



## **ST MARY'S ANNUAL REPORT 2016**

### **RECTOR'S REPORT**

This is my 6<sup>th</sup> Rector's report here in Richmond with Hudswell and looking over the past annual reports, it is joy to be able to reflect on the many ways with which our parish continues to be blessed and to see so many God given gifts growing and working throughout our church community.

The Diocese of West Yorkshire and the Dales has just celebrated its second birthday and it is gradually taking shape. This year we warmly welcome our new Archdeacon, the Venerable Beverley Mason, who was collated and installed as the Archdeacon of Richmond and Craven. Bev Mason's archdeaconry covers the North Yorkshire area of the Diocese of West Yorkshire and the Dales and has the same boundaries as the Episcopal Area of Ripon. She was formerly vicar of All Saints in Bingley for three years and before that Vicar of St John's, Upper Norwood in South London where she was also Area Dean.

In my 2015 report, I quoted from a report called 'Church Growth Research' which stated that there are common ingredients key to church growth which include good leadership, a clear mission and purpose, willingness to self-reflect, to change and adapt according to context and involvement of lay members. The PCC continues to incorporate many of these ingredients in its day to day planning.

Worship continues to be key in our church ministry. Colin Hicks retired from the post of Musical Director and we owe him a huge debt of gratitude for the many years he faithfully and diligently served St Mary's. However we are delighted to welcome our new Director of Music, Chris Denton. Chris is already busily working in the local primary schools, encouraging young people to join the church choir to share a time of fun, faith and fellowship. If you would like to know more, please contact Chris.

The structure and style of the All Age Eucharist on the third Sunday of the month is now being reviewed and we thank Jim Jack and Brett Overin for looking after the musical support and it is hoped to launch the new service in May.

Fun-Key Church is just about to celebrate its 4th birthday and we continue to thank Gillian Lunn and the team who work so hard behind the scenes. It is encouraging to see so many aspects of St Mary's working together - young and old alike, so called traditionalists and modernists. Fun-Key is now an established service and it is lovely to see so many coming to Christ and developing their faith in a way that is clearly relevant to them.

This year we say thank you to Judith Clarke who, after many years, is stepping down as head of the Flower Guild.

During the year your ministry team, this year joined by Gillian Lunn and Bishop John, has continued to work together and the balance of experience, wisdom and energy has been a delight and I continue to be so grateful to all the team. We owe so much to the team, Readers and retired clergy, who work so hard in the benefice. Indeed the worship pattern throughout the benefice could not be maintained without this wonderful help.

The links with the C of E Primary school and St Francis Xavier School continue to grow and it has been a pleasure to work closely with the staff of both schools. This year will be challenging for both schools and their relationship with St Mary's is so valued by them.

We continue to take collective worship every Wednesday at the Primary school and it is a joy when the school community comes to St Mary's for all their major services. Sadly, since the last Ofsted report, the school has been going through difficult times. Inevitably significant changes have taken place and the staff and governors are working really hard to come to terms with these changes. A new Chair of governors, Janet Probert, was appointed recently and, as I write, we look forward to meeting the new executive Head teacher, brought in by the local authority. The school service in church on Maundy Thursday was a difficult one as we said a fond farewell and thank you to Mrs Di Robinson, Headteacher, who worked so hard for the good of the children she loved.

At SFX our diocese agreed to half fund the appointment of a school chaplain. Rachel Ross Russell started in September and it has been a delight to witness the children growing in their personal faith and owning the ethos of the school.

The recent government announcements re the Acadamisation of all schools is causing a great deal of concern re the future for both schools. Our prayers and support are much needed for those responsible for the decision making.

I continue to believe that parish ministry is about being involved in the community in God's name and I have enjoyed becoming involved in many aspects of the life of Richmond. Being trustee of various local charities, has helped me to understand the needs of the community in which we serve. As chaplain to the Richmond Town Mayor and leader of the Richmond District Council and the local branch of the Royal British Legion, I witness, on a daily basis, the amount of hard work and dedication given by so many of you for the benefit of our communities.

Our Verger, Leonard Scrafton, has worked over and above the call of duty since his appointment. My thanks go to him and Susan, who has helped Len since his illness, for the efficient way in which the work in front of house is fulfilled.

