



The Mid-Wyedean Churches

serving Coleford, Broadwell, Clearwell, Newland,
Redbrook, Staunton and surrounding areas.

⊕ THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

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GLOUCESTER

The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of
Mid-Wyedean Churches

Annual Report 2018

Registered Charity No: 1132171

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Electoral Roll Officer: Naomi Wright

Parish Co-ordinator: Alison Stuttard

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Structure, governance and management

The Parish of the Mid-Wydean Churches is a Church of England parish serving the town of Coleford in the Forest of Dean and many of the surrounding villages.

Under the Pastoral Scheme that created our United Parish, the name of the parish is “The Parish of The Mid-Wydean Churches of All Saints Newland and Staunton; Good Shepherd, Broadwell; Saint John, Coleford; Saint Peter, Clearwell and Saint Saviour, Redbrook”. It is part of the Diocese of Gloucester within the Church of England.

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. All Church attendees are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and stand for election to the PCC. At the 2017 APCM it was agreed to ask the Bishops Council to approve a slightly amended version of the Interim constitution which existed for the first 5 years. Unfortunately, the Bishops Council has not yet authorised this amended Scheme but we are hoping that it will be approved before the APCM in 2019. A reduction on our Electoral roll this year to below 100 has meant that we now only have a total of two representatives on the Deanery Synod and a smaller number on our PCC. The new constitution if approved, although it will not make a difference to Deanery Synod reps, will enable each congregation to have better representation on the PCC.

Mission and Ministry

Incumbent’s Report

2018 Interim Minister’s Report (January to August)

Following an earlier interregnum, as vacancies were then named, a previous Bishop said to me, “Yes, but you enjoyed it” when I said it had been hard work “looking after” the Parish whilst holding down a demanding full time job at the same time. It took a few years for that relationship to be restored. I have never harboured an “ambition” to be a Vicar, Rector or have any other such role and having experienced a pale imitation of this whilst Sarah was on maternity leave I can truthfully say that I never would want to take on such a task.

There were three differences this time to my previous experience. Firstly, this time I had a title – Interim Minister – but actually this was something and nothing since in the time honoured tradition of the Church the words implied something more than they actually meant. We still had to send applications for memorials to be signed off by the Area Dean and I still had to sign the Marriage Registers as Associate Minister rather than Interim Minister because the title actually had no legal significance. Why bother, you might reasonably ask, but that’s the Church for you.

Secondly, in this case the Vicar was still around and so if I was really worried about how she might want something done I could always ask her. This was a great comfort and although I tried very hard not to get in the way of that essential first year of bonding between Mother and child I appreciated Sarah’s willingness to offer a word of guidance or a confirmation that the approach was ok.

Thirdly, and by far the most important, on the previous occasions when I was left holding the fort when the Vicar left, it often felt quite a lonely task. This time was different and I offer to you, the

Parish, my observations that if you support fully the people to whom I am referring you have a wonderful resource available to you. Having a Parish Co-Ordinator was a huge blessing and I don't understand how any Vicar can be expected to function without one. Alison Stuttard, comparatively new in role, was the most amazing support and colleague and I want to thank her for her efforts. The EMEP members around the Parish, one in every worshipping and working community, were unfailingly positive and incredibly conscientious and made sure that many important things went on which I would not have managed to do myself. Not only was this a great help to me but it is a totally positive and affirmative example of shared ministry from which Sarah will need support in the future. The service pattern, including a good mixture of lay and clerically led services, was maintained across the Parish with mixed responses. In geographically alphabetical order Broadwell maintained a service attendance of around 20 people, including some new faces who were welcomed with typical openness. It saw both Weddings and Funerals, sadly far more of the latter, and I am delighted to report that whilst Brenda Harding entered well deserved retirement as our organist she continued to play at these occasional offices. Worship began to be supported by a (donated) sound system and a (bought) set of CDs of tunes to our hymn book which has generally worked well. Clearwell saw its regular congregation grow with both new and returning members and continued to welcome couples who chose to marry in St Peter's. The work parties performed wonders with the surroundings of the Church and also improved the appearance of the inside to great effect. An eco-loo was installed and the yew trees were given a much needed "seeing to", both funded by generous donations by individuals and, in the case of the yew trees, by Clearwell Castle. Coleford continued to worship in St Margaret Mary and we remain very grateful to our Roman Catholic brothers and sisters for their hospitality. Discussions were started about possibly holding some services in The Church On The Street and a joint service was again held for the two congregations during Lent. I do feel that the absence of a Church to call their own weighs heavy upon this congregation but must urge all concerned to give their enthusiastic support to any effort to broaden the appeal of the Church and to grow the real Church, ie, the body of Christ, the people. Newland saw significant work on the tower and plans being put forward for the second stage of the internal tower project and we again need to thank the Friends of Newland Church for their care of the fabric of this magnificent building with a tiny but loyal congregation. Redbrook saw significant work completed and further work (eg, the repair of the windows) planned with electrical installations being made safe and lighting being improved. The congregation remained variable in terms of Sunday attendance but is an indication of how what being "Church" means may have to change as we move forward. Staunton saw much work being put into the creation of a reborn Friends of All Saints and had good news in the appearance of an organist willing to play for Sunday services when available. All our Churches benefited from the service leadership of our EMEP team.

