is recommended over the next two years.

Gwenda Moore

Sandleheath Church

Last year, during Lent, we joined with Fordingbridge Methodist Church for our Lent Course, led by Steve, the Methodist Minister.

Our free Film Nights, held every other month, have been very enjoyable with some films engaging us in interesting discussions afterwards and others proving very entertaining. We have decided to run them again this year so watch out for the posters and join us for an evening of free entertainment.

The monthly Coffee Mornings on the first Tuesday of the month continued to be well supported with close competition for first place in the quiz. These have become a regular date in our diaries continuing on throughout this year.

Our entry in the village scarecrow competition in June last year was John Wesley on his bicycle. Great fun but we didn't win the prize! We ran our stall for children at the village annual fete.

Sandleheath Methodist Church Anniversary was held in September and was led by John Scrivens, our former Methodist Minister. It was really good to see him looking so well and catch up on all his news.

Our Christmas services all went very smoothly, with our Choir singing at the Carol Service but we were down a bit on numbers.

Sue Ledger

Children's Sunday Activity Report 2019 / 2020

The children Sunday morning activities have taken a different approach during the past year, with the introduction of 'Roots' in July 2019. 'Roots' follows the Revised Common Lectionary offering resources and direction to leaders in nurturing the faith of young people on a week to week basis.

Positive feedback has been received following the introduction of the new programme from both leaders and young people. The resources offer a varying approach to delivering key messages to a varied number of children of differing ages. The material is versatile and stimulating, and has significantly reduced the time commitments for preparation, therefore suiting the needs of our Sunday morning worship.

The children always appear enthusiastic to engage with activities and enjoy sharing their work at the end of the service which appears to be welcomed by the congregation. We have also created wall displays which has allowed us to share the children's work in the children's corner, brightening the church and celebrating the work of the children to the wider community.

We would welcome any additional support, recruiting new leaders and helpers continues to be a challenge.

We would like to thank you for the support of facilitating 'Roots' and to Jo for suggesting the programme as a way forward.

Nicola & Ruth Daykin

Allsorts

Allsorts services throughout the year have been very well attended, and we thank you all very much for your continuing support. It continues to be a service for all ages and, looking around the congregation, we have age ranges from babies in arms to 90 years plus. Showing us that we are truly God's family worshipping together.

The year has seen a variety of themes taken from the Old or New Testament, as well as Christian festivals such as Mothering Sunday and Christmas. Often the theme is dramatized in some way and an activity is devised to encourage everyone to participate. We are very grateful for those, young and old, who come with the requested props or even come dressed up.

Thought for the Day continues to be very well received. We are truly thankful for the people who have been brave enough to stand up and speak to everyone. We need more volunteers!

Highlights of the year included Little Candle, Creation, 500 Excuses, the story of the great feast and Let There be Light. Mothering Sunday Allsorts was organised by 'the men' and was a great success, so we hope they might take on an Allsorts in 2020! The year ended with the Calendar Chaos, a whistle stop tour through the previous church year, featuring sacred and secular events, ending up with a traditional nativity tableau. A veritable 'cast of thousands'!

We continue to encourage others to take part in the service, especially the children. Where possible they are invited to take part in advance, but otherwise are included on the day by welcoming, taking the collection and being actively involved in the story telling.

Our aim for this service is to keep it simple and fun, but make sure children understand the overall message being focussed upon, as well as give adults something to think about. We are always open to new ideas and want to keep the service fresh and engaging. We already have one or two new ideas up our sleeve for this

year, so do come along and check out what is going on.

I would like to thank Revd Gary, Revd Mike, Tim and Clive, as well as my fellow helpers. The support and encouragement of the congregation is what makes the service.

Janet Newman and the Team

Puddle Ducklings

We continue to meet on the first Thursday of the month. Over the year we have said 'farewell' to a number of children and their parents as the children start school but are so thankful that new children come through the door on a monthly basis. There is no doubt of the positive impact of Puddle Ducklings on young families as we see young mums, new to the area, quickly develop friendships with other mothers, as well as with the helpers.