I would like to thank Claire Murray for her hard work and support to me in her role as parish administrator. Claire has also worked increasingly hard and for many hours in her role as Assistant treasurer since Rebecca, our Treasurer, stepped down following the sad and sudden loss of her fiancée Mark. We thank her and continue to hold her and all the family in our prayers. What could have been a difficult financial situation was averted by the

generous help offered by William Gedy. William has been appointed Acting Treasurer until the finance team is in a position to recommend the next step. However the PCC is very confident in the temporary management of the church finances.

Finally a huge thank you to our Churchwardens Roy and David, ably assisted by Janet, who once again enabled the ministry of the church to function. At key times, such as Christmas and Easter they virtually live in church!

Once again God has blessed us with the gift of so many talents and skills and it really is exciting to look to the future, to discern his will for us and his church. Let us continue to use those gifts to reach out to the community in his name.

John Chambers  
RECTOR

#### PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL REPORT

The PCC adopted a structure of six main sub-groups or teams: children and young people, communications, estates, finance, pastoral, and worship sub-groups, with the addition of a charitable-giving sub-group. The leader of each sub-group will be a member of the PCC, and extra members can be co-opted when appropriate. Each group will make suggestions and proposals for the whole PCC to consider before decisions are made.

The range of additional church services was widened for a trial period to include a Thursday evening Eucharist (which was subsequently discontinued), Illuminate (a non-traditional youth band worship service held monthly on a Sunday evening), Free To Be (an occasional informal Sunday evening contemplative event concluding with the Eucharist) and Café Church (a café-style informal meeting with refreshments, a speaker and discussion, concluded with the service of Compline).

Antony Kirby left the parish in September to become vicar of the parish of Barningham with Hutton Magna & Wycliffe, and Gilling with Kirkby Ravensworth.

Colin Hicks retired after many years as organist and choirmaster, having raised an excellent standard of musicianship in the choir. His successor, Chris Denton, took over in February.

Joy Hornsby retired as a Reader at the end of August.

Gillian Lunn and James Hargreaves were licensed to the Reader ministry.

A 'charitable giving team' organized a questionnaire and from the answers provided a list of charities to be supported monthly with a retiring collection on the first Sunday for the next twelve months. Barnardo's, Embrace the Middle East, Christians Against Poverty and The Church Army each received over £140.00.

The Worship Team devised a questionnaire on the congregation's experience of services and the use of the building. Ten per cent of parishioners responded, reporting that there

was much to celebrate. Seventeen people had reported unhappiness with new developments.

Jan Jack was co-opted as parish safeguarding officer. The parish has a Safeguarding Policy in place.

Permission was given for the Queen's Royal Lancers to use St Mary's Church for their regimental services

Bishop James Bell was consulted on the closure of St Michael and All Angels Church, and authority to lapse was granted. A report from a Church Buildings Council official has been forwarded to the Church Commissioners. Difficulties in the redeployment of the building arise from its access over land owned by others. The Rector is still responsible for the spiritual growth of people in the village and statutory services are to be provided four times a year.. A 'carols and barrels' service took place in the George and Dragon, Hudswell, at Christmas.

The construction of toilet facilities for the disabled was put in hand early in 2015, and completed with the provision of an access ramp in February 2016.

The sound system being not fit for purpose, advice was sought, quotations received, and with the financial help of the Friends of St Mary's, a new system was obtained incorporating some of the existing equipment.

The PCC expressed its support for the bell ringers in their fundraising efforts to overcome the longstanding problems with the oak bell frame and the irreversible wear on the historic bells. An application was submitted for a faculty to replace the bell frame and bells and to install a sound-reduction system on the tower windows for practices.

A faculty was obtained to erect a lockable fire-door to the choir vestry, to prevent pilfering of music, vestments, etc., when the church is used by outside organizations.

The church building was locked for a time after minor vandalism and an attempted break-in of locked doors and money boxes. The PCC decided to open the building during daylight hours for visitors to spend quiet time and leave a candle for prayer, but to lock away valuable items.

Arrangements are in hand with the Blenkiron family to provide a churchyard seat in memory of John Blenkiron, to be sited near the south porch.