More widely across the Parish we remained faithful to our task of offering Funeral services for those who request them and here I must mention Chris Howell and Denise Hogan by name since both of them made much appreciated contributions to managing Funerals.

Sadly we lost several members of our Church during these months including Allan Bidmead, a long-standing and treasured member of St John's, my Mum, Nancy Wearmouth, who was a very loyal

member of The Good Shepherd for many years, Laurence Coulthurst, fondly remembered at St John's at St Margaret Mary, Vee Fordham, who for many years attended The Good Shepherd, Sheila Scott, not long moved away from All Saints, Staunton, and Margaret Teague, another long-standing St John's member. May they rest in peace and rise in glory.

To return to my opening remarks, I am acutely aware that following this period of standing in for the Vicar she was to return part-time from September (see her separate report) and then full-time from January 2019. I know from my experience above, in addition to what I already knew full well, that Sarah will not be able to complete every task which the Diocese would have her do, let alone fulfil every expectation which we, her congregations, would have of her. This is simply a fact of life. As I prepare to ride off into the sunset (sorry Sarah) please, please both accept my sincere gratitude for all that you did to support me during the previous twelve months and redouble your efforts to do the same for Sarah and for anyone else who may follow in the future. The Church will never again work (if it ever did) with a model of a Vicar offering pastoral and liturgical care to a congregation on his or her own: being Church involves commitment, generosity of spirit and true support, most importantly in trying to understand the immense and sometimes conflicting pressures of the role. Every one of us is a unique member of the body, with our own gifts and, if we are honest, our own failings; Mid-Wydean will thrive, as I devoutly wish to see happen, if we each accept our responsibilities towards each other and work hard at simply being (even) better Christians. I loved feeling your support whilst doing a little bit more for a short while – Bless you all.

Alan.

Incumbent's report September – December

Returning to work in August after just over a year away was, as I'm sure many returning mums experience, both a joy getting back to something I very much feel called to, but also a challenge and a wrench, my whole focus having been the lovely Isaac for a whole year. What a privilege to be able to do that – just be a mum for a whole year, and see this new human life 'made in the image of God' change and grow over that time. My deepest heart-felt thanks go to Alan and Alison as Interim Minister and really very new Parish Administrator, and also to the EMEP team, both for keeping the parish moving forward and for being so considerate of that special time as a new mum.

Having so much accumulated leave, I was able to return to work part-time between August and Christmas, so the transition both for me and for Isaac wasn't too stark. Another luxury for which I once again give the whole team thanks for continuing to support us and the parish through those extra months. Having said that, working part time did prove challenging in its own way – it isn't really a part-time job. In fact, it did used to be at least three full time jobs!

The first significant task on my return was to reapply to the Diocesan Development Fund (now the LIFE Development Fund) for continued funding for the Parish Administrator post. Thankfully, this application was successful, on this occasion, offering us all the funding we requested for that post, covering most of the cost for three years. Our other request for funding for a buildings officer was turned down. We will also need to reapply to Sylvanus Lysons charity next year to cover the remaining cost of the Administrator post. It remains a concern that this post and the Church on the

Street rent are costs that as a parish we are a long way from ever making self-sustaining or being able to subsidise them from parish funds.

The parish was approached by the Diocese in connection with a Church Army programme of placing two pioneer Church Army Officers in each Diocese in England. They wanted a parish in the Forest for a placement, and so in conjunction with the Area Dean, and based on the feeling that our parish might be closer to an understanding of pioneering ministry than some. In other words, because we already have a Pioneer Lay Reader, have participated strongly in the past in Mission Shaped Ministry training and have an active fresh expression within the parish. Whilst there was a feeling that there are cons as well as pros in this approach to growing church, (as with any), the decision was made to accept the offer, if it is able to go ahead. Should Bishop's council approve the plan, the post is to be funded by the Diocese and by Church Army – there is no direct financial implication for the parish.

This year marked the centenary of the end of the First World War. The Town Council planning committee wanted to hold an outdoor service by the town's war memorial instead of holding the service in the Baptist Church, where it had been taking place since the closure of St John's. Various uniformed groups and other community groups were invited to take part in the much larger parade for this year, and the service was extremely well attended. I produced the service content for the occasion and asked the Baptist minister Rev Rob Saunders to rise to the challenge of a short appropriate homily, which he duly did admirably – extremely well, in fact.

The Remembrance Service at Redbrook had been the previous day, which was also largely organised locally by non- or irregular churchgoers. The village war memorial had been restored for the occasion and the service in the church was very well attended, and the school contributed well. Knitted poppies adorned the fence outside the church facing the road.

For both occasions, the sense of the community owning what was happening was extremely encouraging and inspired us to take a chance at Christmas time...

However, the weather put a considerable damper/dampener on the occasions! Two new events were offered this year, alongside our more regular offers. Both of which we will try again, as I think the idea is probably sound! But both suffered because of extremely wet weather conditions.

Firstly, we tried an under 5s story and song service, using adapted well-known children's songs to tell the Christmas Story. I think we have at least produced a good resource that we can either use again next year in the same way, or possibly take it out on tour around local nurseries and play groups.