We have a varied programme throughout the year. Our time together always includes a craft table, themed story time, birthdays and prayers with bubbles. The children really enjoy the new toys that were purchased a year ago and we are so grateful to everyone who supported us with generous donations. They provide an excellent range of experiences for all the children, whatever their age. Of course, there are two other important events during our time together, food and drink! Our new time of 12:30pm to 2:30pm has been working well. Families and helpers bring their own lunches and we all sit together to enjoy our choice of food, starting with a simple Grace. Tea and cake are served later with something for the children as well. The change of time has meant that parents can enjoy the full session before going off to collect their school aged children.

I cannot thank my helpers enough for all the work and preparation they do to make Puddle Ducklings enjoyable for all. Angela and Lisa organize craft activities each month, so enjoyed by the children. Carol, Pam and Judith take on a variety of jobs between them, Glenda, Olive and Chris are very helpful in the kitchen, as well as setting up, and of course Carol does all the admin work for us.

We often have discussions about the need for a weekly gathering of toddlers with their parents or carers and are pleased that Jo Heath is investigating whether this is viable. What we need are helpers to enable this to happen!

Janet Newman and the Team

Messy Church

Messy Church has maintained steady numbers throughout 2019 into 2020. We have a core of 4 families who we regularly see at Holiday at Home too and it is wonderful that one form of outreach has impacted another. Given some of the challenges that church outreach now faces, i.e. the necessity of safeguarding training and behaviour management strategies, we have spent much time reviewing our understanding of and ability to work with families who are not used to a church environment while attempting to come alongside them as Jesus taught us. This has presented a number of challenges, but we are confident that as a result of our session with Andy Saunders at the beginning of February that we are finally able to create a safe and nurturing environment that encourages people to join us. The same families also came to the pancake party and had a wonderful time dressing up and playing games together and meeting with members of the Fordingbridge regular congregation.

We have begun to support the Breamore team as they prepare to launch in April 2020 and are in the process of arranging vinyl banners for all of our Messy Churches and leaflets. It is a very exciting year for Messy Church and we look forward to reaching more families in 2020.

Jo Heath

Michaelmas

The Michaelmas Group continues to meet monthly, usually in the evening of the 3rd Tuesday. We enjoy a variety of speakers and activities.

This season started in September with a visit to Salisbury Playhouse to see "Relatively Speaking". Following the AGM in October, we were encouraged to be a little more active and were introduced to the Otago exercise programme. In November we ran the raffle at the Autumn Fayre and also paid our annual visit to Salisbury to help sort shoeboxes for the Trussell Trust.

This year we got off to a flying start as Anne Dobson told us about her time nursing with the Flying Doctor Service in Kenya. In March we shall hear about Hospice at Home which is based at Salisbury Hospice. Janet Newman and Mike Trotman will be making return visits. We also look forward to learning more about Fordingbridge Greener Living and a walk around Blashford Lakes. As usual we shall round off the year with a meal out.

Gillian Benfield

Mothers' Union

We started 2019 with a talk by Christine Clode on this year's theme, Listen, Observe, Act, in steps with God, followed in February with Ruth Daykin, My Profession My Faith. In March we had a very interesting talk by Heidi Trotman. Jill Tybjerg came to our April meeting telling us all about her trip to Kinkiizi. In May we had our outing to the Hillier Garden and our joint meeting with Michaelmas which was play reading with Pam Goldsborough.

In July we went to the Lavender farm to explore the gardens and enjoy a cream tea. August was our fundraising month, when we sold cream teas in aid of the Mothers' Union Summer of Hope. This was very successful, as well as a lovely social time and we raised £235. In September Revd Gary Philbrick told us about the History of Church music.

There were also Deanery events. In January the wave of Prayer service was held at St. Georges' Church in Christchurch, The Lady Day service in March was held here in Fordingbridge. There were also quiet days and prayer lunches.

Janet Newman was our November speaker with a practical entitled 'Not a flower in sight'. Most of the members participated with lovely arrangements. Our Christmas service with Barry and his Men's Group was a thoroughly enjoyable afternoon.