The PCC gave its support to the latest St Mary's exhibition entitled "Summoned by Bells" to be held over the weekend of 20<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2016.

William Gedye was appointed acting treasurer, following the resignation of Rebecca Simpson for personal reasons.

Jennifer Patrick  
PCC Secretary.

## CHURCHWARDENS' REPORT

We continued to host memorable services. These included a special Green Howard's Sunday service in May which marked the reopening of the museum. We hosted the first Lay Readers Licensing service under the new diocese. It was good to welcome people from throughout the diocese and to see Gillian Lunn and James Hargreaves mark the end of their training. There were many comments on the warmth of the welcome, fellowship and hospitality. Thank you to all who helped make it possible.

Keeping the church open and unsupervised during the day has always been a feature of St Mary's. Our visitors book is testament to those who have enjoyed the peace and tranquility. However an episode of petty vandalism and damage forced us to make the difficult decision to close our doors for a short while. Thank you to everyone who helped to repair the damage. The book of gospel readings presented to the church by former curate Howard Stoker was damaged beyond repair and was replaced. An especial thank you to Anne McDonald for arranging a new dedication label for its cover.

The two phases of work on the disabled access toilet facilities are now completed. This caused much disruption in the tower area. It was impossible to close the building during this time. Thanks to everyone who continued to work around this and huge thanks to those who worked very hard to keep the dust and dirt to a manageable level for services. You don't realise just how big our church is until you begin to clean it.

We were all saddened to by the resignation of Colin Hicks our director of music. We welcome his successor Chris Denton. Thank you to all who helped during the vacancy by taking a stint on the organ bench. This ensured that we were never without musical accompaniment. We certainly have some very clever and talented members of our church family.

The church wardens together with the Rector serve on the board of trustees of the Thompson Charity who manage an almshouse in the town. The group has been joined by Cllr Paul Spencer following the death of Cllr John Robinson. At time of writing a new tenant is about to move into one of the two flats.

On a personal note I would like to put on record my thanks to my fellow warden and deputy warden Roy and Janet Morel. Juggling my full time job which involves working shifts and weekends with wardens' duties can be difficult. It is only made possible with their help and co-operation and much responsibility falls on their shoulders.

David Frankton

## ESTATES REPORT

### Disabled Access Toilet

Commencing April 2015, a disabled access toilet was built at the back of the church to fit in with the paneling, so as to blend in and look as if it had always been there. This had to be done as by law, if you have toilets there must also have facilities for the disabled and this was the only place for it. The work is completed with a ramp and rails to facilitate access.

As in 2016 there is going to be work done on the bell tower to erect new beams and replace the bells and there is no way this can happen without lowering bells etc. into this space, one of the sets of rails will have to be removed, so therefore the fixings for these rails are temporary and will be made permanent when the work is completed. The building inspector has been informed of this and accepts this.

### Sound system upgrade

In June 2015 there was a complete overhaul of the sound system and a new system was fitted, which will allow for additions to be made in the future if necessary.

### General Building Maintenance

Crichton Building Company did the usual maintenance. During which they cleaned the gutters and replaced roof tiles. Unfortunately, due to the direction of the wind and rain in the early part of 2016, there were leaks on the north side of the nave. There is also damp incursion on the south of the chancel and the south aisle. The company has assessed these problems and some repointing needs doing, as work done some years ago was not done correctly. As this is the first time this has happened in the last 8-10 years it is unlikely to happen again unless the weather is exceptional, as to solve this would mean the whole roof being done at a very high cost. Crichton Building company say that they will not need scaffolding to carry out the repointing work, which will be carried out in the summer of 2016. They will send a quotation prior to commencing work.

### Security Light

A passive light was fitted above the north entrance to the choir vestry. There has been a worry as the steps are steep and the light only came on once someone had opened the door and flicked the switch. The new light picks up movement over a wide area and so the choir are able to get under what can only be termed flood light. The system is low cost and long lasting and very effective.

Roy Morel

## BELL TOWER REPORT

Once again, we have had a successful year in the tower, managing to maintain our ringing alongside all the hard work that has gone into the appeal. We have been ringing regularly for services and as well as our usual Tuesday night meetings have been holding learners' practices on Monday evenings, giving our less experienced ringers more time to ring. This uses our simulator, so we can run additional ringing without disturbing those outside the tower. Thanks to John and Jan for keeping these going.