Secondly, and this one largely inspired by the Remembrance Service, we tried an open-air Community Carol Singing event. In the end, about 12 people gathered in Church on the Street and sang a few carols together and warmed ourselves up with coffee and mince pies. But we'll almost certainly try it again next year with more advertising and perhaps as an ecumenical event.

Please see towards the end of the whole report for plans and priorities for the coming year.

Sarah

Worship

Our pattern of worship continues in the same form as was described in last year's report.

The St John's congregation asked the PCC for permission to have one of their Word Services at Church on the Street. This started in the Autumn of 2018 and takes the form of a more contemplative and reflective service. It has been well supported and enjoyed by those people who attend. We hope that this will continue into 2019.

The congregations of Newland and Staunton (averaging 8-12 in total) continue to worship as one congregation, alternating worship between All Saints Church, Newland and All Saints Church, Staunton. Each Church has one 9.30am Eucharist and one 4pm Evening Prayer service every month. St Saviour, Redbrook holds a family focused service once a month on a Sunday afternoon and a monthly Sunday afternoon Eucharist. The relationships developed through school contact continues to be important in this, though members of the wider community are also now joining the regular congregation, following some successful festival services that have been well attended. A very active House group of 8 regular members continues to meet twice a month.

Services of the Word and Evening Prayer services are led by lay members of our congregations with members of the EMEP team taking the lead at All Saints Newland and Staunton, St Peter's Clearwell and The Good Shepherd, Broadwell.

United Parish Services are held 6 times a year normally on Festival days with all churches in the Parish being visited during the year. Those who attend our Parish services appreciate the opportunity to worship together and the hospitality and socialising afterwards, some services are followed by a Bring and Share lunch.

Lifts are offered to people who need them to ensure no one is excluded from joining in with this Parish worship.

EMEP

Effective Ministry in Every Place – has been a real blessing to Mid-Wyedean. Those involved have been Chris Howell at Broadwell, Chris Young at Clearwell, Bea Erskine at Newland, Mark Bock at Redbrook, Denise Hogan at Staunton, Wendy Williams for Mustard Tree and, more recently, Miriam Goalby for Shalom. I chaired monthly meetings at which we were able to raise concerns, share joys and sorrows and plan for the future all with a local perspective and Alison Stuttard attended, made sure Coleford wasn't neglected in Sarah's absence. I am very grateful to all these people for making sure that the Parish continues to function with a genuine regard for each of its worshipping communities and in many cases their help in preserving the service pattern and encouraging regular worship has been invaluable. It has been a genuine privilege and joy to work with them and I looked forward to each month's meeting, which must say something about them all!

Alan

Schools

Open the Book continues in the Parish. At Clearwell C of E school it is led each week during term time by Chris Young.

I continue to visit for Open the Book Assembly. During the Spring and Summer term these were once a fortnight.

We start assembly to the whole school by lighting a candle in the name of God who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The Children read the various parts in the bible stories which I have copied out for them. There is always huge enthusiasm for taking part! After the prayer we all join in with the Lord's Prayer (modern language) and often sing a song. The Children come in to and go out to music.

When we extinguish the candle then Worship has finished and teachers and assistants give our any notices that are needed for the day. The school is well organised and the Children come in and go out quietly and orderly. I still hope that someone may like to come and join me for Open the Book!
Chris Young.

Other Assemblies

During 2018 the Interim Minister Alan Wearmouth continued to visit Clearwell school and St John's Academy weekly. The Mustard Tree Team led 4 assemblies and continued to hold monthly Mustard Tree sessions on a Saturday at St John's Academy during 2018 (see report below)

Chris Young, EMEP local Minister for Clearwell, joined in with Clearwell School end of term services at St Peter's Church and led their Christmas Service at the end of the Autumn term 2018.

Other school contact and collaboration

Redbrook Church is now used on a regular weekly basis by the School for worship, PE and other whole school events. The Licence agreement between the PCC and the Wye Forest Federation (the governing body of the school) was renewed in April – however, the school has indicated that finances are very tight, and so have renewed for only one year whilst they review the situation.

The Mustard Tree: Family Fun, Faith & Food.

2018 was a good one for Mustard Tree. The group grew in numbers (we now have an average attendance of 26, 12 adults and 14 children), strengthened its team by recruiting two parents to the regular planning group, improved communication with St. Johns School, and established a more consistent meeting schedule which is publicised in the weekly Pew Sheet in all our churches, in the St Johns School newsletter and on our Facebook page.

The monthly sessions (third Saturday of the month from 4-6 pm in St Johns School Hall) usually follow a pattern of inclusive worship on a theme relevant to the Church calendar, followed by games and activities and a shared meal. We ask for donations towards the meal and activities. Mostly parents donate money but sometimes they bring food or materials for an activity instead.

In 2018 our themes ranged from Baptism, St George and St Patrick, Love, Saying Thank you to drama and a totally extraordinary and extra-terrestrial Christmas play called 'Galactic Birth' (written by Wendy!)

The play was a huge undertaking ... involving absolutely everyone, including Rev Sarah and young Isaac as sheep, Matthew as Dr.Who and Daniel as a most eccentric shepherd (who washed his socks by night...amongst other things!) Despite the fact that the cast changed minute by minute and the dress rehearsal was on the same afternoon as the performance, Galactic Birth was really successful in bonding the group. Everyone had shared in the experience and it won't be forgotten for some time!