We had our usual Corporate Communion, three this year which were well attended and an important part of our branch life. The marriage preparation day saw Jean Groves and me preparing a soup lunch for 40 people. Also a few members had a marriage couple to pray for in their coming wedding.

This concludes my last APCM report as Mothers' Union Chairman. At the Mothers' Union AGM in October and for the 2nd year running nobody came forward to take over as leader. As I had been leader for 11 years (5 jointly and 6 solely) and with an ageing committee, the branch was closed. It was a difficult decision to make as our branch in Fordingbridge started in 1893.

Revd Nicky Davis closed the branch with a service from the Mothers' Union service book.

A few members have mentioned becoming Diocesan members. A few have joined Hyde's group. We have now moved on by joining with the Michaelmas group with an extended programme to include some afternoons.

Christine Fry

Music at St Mary's

The musicians at St Mary's continue to make a significant contribution to the liturgical life of the church, with the choir singing Sunday services throughout the year as well as on the many special occasions that fill the calendar.

One of the most memorable events over the last year was the "Come and sing" liturgical performance of Faure's Requiem at the end of October at which we welcomed a large number of singers from other choirs and churches. The soloists were Richard Hooper from Salisbury Cathedral Choir and our own Head Chorister Hannah Eden. After an enjoyable afternoon rehearsing, the Evening Service had a reflective and peaceful atmosphere and the combined voices sang superbly.

The choir was in excellent form over the Christmas period, especially at the Advent and Christmas Carol Services. The singers worked hard to learn some new and challenging pieces which they sang with great confidence and expression helping to make both services very special. Attendance at the Christmas Carol Service was at the highest level for over a decade.

During March this year we celebrated International Women's Day with a full Choral Evensong entirely of music by female composers. The choir learns and sings pieces by Margaret Rizza, *Joanna Forbes L'Estrange* and others on a regular basis so it was particularly special on that day to celebrate the tremendous contribution they make to the much wider world of music far beyond our own repertoire.

We are always extremely grateful to the choristers of all ages (from 9 to 90+!) for the considerable amount of time, effort and energy they give week by week. The sheer amount of music they learn and perform over a year is extraordinary, as is the consistently high quality of their singing. We would also especially like to thank Hazel Banham and Chris Carter who have both "retired" after many years of singing with the choir. Thank you both so much for all your hard work and commitment, and we hope you are enjoying sitting back and listening from the congregation!

Tim Ruffer and Clive Jones

Pastoral Visitors and Related Activity

Our loyal team of Pastoral Visitors continues to provide support and companionship to all members of the community and not just to church members. Our thanks go to them for all the time, effort and commitment they all show as we show the love of Christ here in our lovely town and the surrounding areas. A special thanks go to Helen Tague for taking the minutes of our meetings every time we meet. We are now aiming to become a Benefice wide Pastoral Visitors Team and hoping that those who do Pastoral Visiting in Hale, Woodgreen and Breamore will be able to join those visiting from Fordingbridge.

Sandleheath and Hyde: We have two new Pastoral Visitors from Hyde, Martin Ings and Julie Francis. Martin has done the BCM (Pastoral) and Julie attended the course that was run at Burley. Sadly Betty Darke died last year and our thoughts and prayers are with Stephen, Carrie and the family. Julie is also a pastoral visitor at Salisbury General Hospital.

Visiting

We now have 12 pastoral visitors who do regular home visits and once a month take Communion to all the care homes in the Parish. Not all our visitors administer communion. We have continued to visit people who are housebound and want some companionship. We meet every 6 weeks and our day of meeting has been changed back to a Monday. At our meetings we discuss any problems that may have arisen and re-arrange visits for Visitors who will be away. We also ascertain who needs hospital visits or if any of our church members have any problems that we can help with.

Fordingbridge Care Home

A new initiative since September 2019 has been taking a Dementia Friendly Service into Fordingbridge Care Home. This has been extremely successful, and we have 6 – 8 volunteers who attend and support the service. We have up to 20 people attending.