We have been pleased to welcome Sioban to the band, and Alistair, James and Ollie to being associate members of the Yorkshire Association. After ringing her first quarter peal, Jan has been made a full member of the Association and we were pleased to share these achievements with the Sunday morning congregation. This year's local striking competition was held at Kirklington, and we were able to enter our usual 2 teams. We also sent 2 ringers to represent the branch in the Yorkshire association competition at Market Weighton.

We have been busy with our appeal, most notably re-forming our handbell group to perform at the Station Singers concert in January, which stretched the talents of some of our more experienced ringers! Peter has been enthusiastic and energetic in leading the appeal, ably assisted by the rest of the band. My thanks go to him and everyone else who has supported the ringing at St Mary's in what has been a very busy year.

Susan Welsh

## BELL RESTORATION APPEAL REPORT

### ***The need***

Our present bells which are an eclectic mix of old and new do not form a proper musical relationship bells and are hung on 2 levels which makes maintenance difficult and unsafe. Furthermore, the poorly designed 2-tier wooden frame moves during ringing which makes it difficult to ring the bells and puts an undue strain on the Grade II\* listed tower. Ninety and again 50 years ago the Church wardens were advised to replace the unsatisfactory wooden frame and install a metal frame. There was no resolve then to take any action but we do now have the resolve and the increasing necessity to take the project forward.

The project

We aim to replace the 2-tier frame with a single tier metal frame and, as the existing peal of bells will not fit in a single tier frame, we will install a new peal of 8 purpose-made tuned bells. We will install adjustable sound control in the louvres to lessen the impact of training nights and extended periods of ringing on those living nearby. Five of our bells are of historic interest and these we will hang separately for chiming and make them accessible by a walkway to form part of a permanent exhibition of ringing through the ages. The remaining

three bells which are of no great musical or historical significance have been offered to other churches through the Keltek charity and if not needed will be reprocessed with the value of the metal discounted from our quotation. It is anticipated that we will be without bells for up to six months while the work is carried out. A Faculty for the work has been granted.

#### The appeal

We launched the appeal last May and have made steady progress towards our target of £160,000 plus VAT with £70,000 in the bank and £60,000 pledged. Claire Murray, Rebecca Simpson and William Gedye have provided invaluable support in managing our finances. Under current arrangements a grant for t VAT should be available retrospectively under the Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme.

The money raised comes from the extraordinary generosity of the congregation of St Mary's, the people of Richmond and corporate donors including Richmond Town and District Council, The Green Howards Association, The Yorkshire Associations of Change-ringers, the John Priestman Foundation, the Garfield Weston foundation, Staley Stonework, Ken Warnes, Neeps and Tatties, Lynette Williams Market Hall, the Mercers Grocers and Haberdashers, the Fellmongers, the All Churches trust and numerous individual donors as well as collections from funerals. Fundraising events have included packed concerts by the Oxford Gargoyles, Musicality and Station Singers, a dinner and guided tour of the Green Howards museum, wine and cheese parties, quiz nights and teddy bear parachuting with tower tours. The Richmond Belles have generously catered for these events. Further events are planned including a sponsored Richmond Surrey to Richmond N Yorks tandem bicycle ride in May ringing at churches along the way. Plans are well underway for this ride with a "justgiving" site for those wishing to sponsor us <https://www.justgiving.com/richmond-hudswellpcc> which is also easily accessible via our website [www.Richmondbells.com](http://www.Richmondbells.com). Four of the eight new bells have now been specifically donated by individuals. We are looking for donors for the remaining four bells, and other donations as well, because inevitably there will be unforeseen funding gaps once the work starts.

We are sufficiently confident of raising the money that with the authorisation of the PCC we have paid a £10,000 deposit which fixes the price of the works and ensures our place in the queue for casting the new bells with Taylors Bellfounders, our chosen contractor. The casting is currently scheduled for November 2016 and we will arrange transport from Richmond for all who wish to witness this unique once-in-several-lifetimes event. In due course we will be asking the PCC for their advice on the consecration of the new bells and asking the PCC and congregation to consider the inscriptions to be cast on them.