In addition to the monthly sessions, Mustard Tree also ran two holiday sessions. We had 4 Summer Lunch sessions in August in which we prepared food and provided a range of activities such as music making, fabric and paper rubbing, a treasure hunt and a play which one of the children wrote. In October half term we ran two sessions in which we cast and made costumes and scenery for Galactic Birth. In one of these sessions our numbers reached 38!

Finally, in the context of strengthening our links with St Johns School, we led four assemblies and had stalls at the Summer and Christmas Fairs.

Our challenges for 2019 are: to strengthen our relationship with St Johns School, to improve and maintain our Facebook page and, hopefully to attract more volunteers! All these targets will establish the group more firmly and hopefully continue to provide families with fun, faith and food for as long as we can.

We would like to thank Chris Young, Ann Meek, Alison Davis, Claire, Richard and Emily Fordham and Ian Ward for volunteering to help out either on a regular basis or by running activities during our sessions. Also a huge thank you to our two parent team members, Lou Benwell and Matthew Parker for their hard work, inspiration and sheer talent!

Sue Sparkes and Wendy Williams.

Governors

During the past year I have been serving on the Interim Governing Body of St John's Church of England Academy as the school has made huge strides forward in addressing the issues raised by Ofsted in its most recent inspection and the designation of the school as requiring special measures. The support given by the Diocese of Gloucester Academies Trust has been immense and the appointment of a new permanent Headteacher and a number of staff changes have contributed to what seems to me to have been a rapid and sustained improvement. Unfortunately until Ofsted have visited again the school remains with its unwanted label but I am confident that this will change when they arrive, probably towards the end of 2019.

The IGB was small during 2018 but is intended to grow in 2019 with the aim of creating a new Governing body. The role of Foundation Governors in addressing the ethos of the school and its Christian distinctiveness is an important one and there is likely to be the opportunity for at least one other person to serve in this capacity on the new Governing body, but that is for the future. As far as the year 2018 is concerned I attended every IGB meeting except one when I was abroad and was at pains to stress the support of the Parish for the School, although we have to accept that the absence of a focal point and dedicated building within the locality makes identification with the Parish that much more difficult. However, the work of "Open The Book" and "Mustard Tree" both helped to maintain the local links during 2018 and for their efforts we ought all to be most grateful.

During 2018 Chris Young has kindly fulfilled the role of Foundation Governor at Clearwell C of E Primary School and under its new headteacher we were delighted to see it achieve a "Good" rating from its Ofsted visit just before Christmas. As it is such a small school one or two pupils moving away can have a huge impact on the school roll and we do need to keep Clearwell School in the awareness of the community as an option for those children who might benefit from such an intimate education.

During 2018 Mark Bick kindly fulfilled the same role at Redbrook C of E School until Sarah returned from Maternity Leave. The school remains part of the Wye Forest Federation alongside St Briavels C of E Primary School.

Please remember all our schools, their pupils, parents and staff in your prayers.

Alan.

Pastoral

Weddings, baptisms and funerals. This aspect of the work of the church continues to be busy. There was a decrease in numbers of baptisms from 24 to 12 in 2018. Weddings stayed the same with 32 ceremonies and there was a very small decrease in the number of funerals from 54 to 52.

When Rev'd Sarah Bick returned from Maternity Leave in July 2017 a decision was made to continue with the new pattern of Baptisms that was introduced in 2017. Baptisms are offered once a month, alternating between The Good Shepherd and St Peter's, as these services are at 11:00 rather than 9:30am.

The annual Celebration of Marriage service at St Peter's Clearwell was combined with the Carol and Christmas Tree service and all couples who married in the Church in the past few years were invited to attend.

Home communions, house group and visiting.

All Together Now: A service of Home Communion continued to be held at Tuffthorn Close Community Room during 2018. It is not a particularly big group but is very friendly and welcoming. There is a

lovely family feel and everyone enjoys their time together. Sadly, the Carol Service was not very well attended but those that did go thoroughly enjoyed it.

The Home Communion at the Coombs Nursing Home is going from strength to strength with numbers ranging between 18 and 25. It is led jointly by members of our team and from Coleford Baptist Church. The Carol Service was a great success and was joined by Coleford Community Choir. This is a lovely friendly Service and we encourage families and Staff to join in.

The House Group in Clearwell continued to meet twice a month with a regular group of people attending. The Interim Minister took Communion once a month whilst the other service was led by the EMEP local minister.

Redbrook house group has flourished under the leadership of their local EMEP representative seeing about 60% of the congregation regularly attending, including two children/young people. The child (aged 10) now wishes to be Baptised and her mum to be confirmed, both planned for 2019.

Other Mission



Church on the Street

The parish office at Church on the Street has continued to be the communication hub both for members of our congregations and the wider community. The Parish Co-ordinator has continued to work from the premises providing a point of contact to the community and administrative support to both ordained and lay leadership including the leadership of the Mustard Tree team which is our Fresh Expression targeted at supporting families, based at St John's Primary Academy.

We continue to see people coming in asking for financial help and we now have an arrangement with the Drop-in centre who let people know what we can provide.