SP6 Friendship Group

Our Friendship Group continues to thrive having 30 regular attenders, although not everyone can attend every month. We now meet at The George pub as we outgrew Bridges back room. We now meet on the first Tuesday of the month from 10.00am -12.00md for coffee, cake, biscuits and chat. At Christmas we had a wonderful lunch. We have our usual theatre trip and garden visits planned.

Fordingbridge Surgery Patient Participation Group

The merged Friends of Fordingbridge Surgery (FoFS) and the Patient Participation Group (PPG) continue to work well together. We continue to work in partnership, for the benefit of the patients and the surgery. As well as being able to offer support and friendship through the Friendship Group, we are now able to offer one to one support through counselling to those who are bereaved. These are people who are referred by the doctors, nurses or teachers at The Burgate School and social services. We have 3 counsellors and we have had a further 28 referrals since April 2019. The FoFS continue to fund a counselling room in the Avonway for these sessions.

Revd Kate Wilson

Prayer and Meditation Group

The Meditation Group continues to meet each Wednesday. We are six regulars, plus one or two who come from Woodgreen when they are able, and two young men 'drop in' whenever they are working in Fordingbridge - they tell us that they find the quiet of the meditation prayer is really helpful. We light candles for our local community and for those we know; we remember the places in the world where there is war and for all those who suffer as a result. We are thankful for the wonderful silence of the church which enables us to be more aware of the living God in our midst. We are aware of and thankful for the many meditation groups in every county in the UK and across the world and that some may even be praying at the same time with us.

We feel that it is a pity that we do not get enquiries about silent prayer. I am always willing to talk to people and explain more about silent prayer as I am sure are others in the group. A new poster needs to be displayed in the porch to encourage more enquiries.

Daphne Himmel

Open Space

Last year Open Space went well. We met almost every other month. Ann Lewin started off the year with a talk on 'Poetry in Holy Week' which was enlightening, interesting and enjoyable. David Brown, our Quaker friend did two workshops, one on the different ways we find and use our empathy; the other was on 'Instant Theatre' where we made up and acted out our own story. This was enlightening and very enjoyable. Richard Canton gave us a very interesting talk on his extensive travels and all the various religions he had come across in the different places he visited. We hoped to find someone from the Muslim community to talk with us but that was not possible; we may be more successful this year. Open Space is a place where we meet together freely and with open minds to discuss new and old ideas about our own and different religions and the various ways we live our lives. Dates of our meetings with the title of the topic we are always in Partners.

Daphne Himmel

Too Old for Sunday School (TOFSS)

This is an ecumenical group, which meets at least once a month, except during Lent, when we join local Lent groups. We meet to discuss aspects of the Christian life and use film and recordings of speakers to inspire us.

We are half way through “Twelve Women of the Bible”, and recently watched “Facing the Canon”, one of a series of interviews by the Revd Canon J John, (on YouTube) in which he interviewed Charlie Mackesy, the artist and author of “The Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the Horse”.

John and Pat Bloomfield

Mission Matters

Mission Matters Group Members are Revd Canon Gary, Revd Mike, Revd Nicky (representing Breamore, Hale & Woodgreen), Alan and Gwenda Moore (Godshill), Carol Sims (Hyde), Sue Ledger (Sandleheath), Rosemarie Price, John & Pat Bloomfield (St Mary's Fordingbridge).

We are looking forward to Heather Clark, Churchwarden of Hyde, joining the Group in May.

During this year, we have agreed our Aim:

To bring a focus in our Churches on Mission & Social Justice awareness

We have continued to support Fairtrade, and the Fairtrade cross-churches group.

Books to Borrow pops up in St Mary's Fordingbridge (1st Sundays), and occasionally at Godshill and Woodgreen Coffee Mornings. There are books for all ages covering a wide range of Christian interests. Borrowers have found participating in this most enriching. Any of our churches should feel free to use it - just contact Pat or Gwenda for access to it.