Peter Trewby 28/3/16



The Lent Course "Praise Him" hosted in various locations, and Holy Week prayers in Holy Trinity, were well-supported. The Walk of Witness on Good Friday was shorter and more public than previously, being more focused on the Market Place.

Holy Trinity. Joy Hornsby organised the August rota for prayer and reflection. Regular United Prayers on the first Thursday in each month at 12 noon, were led in turn by representatives of different churches, and attracted growing numbers.

In Christian Aid Week, £3723.58 was collected (about £600 more than 2014), and the Coffee Morning in November raised £369.22. A CTIR Coffee Morning in February again enabled helpers from different churches to work together, and to be seen to work together, as well as raising funds.

CTIR hosted a Hustings in Richmond School prior to the General Election, with positive feedback on the Christian approach to questions, the chairmanship and the civilized atmosphere.

Keith Hall organised another successful picnic in Ronaldshay Park, on Sunday 19th June, which included many children and a lot of fun.

Dementia Support: A group visited Garget Walker House three times to sing and chat with the service users. In November, CTIR hosted an information session from Dementia Friends, giving guidance on supporting people who are living with dementia.

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity concentrated on a single service in Holy Trinity, with St Mary's hosting the well-attended Agape Meal in the Town Hall.

Sheila Pearson has been Chairman, with John Dickinson continuing as Secretary and Roy Bebbington as Treasurer.

John Dickinson

## COMMUNICATIONS TEAM REPORT

In the previous 12 months the full Communication Team met twice. A sub-group set up to consider and approve a number of website developments has worked closely with the website developer over several months

Details of Sunday services are published each week in the Darlington & Stockton Times and special events are printed in the monthly *What's On in Richmond*. The monthly entries for the national website, *A Church Near You* continue as usual.

The parish magazine distribution lists have been reorganised and updated. The magazine team continues to involve a considerable number of the congregation in its compilation,

printing, collating, distribution and advertising. Magazines are distributed every month to homes, care homes, churches, tourist accommodation, hotels, and libraries in the local community.

The redesigned parish website, [www.richmondhudswellparish.org.uk](http://www.richmondhudswellparish.org.uk) is linked to Facebook and Twitter. Details of all church and outreach programmes, contacts and activities provide a source of information for the congregation, the local community, and the wider public.

Special thanks go to two people, David Frankton and Frank Gibbon. David Frankton for the major contribution he makes, behind the scenes, to the church's ministry by printing in-house the monthly magazine, notices and almost all the other printing for special church services and events; Frank Gibbon for continuing the time-consuming task of organising magazine advertising.

Sheila Harrisson *Chairman*

## DEANERY SYNOD REPORT

The Deanery Synod met three times during 2015

John Chambers took over John Richards as Interim Rural Dean in 2015

The retiring Lay Chairman, Peter Nicholls sent a letter of thanks for pleasant memories of his time as chairman and for gifts received.

### *Current developments in the parishes*

Gilling - Compline services led by lay members.

Hipswell & Colburn - a) Help for refugees; lorry of supplies currently on road to the Greek island of Samos. Rev Andrew Cromarty would like to make this a deanery involvement. b) A Veterans Art Group was established to help people suffering the effects of war.

Catterick - A weekly computer access group and community café have been set up, initially for bereaved women and those who had relied on others with computer knowledge and skills. Rural Action Yorkshire helped with the funding.

SFX School Chaplaincy, Richmond - The chaplain works in the school and the deanery. SFX church & St Mary's are invited to hold their Holy Communion services in the school chapel.

*The new Archdeacon:* Rev Canon Beverley (Bev) Mason began her post as the new Archdeacon in January 2016 and wishes to meet deanery members. She will be invited to a deanery meeting.

Sheila Harrisson *Deanery Synod representative*

## FRIENDS OF ST MARY'S REPORT

The Friends of St Mary's is open to all those who are on the Electoral Roll and was formed to help with the general upkeep and maintenance of the church, its activities and services and to bind together in common fellowship all those who love the Parish Church.