During 2018 Shalom, discipleship groups for people with learning disabilities, came under the umbrella of the Mid-Wydean Churches and their leader has become part of the EMEP team.

During 2018 the group met weekly at Church on the Street for paint and pray sessions and one to one bible study. With Shalom using Church on the Street for their sessions the building has become known as a 'Safe Space' for Shalom members and their wider group of friends – they know that they

will get a listening ear, a cup of tea and someone to walk to the bus stop with them when they are feeling vulnerable.

2018 saw the successful launch of the Coleford Memory Café. This now happens one afternoon a month and provides for local people with Dementia and their carers and is run by an ecumenical group.

The Parish office joined in with a new Local initiative, The Faddle Fair. This is a craft and food market for local producers and happens three times a year. Church on the Street has opened the premises for a 'Quiet Space' and refreshments during the day offering somewhere to sit and rest. We have continued to be a presence during other town events.

We have continued our relationship with the Forest of Dean Food bank and have developed a relationship with the Forest of Dean Baby bank as a local collection point for items required by new families in financial difficulties. In the lead up to Christmas we became a collection point for the Salvation Army toy appeal for local families, with people from across the community donating new toys etc.

The shop space at Church on the Street was utilized by both a Christian Bookshop 'King of Kings' and 'A Fair Deal Locally', a business selling fairly traded goods, during 2018. However, the owner of King of Kings retired in the autumn of 2018 but 'A Fair Deal Locally' continues to trade on the premises.

We are increasing the amount of worship which happens at Church on the Street. A weekly morning prayer was started on Sarah's return from maternity leave and we held a Nativity story and songs session for the under 5's in the week before Christmas.

Church on the street is becoming an ecumenical meeting place including, for example, the Mount of Olives Pentecostal Church post Alpha group. For the future, in partnership with the Mount of Olives and hopefully with other churches, we hope to increase our volunteer base for Christian presence. Our bookshop manager had to retire in 2018 and one of the ways we are responding to this is to gather a group of volunteers to run a secondhand Christian, Spirituality and well-being bookshop. Volunteers would provide a listening ear for those people who come in to visit the shop and parish office. We are engaging with new Diocesan Prayer Ministry training and are putting that on as ecumenical event as part of shop volunteer training and to resource all the different local churches.

Discipleship

Lent Group

We didn't hold our own Lent groups this year but joined in with our fellow Christians at Christchurch again for theirs. This was led by a different leader each week from all denominations and from a

wide geographical area. Those that attended enjoyed the experience of meeting with other Christians from across the area for prayer, discussion and a chat whilst getting to know one another over a cup of coffee or tea!

Social Groups & Fund Raising

Craft Group

The Craft Group continues to meet on Thursday afternoons at the Church of the Good Shepherd and the group has grown during 2018. Various trips were organised during the year to both local and national crafting events. Some of the crafters took a stall at Church on the Street during the Fiddle Fair events in the town.

CAMEO

Come And Meet Each Other continues to meet twice a month at the Church of the Good Shepherd. Over the course of the year members of the group knitted various items to be distributed by 'Teams for You' at Christmas to Children all over the world.

Report of the Fundraising Committee 2018

The Fundraising Committee continued to meet during 2018 to try and come up with ways of providing some social occasions whilst raising money for the Parish.

A series of Lent Lunches were held in 2018 with all money raised being shared between the Parish and Christian Aid. This raised £150 each for the Parish and Christian Aid.

The Main event for 2018 was the Flower Festival held over the first May bank holiday weekend at St Peter's Church. The Church was beautifully dressed and refreshments were served in the village hall. There was also a photographic exhibition in the hall and the church and a variety of stalls. This event raised just over £1000.

There was an Ascension Day tea party at St Saviour's on the Sunday after Ascension day and a presence in town during the Coleford Music Festival weekend where tea coffee and cake was served from Church on the Street.

Church on the Street was also open on Easter Monday for the Festival of Transport and on two of the Fiddle Fair Sundays where refreshments and a quiet space were available.

September saw our annual Soup and a Roll for Ride and Stride (Gloucester Historic Churches Trust) at the Good Shepherd Broadwell followed on the Saturday by a walk to and service and tea at All Saints Church, Newland with £270 being raised for GHCT.

The Macmillan Coffee morning was not as well attended as we would have liked as there were quite a few being held in the town on the same day but we still raised £110 for Macmillan Cancer Care.

The Good Shepherd hosted a lovely weekend of Harvest flowers in aid of the Food Bank and we had a wonderful Parish Service on the Sunday followed by a Bring and Share lunch.

The Good Shepherd had a coffee morning and bring and buy in October to raise money for their fabric fund.

Sadly, the Autumn Banquet that was planned for All Saints Church Newland which we had hoped would raise about £400 was cancelled due to lack of support.

However, the Beer and Carols at All Saints Church Newland proved to be a fun evening for those who attended from the village and our wider congregation.

All in all a total of £1780 was raised towards Parish Funds during 2018 which was a decrease from the £2970 raised in 2017.

Other Fund raising: As was reported above, in addition to our own fundraising, we raised money for Macmillan Cancer care, Christian Aid, Gloucester Historic Churches Trust (Ride and Stride) & the local food bank through various events.