In the last year: Speakers have visited the Benefice Churches as follows:

- Feb Fairtrade, an excellent speaker at St Giles, Godshill
- May Open Doors UK & Ireland at St Mary's Fordingbridge and St Mary's Breamore. We had an inspiring talk on the persecuted church, using costumes.
- May Christian Aid: a joyous Joint Service at St Giles attended by Breamore and Hale & Woodgreen, with a separate speaker at Holy Ascension Hyde.
- June The Sailor's Society spoke at Woodgreen Coffee Morning.
- June Kinkiizi: various events with Canon Moses and Revd Eric from Uganda.
- Oct CAP, Christians Against Poverty, speakers came to St Mary's Breamore and to St Mary's Fordingbridge to give an insight into help with debt and unemployment in the UK using our new audio-visual equipment.
- Nov Release International led a letter-writing morning at St Boniface, Woodgreen, when we helped to write 1000 Love Letters to our persecuted brothers and sisters.
- Nov A supper was held in Godshill with a Christian visitor who works in North Korea.

Fordingbridge PCC decided to become an 'Open Doors Partner Church' and many in the Benefice took part in the Campaign 'I See You' (the Handmade Petition), sent with love and our prayers. Open Doors Prayer leaflets and magazines are distributed monthly to St Mary's, Fordingbridge, St Giles, Godshill and St Boniface Woodgreen.

The Future: We plan to continue to support the Lent Lunches, in St Mary's Church Hall, organised by Jane and Martin Calver, who share the profits between St Mary's and The Children's Society. A speaker from The Children's Society is expected at St Mary's Hale on 16 February 2020. A Benefice FairTrade service is taking place on Sunday 1st March at St Mary's Fordingbridge as part of Fair Trade Fortnight, and Fordingbridge's aspiration to gain Fair Trade Town status. Christian Aid will be highlighted and supported at services at Hyde, and possibly Godshill, in May. There has been a request from Revd Nicky and Heather Clark for Open Doors speakers to return to the Benefice to speak at Hale/Woodgreen and Hyde. We plan

to put at least one copy of the 2020 Open Doors World Watch List in all our churches. Efforts are being made to get John Hunt, founder of Lotus Flower Trust, based in Hyde, to talk somewhere in the Benefice about his work with the poorest or the poor in North India, an area unreached by many Non-Governmental Organizations.

Pat Bloomfield and Gwenda Moore

Traidcraft

Fairtraders are continuing to meet as a group, with a view to encouraging fair trade throughout the Benefice and to support the committee which is dedicated to making Fordingbridge a Fair Trade town. The latter was agreed at a meeting of the Town Council last year. On the committee, the Church is represented by Patricia Winder.

In October we manned a stall in the Co-op, which advertised Fair Trade goods from that supermarket, in celebration of their 25th year of commitment to Fair Trade. Traidcraft itself enjoyed its 40th anniversary in 2019 and has survived the very difficult time experienced recently. The choice of stock offered by Traidcraft has reduced somewhat but still includes an excellent range of food and gifts.

On February 29th 2020, during Fair Trade Fortnight, the Fair Trade group are holding an event in the Town Hall with a large stall, refreshments and activities to celebrate and publicise Fair Trade. The following day we are running the Allsorts service at St Mary's and there will be an opportunity to buy Fair Trade goods afterwards. There will also be a stall at three of the Lent lunches held in St Mary's Church Hall.

As a group we have been successful in raising money to be able to support the Traidcraft Exchange charity and this can be seen as part of the external giving made by our churches. Since April 2019, by using the 10% discount that we gain on orders from Traidcraft, St Mary's and St Giles have been able to send £200. Additionally, we sent £50 made in profits, after St Mary's Autumn Fair and Christmas season. Traidcraft Exchange is the part of Traidcraft which actively helps producers in the poorer areas of the world, by giving them the wherewithal to start a business and gain the necessary skills to make it prosper.

In fact, by buying our good quality food and gifts you are supporting a charity which does very valuable work in helping to redress some of the terrible imbalance in trade which exists in our world today. Thank you very much.