Once again this year we held our summer barbeque in church and were grateful to Freda and Tony Dykes for singing and Rev Antony for playing the bagpipes. In the autumn we had an enjoyable Quiz and Pie and Pea supper at the Cricket Club and both events were well attended. Throughout the year we also raised money by providing refreshments at various concerts and by Margaret Emmerson's bus trips. These trips raised over four hundred pounds for the Friends.

I would like to say a big thank you to the committee, in particular to Susan Wallis, Frank Gibbon, Graham Barber and Margaret Emmerson who have quietly organised and supported the Friends for many years. This year a total of £5,614 has been spent, enabling us to ensure the work on the Disability Access Toilet and ramp has been able to go ahead and be completed. We have also paid for a new sound system and the setting up of the new church web site and the supplies for the Christingle service, and Easter eggs, as a thank you to our Choir.

We are planning some different events in the coming months and as ever we are always looking for new committee members. If you feel you would rather not be on the committee but would like to help in some other way we would love to hear from you.

Liz Chambers

## KNIT2GETHER REPORT

The Knit2gether Group has enjoyed another year of meetings at The Restaurant at Greyfriars, on Flints Terrace, Richmond. In between 10am and noon on a Friday. Meetings have a regular attendance of approximately 15 – 17 ladies and gentlemen of all ages, plus many occasional visitors. Each bringing their own creative projects, sharing knowledge and skills whilst having fun and fellowship. New member always welcome.

Claire Murray

## AFTER THE CARDS

We meet on the 1st Tuesday of the month in Greyfriars café at 10.30 am.

Carrie and Anne have had another positive year, where several bereaved people have met each month for a coffee or tea. They have the chance to chat in an informal atmosphere about themselves and their current needs or just 'putting the world to rights'. New friends have been made and they are now able to move on together through their process of bereavement.

Carrie Stephenson

#### MONDAY MORNING TODDLER GROUP REPORT

Gathering about 10am in the Methodist Church Halls we enjoy a time of fun and friendship for children aged between 0 and 5 years old and their adult carer (mum, dad, grandparents, friends etc.) Tea, coffee, juice, fruit and healthy snacks await and flow throughout, and even more important a warm welcome is guaranteed.

This is manned by an enthusiastic, loving and committed team made up of ladies from both Richmond Methodist Church and St Mary's Church. If you would like to come along and help we would love to see you, as more helpers make it easier when there is the inevitable outside commitments or illness. You don't need to help all session or even every session. Free flow play with a variety of toys for a variety of ages is followed by singing, stories, action games and fun.

Numbers vary between 10 children and 25 depending on the weather and time of year, and special gatherings have included celebrating Christmas and Easter with seasonal food, summer in the park and cake when it is children's birthdays. There are also invitations given and (taken up by our families) to all our services at church especially Easter, Crib, Christingle and Christmas.

The time spent with each other, enjoying each other's company, encouragement and the space to do it in such a friendly way is invaluable. We know the children gain lots, but so too the adults as they find people with similar concerns, joys and thoughts as each other.

Gillian Lunn

#### MOTHERS UNION REPORT

The big events last year included the dedication of our new banner by Bishop James at our Patronal Festival and we thank Rev. John for inviting Bishop James, followed by lunch at The Kings Head.

Our Afternoon Tea with Reeth Brass Band which was most successful.

The amalgamation to the new Diocese of West Yorkshire and the Dales and our final Advent service as Ripon and Leeds in Ripon Cathedral which was well attended and of course we had our usual lovely lunch at The Deanery.

We also took our turn doing the Midday prayers at the Cathedral again followed by a lovely lunch at The Deanery.

We also donated and helped with the Family Funday at Colburn and supported yet again The Family Help Centre/Woman's refuge at Darlington.

We also gave donations to AFIA holiday caravan at Filey Prayer Network, Overseas missions and our own Church.

The disabled toilet baby change which we were going to provide was kindly donated by Acomb Construction and so Mothers Union bought the changing mat and nappy bags. Members of MU help at Mothers and Toddlers weekly at the Methodist Church, monthly at Fun key Church and The Belles of St. Mary's who provide and serve refreshments at the Bell Appeal events are also better known as members of the MU.