Ecumenical links

We value our connections with Christians of other denominations, both for Christian fellowship and for partnering in engagement with the wider community in mission and evangelism. We hope to grow in partnership with other churches using Church on the Street as a shared base.

Coleford Churches Together

The CCT council has been in abeyance during Sarah's maternity leave, as Sarah has been the chair and no-one has stepped forward to take that on. However, local ministers have continued to meet three or four times a year, over breakfast, to discuss plans for joint ventures, and to hear about each others' churches struggles and joys.

Foodbank



We continue to support the food bank through a variety of ways. Members of our Congregations volunteer at the local distribution points and money has been raised for them from coffee mornings in the parish office and at other events.

We were overwhelmed by the generosity of local individuals and businesses who brought food items to the Parish office in the lead up to Christmas. This was all delivered to the Food Bank who were delighted by the gesture.

Roman Catholic Church, Coleford - St Margaret Mary

The PCC continues to be grateful to the priest and congregation of St Margaret Mary RC Church, for welcoming St John's congregation into their building to give us a place to worship. We have enjoyed some joint activities, during Holy week we joined the Roman Catholic congregation for an evening service and ended the year with our second joint carol service.

Buildings (Church Warden's Report)

Electrical Inspections

All Churches that were due them had their 5 year Electrical inspections at the beginning of 2018. All are satisfactory with just a few observations and recommendations.

Fire Extinguisher Checks

All Churches had their annual Fire extinguisher tests in February

Lightning Conductor Checks

All Churches had their Lightning Conductors checked in September. These will go to a bi-annual check as recommended by Ecclesiastical Insurance so will be due in 2020.

Local Church Council meetings

During 2018 the LCC meetings were moved to a Sunday morning after a service and were mainly chaired by either the local warden or EMEP rep. This has resulted in more people attending their local church council meeting so therefore more congregation input.

All Saints, Newland

- The Friends of All Saints successfully applied for a Faculty on behalf of the PCC for the second phase of the Tower project and were actively seeking funding during 2018.
- There was a significant leak from the roof onto the organ. The leak was fixed.
- There are some barge boards in the valley of the roof which need removing.
- The Friends organised for the gutters to be cleared and the gulleys around the outside of the church at ground level.
- The organ had a full service.
- There were some problems with some lights – these were fixed by a local electrician.

All Saints, Staunton

- A 'Power 100' regulator was fitted to the clock at the beginning of the year. This will regulate the time every 20 seconds and will also automatically change the hour between GMT and Summer time. However, after continued problems with the worn mechanism of the clock a Faculty was applied for at the end of 2018 for the mechanism to be taken to Smiths of Derby for a complete overhaul.
- A new gate was fitted in the Churchyard wall to prevent the sheep getting in.
- A decision was made not to repair the organ as it was going to cost £12,000.
- David Elias replaced some slipped tiles, renewed battens and cleaned the gutters.
- Plans have been drawn up for the re-ordering project.
- QI Inspection was carried out in August. The Church was deemed to be in poor condition overall. There was a list of urgent work, work to be carried out in the next twelve months and then work to be looked at in the next 5 years.
- All Saints Staunton now has an organist who is able to play at some of their services.
- Friends group was set up in September. It is hoped that they will be able to put a funding application together and apply for a faculty for the re-ordering of the building.

Good Shepherd, Broadwell

- A new path was laid around the Church. It was paid for by bequests left to GSB for the purpose.
- The outside needs rendering and redecorating – it will cost approximately £10,000. Funding streams are being investigated.
- Brenda Harding the Church organist retired at Easter after many years faithful service. She continues to play at occasional services.
- The main Sunday service is now accompanied by a set of CDs of the Hymns old and New hymn book. This can be used throughout the parish if required.
- The back of the Church has been set up as a Children's area.

St John, Coleford

- There was a lot of discussion during 2018 about the future of the St John's congregation and whether or not it would remain at St Margaret Mary.
- A decision was made to have a trial 6 month period of one service at month at Church on the Street. This started in the autumn and if successful will continue throughout 2019.
- **Hope to develop a monthly joint service in the coming year with the RC congregaton**

St Peter, Clearwell

- The Cemetery Chapel is in the process of being closed for Public Worship. A local group is interested in setting up a trust to look after the building
- An 'Eco' toilet was installed in the grounds in February 2018.

- The Cellar was made more secure to stop youngsters gaining access and new fencing was put around the cellar steps as required by the Insurance company.
- An Archdeacons licence was granted for the maintenance of the Yew Trees and the work was completed in the summer. Dead wood was removed, the tops were taken out to reduce the crown and they were banded. This work should last for 5 – 8 years. A generous donation from Clearwell Castle paid for the work to be done.
- The maintenance team continue to clean the inside of the church and maintain the grounds around the building.
- The boundary walls have had the ivy removed.
- The bulbs in the chancel lights were replaced and some of the spot lights repositioned to shine down on the choir stalls so that people could see to read.