Trudi Cotton

Tower Bell Ringers

I would like to start this report by offering congratulations to Mike Ireland on 65 years of ringing. Mike started learning as a teenager at Downton along with Bob Plaskett, who is still a keen member of the Downton band. Mike's contribution in conducting call changes on a Sunday morning is particularly appreciated.

We usually field a strong band for Sunday morning ringing and evensongs and are pleased to be able to ring all eight of our bells more frequently these days. Our learners continue to progress, and we are grateful to friends from the Downton band who have assisted at Thursday evening practice nights. Our ringing Rector and ex-officio Chairman, Gary Philbrick, augments the band when he is able to do so and we appreciate his support and encouragement, also the use of his living room for our AGM.

We have rung for three weddings this year and hosted a number of visiting bands for outings, quarter peals and full peals. We often get compliments on the quality of our bells which are popular for branch and advanced practice ringing. Our occasional Friday afternoon quarter peal band, organised by Mary Melbourne, has continued to meet with varying degrees of success.

After a break of many years, we had our own Tower outing this year and enjoyed a rainy day out visiting

towers to the north of Southampton. We enjoyed a good pub lunch as part of the event and thanks are due to Mary for her organisational skills.

At branch level, some of us attended the Salisbury Branch AGM and also the branch outing to Taunton and District. We achieved a creditable second place in the Branch Striking Competition which was held at Coombe Bissett.

As is customary, we rang half-muffled for Good Friday and Remembrance Sunday. We enjoyed our usual Christmas meal at The Ship which was well-attended and concluded our year by ringing out 2019 and greeting 2020 with all eight bells ringing at midnight.

Thanks as always from the whole team to Keith Halstead, our Tower Captain, and to him and Mike Ireland for attending to maintenance matters.

Roger King

Churches Together in Fordingbridge and District (CTFD)

In February 2019, an Events Team was formed, comprising Dave Kratzke, and Ros Bradbury (New Life) David and Marguerite Williams (Poulner Baptist/Hyde), Jan Brian (RC) and myself (Anglican). The meetings were chaired by Paul Williams (New Life) and Chair of CTFD.

New Life organized the Walk of Witness on Good Friday, with help from others, particularly Ian Newman. Well attended by all the churches and attracting others to join in the Service at the Market Place at 12 noon. A Big Church Litter Pick took place in March, with equipment from New Forest District Council, and helpful advice from Mike Harley, FB resident. A surprising amount of rubbish was collected by young and old, and it was fun working together and getting to know each other better.

A delicious Hog Roast was held at Burgate School on the first warm day of the year, in May. Well attended by all churches, and many young families. Churches supported with salads and puddings. A plan to hold a Family Fun Run did not materialize due to lack of manpower. In October, the excellent film "Breakthrough" was held as a FREE event in the Town Hall, with free juice and popcorn. This was a haunting film which demonstrated the power of prayer.

Efforts have been made to source a replacement Churches Together Tree, a White Poplar, from Scentsational Plants, Fordingbridge to replace one planted to commemorate the Queen's Jubilee, which is in a sorry state. At time of writing this, a larger tree has been ordered, and so has a new plaque. The Town Council have been very helpful in giving advice and will plant and stake the tree for us with no charge. It is hoped that some church representatives might come together to mark the occasion of the planting of the new tree at some point soon, and that it will enhance the Recreation Ground.

New Life opened "The Branch" at No. 1 High Street at Easter, and all the churches were invited to drop in. It offers space for Workshops (CAP Money, CAP Life Skills) sells Christian books and goods, and is much welcomed.

Sadly, no Chair or Vice Chair was found at the AGM in October 2019. Roz Bradbury kindly agreed to continue as Treasurer.

Julian Sims has offered to take on the Chair in the Autumn of 2020. In the meantime, Canon Gary and Rev Nicky have kept things going.

A Church Unity Service was held in St Mary's FB on 26 January 2020. Joyful and well attended.

Future plans: a Good Friday Walk of Witness and Service on 10 April, Fordingbridge. Kite Flying at the Breamore Mizmaze on Pentecost Sunday 31 May 2020.

Pat Bloomfield