We still do not have a branch leader and we do pray that someone will feel able to take on this role at the moment the committee consisting of Liz Chambers Margaret Clayson Christine Stedman and Susan Scafton are keeping everything on an even keel! We meet on the last Tuesday of the month in the Methodist Church lounge at 2pm unless stated differently on the pew sheet everyone is assured of a warm welcome.

Susan Scafton secretary

#### ST MARY'S WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP REPORT

We have enjoyed another very happy and successful year. The past year has been interesting and varied which followed the usual pattern of short time of prayer, a guest speaker followed by refreshments. Our meetings last about an hour and a half. We meet in the Town Hall on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month at 2:00pm (excluding July and August.)

In keeping with our affiliation to St Mary's we held our Annual Easter Service and the traditional Carol Service. In addition, we held our Annual Summer afternoon tea and Christmas parties.

We continue to be a happy, relaxed and caring group who enjoy good fellowship together. We are an elderly group of ladies and sadly in the last year for various reasons three members can no longer attend. However, we have welcomed four new members this year.

It is worth mentioning that the Women's Fellowship was formed from the then Young Wives Club who wished to open membership to a broader cross section of women. This was achieved and continues to be the case as our membership is a broadly based group of ladies both secular and interdenominational.

We celebrated our 45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with a party last September.

Eileen Simms Convenor

## STUDY GROUPS REPORTS

### WEDNESDAY BIBLE STUDY GROUP.

No report available.

### THURSDAY BIBLE STUDY GROUP

The Study Group meets at 1 Roper Court, Richmond, at 7.30 pm every Thursday. We are continuing to study The Acts of the Apostles, which is an exciting narrative of the foundations of our Church, with much to discuss, helped by a commentary by Bishop Tom Wright. We read the Bible, listen to each other and learn from each other's experiences and insights. We finish the evening with coffee and biscuits, and enjoy each other's company.

Jennifer Patrick.

### MUSIC GROUP REPORT

For the last year, a group of musicians and singers have continued to lead the All Age Worship on the third Sunday of the month. Allan Guy, Jim Jack and Brett Overin have taken the lead in organizing the musicians and Gill MacLean has let the singers know in advance what they will be singing. Meeting at 9.15 on the morning of the service to practice, the musicians and singers have provided a sound that is different from the other morning services so adding to the variety on offer at St. Mary's. The group has also supported the Christingle and Crib Services.

Jan Jack

### TREASURERS REPORT

#### Background

I joined the St Mary's treasury team in December 2015 initially as coach to the Hon Treasurer Rebecca Simpson, and subsequently agreed to prepare the accounts following Rebecca's personal tragedy. The accounts were presented to, and approved by the PCC at their meeting on 16 March 2016, and have since been independently examined by Gillian and Alastair McLean.

Summary as at 31 December 2015

As in recent years, there was a small surplus (£1,129) of income over expenditure in the general everyday funds ('Unrestricted funds') of St Mary's.

The specific appeal provided for the installation of the Disabled Access Toilet, and the Bell Appeal was launched in the spring. In many activities the church continues to benefit from specific donations from 'The Friends' which help to keep the funds in the black. The PCC has investments and bank deposits which cover both the 'Restricted Funds' and 6 months of reserves. There has been little movement in the Hudswell account with the only significant item of expenditure being the Quinquennial inspection.

#### Unrestricted Funds

There was a small increase in the income from planned giving, church collections and donations, matched by a similar increase in expenditure. Other income was static. The Parish Share continues as the largest item of expenditure and the accounts reflect the settlement of the 2015 share in full.

A number of 2014 invoices due for payment in 2015 had not been identified in the 2014 creditors and a prior year adjustment of £1,863 has been applied.

#### Restricted Funds

At the end of 2015, there were adequate funds to cover the main Disabled Access Toilet installation, both the work and fundraising continued into 2015. The Bell Appeal was launched in the autumn and continues at a pace in 2015. Other 'Restricted Funds' are in reserve to cover future work to the fabric of the church, the anticipated replacement of the main blower on the organ and for the development of 'Fun-key' church.

#### The Future

A balanced budget has been prepared for 2016 which suggests that St Mary's will about 'break even' if there are no major unforeseen circumstances. We plan to implement a stewardship campaign in the autumn to help provide financial security for the future.

William Gedye