St Saviour Redbrook

- A new consumer unit for the Electrics was installed after a smell of burning was discovered.
- All the outside lights were replaced during the electrical inspection as per the insurance recommendations
- The four overhead lights in the main building were also replaced as these were not fit for purpose with the building being used by the school.
- The light at the top of the steps has been rewired.
- The repair of the Stained glass East window and all the damaged windows around the Church was completed by the end of 2018. The stained glass was covered by insurance but not the plain glass panes.
- House groups continue to thrive and are now held at the Local Warden's home in Monmouth.
- There was a move to have some plans drawn up to make the building more fit for purpose for the school to use with toilets and kitchen area and better heating. However a lack of money will prove a problem.
- The QI was done in August and the building was considered to be in poor condition overall with some more urgent items and some for the next year and some for the next 5 years.

We would like to pass on thanks to everyone involved with the church services, particularly to the ministry team, the readers and to all the helpers and music makers!

Special thanks go to all the assistant wardens.

Sarah Codd & Susan Sparkes
Churchwardens

Deanery Synod Report

In February there was a discussion about Working Better Together in the Deanery, each parish was asked to think about what their own church can offer to the Deanery.

At the June meeting there was a presentation by Sandie Bradley, the Forest of Dean Messy Church Co-ordinator, explaining about Messy Church and the resources available. There was a Mega Messy Church event held at the Viney Hill Christian Centre in September.

The main event held in the Deanery was the Christmas FESTIVAL WEEKEND at Speech House in November, which proved a huge success. Making the decision to cease all church services in the diocese gave the scope to manpower the event making it a congratulatory success. It was enjoyed by all, including Bishop Rachel, who put heart and soul across both days, being a centre figure among the wide range of events and stalls. The Sunday Worship was packed and an inspirational way to be among so many fellow Christians from around the Forest. Drawing on its success, it is hoped to hold another in the future.

A presentation was given by the Mission and Evangelism Officer regarding a partnership between the Diocese and the Church Army to set up a CENTRE OF MISSION was discussed. One Church Army Pioneer would be based in Coleford, and one in Matson.

TEENS IN CRISIS or TiC+ is a Christian organisation set up specifically for family counselling. Examples and background information were given by the Director of Operations, Claire Power-Browne.

Worryingly and a situation directly affecting ourselves is that of the PARISH SHARE. Andy Tyler, the Treasurer, elaborated on the fact that our parishes in the Deanery are continuing to fail to meet the cost of clergy. All treasurers were reminded to pay the Deanery dues, but the accelerating shortfall will obviously have its consequences.

New Appointments have been made at BrookDean, the new name for the Parish of Drybrook, Ruardean and Lydbrook.

Rev. Sam Norton was initiated at Parkend and Viney Hill.

New Archdeacon: Rev. Hilary Dawson was announced as the new Archdeacon of Gloucester. Penny and Glynis

A year in the life of.....

Reflections from two of our parish churches:

St Peter, Clearwell.

The service at 11am is usually a Communion or a Service of the Word with a Baptism happening every couple of months on the Second Sunday. Isabel and Cindy, ably assisted by Judy and Wendy normally serve tea and biscuits after the service at the back of the Church. This gives us a chance to talk to visitors, especially to couples and their families who are preparing for their wedding at St Peter's.

On the Second Friday of the month there is a home communion at Sylvia's house which is usually attended by a few church members and on the fourth Friday there is a Bible Study group, again at Sylvia's.

2018 saw about 30 weddings at St Peter's Clearwell which means a lot of work for our clergy and Betty and Daphne our Organist and Verger and other members of the congregation who help out. The whole congregation are very welcoming to our wedding couples and their families and build up relationships with them and we hope that they look on us as friends.

Special services and events: Special services at Easter and Christmas were well attended. The flower festival held over the early May Bank Holiday weekend with the theme of 'Pastimes' was successful and many thanks to all those who took part with such beautiful arrangements. The songs of praise on the Sunday was enjoyed by a good sized congregation.



Our Patronal Festival was on 1st July and we had a small Harvest Celebration at the end of September with lunch afterwards.

An extra effort was made with Remembrance this year since it was the 100th anniversary of the end of WW1. With Isabel's organisation an exhibition was mounted in the Church and it was also beautifully decorated. A NAAFI Café was held on the Saturday (Officers Mess) and a good number of people came to look around and socialise. The Sunday service was wonderful with a congregation of over 300 including the Clearwell Pack of Scouts and Cub Scouts (about 50) with their banners and the Last Post and Reveille was played by a young cornet player.



The Christmas Sale on 24th November raised a good sum towards the Disabled Ramp.

Our Carol Service on the 16th December saw a nearly full Church and lots of wonderful singing! Thank you to all who contributed to this service.

At the end of term the school came for their Christingle Service and Nativity Play. There are only 40 children in the School but they were well supported by their parents and grandparents and other family members and they sang beautifully. The children collected £75 for the Children's Society. Many thanks to Daphne and Betty for the Christingles.

The Church and grounds have been kept in wonderful order throughout the year and grateful thanks go to cleaning team – Mary, Alan, Wendy, Isobel and Cindy (and not forgetting Charlie!).

I would like to end with our sincere thanks to Rev Alan Wearmouth for all his hard work and care for St Peter's through the year whilst Sarah was on Maternity Leave.

Christine Young.

The Good Shepherd, Broadwell.

The regular pattern of services continued at The Good Shepherd, alternating between a Communion Service and a Service of the Word with an occasional Baptism on the 1st Sunday of the month.

The Church of the Good Shepherd hosted our Parish Lent Lunches on the Fridays in Lent – soup



and a roll and a cup of tea or coffee. A team of soup makers provided delicious lunch for our visitors and there were many hands to help clear away. Thanks must go to Sarah and April who set up the room each week.

Our Foot Washing Service was held on the evening of Maundy Thursday and was led by Father Barry Coker. It was a very moving service for those who attended.

There was a coffee morning on Easter Saturday with Hot Cross buns – always a popular event in the calendar.

Our Easter Morning service saw us saying Goodbye to our wonderful organist of many years Brenda Harding who decided that it was time to retire. Brenda has continued to play at occasional offices during the year.

So what were we going to do without Brenda? How were we going to sing our hymns on a Sunday Morning? To the rescue came a set of CDs with all the tunes to our Hymn book (Hymns Old and New), a CD player and Lesley Weamouth who now DJs for us on most Sundays ably assisted by Rosemary Ward when Lesley is not available!

A soup and roll lunch was held in early September to raise money for Gloucester Historic Churches Lunch and this was well attended.

At the end of September we had a Harvest Flower Festival with many lovely arrangements – thank



you to all those who organised and participated in making the Church look so beautiful and who helped with serving refreshments on the Saturday. This was followed on the Sunday by the Parish Harvest Festival – we had a full church and lots of donations of foodstuffs for the food bank – perishable items were auctioned off and the money raised, together with that raised on the Saturday, was given to the Food Bank. The Church

was set up 'Café Style' and Rachel, who runs a Fair Deal Locally, gave us a talk about Fair Trade during the Sermon slot. The service was



then rounded off with an amazing spread as everyone had brought food for the Bring and Share lunch. Such a lovely weekend!.

The annual All Souls Service was held at the Good Shepherd and was well attended as usual. The year closed with our Carol Service, Crib Service, Midnight Mass and Christmas Morning services – all of which were well attended.

Shalom

The Shalom Groups officially came under the banner of the Mid-Wydean Churches in the summer of 2018.

On behalf of the Shalom Groups we would like to thank you for making us so welcome.

Within this past year there has been a regular Tuesday afternoon group at Church on the Street, alternating weekly between Prophetic Art and Bible Study. After discussion, in September it reformed into Biblical Interactivity, creating an opportunity to study scripture and then reflect on it through the arts. This incorporates both of the previous sessions into one. We are systematically working through Scripture, having started at the very beginning when Father God created the universes. The numbers have fluctuated over the year and currently there are some regular attendees. This activity is open to all ages and abilities.

The Christchurch group contributed a sketch called the 'Ragman' at the joint service in Holy Week at St. Margaret Mary's Roman Catholic Church.

The Shalom Groups organise and facilitate a number of different groups, events and activities, more details can be found on the website: [Www.shalomgroups.org.uk](http://www.shalomgroups.org.uk)

Miriam Goldby

Safeguarding

The PCC has complied with the duty under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 (duty to have due regard to House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults). The safeguarding officer is Mark Bick who can be contacted on 01594 836418 or at <mailto:mark@markbick.co.uk>. The deputy officer is the incumbent, Rev Sarah Bick who can be contacted on 01594 835476 or at vicar@mid-wydeanchurches.co.uk. During the period of Maternity Leave the Rev'd Alan Wearmouth took on the role of deputy officer. The Diocesan safeguarding team can always be directly contacted as well. There were no incidents directly within the responsibility of the parish this year. Everyone we believe needs DBS checks has had them done and completed the relevant training. The Safeguarding Policy was reviewed and adopted at a meeting of the PCC in September 2018.

Priorities and & plans for 2019

The main themes for the coming year in practical terms, are:

the implications of Alan's retirement and recruiting a new house for duty priest or adopting another solution;

the future funding of Church on the Street and the Parish Administrator post, considering the resilience of subletting to a business in a setting where businesses are closing all around us, and meeting the goals on our Development fund application;

growing our ecumenical relationships again, and possibly finding some of our solutions in working together.

I have a sense, however, that it also needs to be a year of prayer and reflection, of not over-committing to activity, but of seeking to deepen our commitment to God and God's leading. This may be the busy new mum talking! But I don't think it is only that – rather that we all need to find that balance of simplicity and joy, putting down those things that actually aren't fruitful and putting our energies and resources into whatever God is doing.

May God guide us in the discernment needed to put that into practice.

Sarah.

Finance Committee Report

The Finance Committee has continued to meet regularly in between PCC meetings, exercising its responsibilities in discussing financial affairs in greater detail than could be tolerated at PCC, taking decisions which couldn't wait for the next PCC and assisting the Treasurer in her onerous duties. As well as Edwina Bell, our Treasurer, attendees included Alan Day from Broadwell, Betty Weaver from Clearwell, John Simmons from Staunton, myself as Chair, Sarah on her return from Maternity leave and Alison Stuttard as Parish Co-ordinator. Churchwardens are always welcome but not requested to attend as would be representatives of Coleford, Newland and/or Redbrook. This Committee has worked hard over the year in dealing with a variety of time-consuming items and I thank them all for their contributions. This is another meeting which I have always approached with anticipation, knowing that essential work would be undertaken there.

Alan.