

CHURCH WARDENS REPORT DECEMBER 2018 TO DECEMBER 2019

The month of December 2018 brought not only the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ but also an afternoon on the 8th of joyous festive songs from Jill Arthur and her musician students and friends. A superb afternoon tea was provided by members of the social team plus a fantastic prize winning raffle organised by Gwen Fisher. The proceeds of which went towards the Tower Restoration fund. Gwen's ability to raise a significant amount is always a pleasure to observe and experience. On the 15th Rebeka and Laurance Hardy celebrated their diamond wedding anniversary and kindly provided fizz and cake following the Sunday 10am service to share in their celebrations. Services over the Advent period went well with the Church beautifully decorated by Jackie Lee and team plus Viv. Lee Smith produced a wonderful outside walk-in crib, where one looked into the crib a baby with a reflective mirror offered a spiritual experience of seeing one's own self within the Jesus child. Lee's artistic ideas and skills uplift our Church to a level that is in my view quite unique. Christmas Day Lunch at the Old School was very well attended and thanks must go out to all those volunteers who cook, serve and entertain on such a special day. For the folk who would otherwise be on their own this event is a God send and the feedback of appreciation and thanks is enormous.

Moving into the Epiphany saw World Religion Day on the 20th followed by Holocaust Memorial Day on the 27th. The month of January passes without anything of significance to report. A charity lunch on the 19th February for Family Support Work saw 90 people enjoy a two course lunch in Pulborough Village Hall plus a speaker who was a judge from the Chelsea Flower show. Over £1200 was raised for the charity with church members from Pulborough, Steyning, West Chiltington, Sullington and Storrington working together to provide an excellent event.

A Lent course of 6 weeks commenced on the 25th February organised and presented by the Reverend Charles Hadley and Mrs Felicity Hadley held weekly at the Priory and assisted by members of the Chermin Neuf community. Members of the Community Church, Catholic Church and our Church came together in prayer and study. It was a great success with more to follow in the year bringing Christians of all denominations together. This month saw Rev. Rob Wall depart to Palestine for 10 days to help the Palestinian cause of planting olive trees. More on this subject to follow.

The month of March commenced with the Women's World day of prayer hosted by our Church it was a beautiful service organised by Chrystalle Kersley and well attended. The following day on the 2nd of March I and Amanda Hislop attended a Healing Day in Eastbourne with talks and services by Bishop of Lewes and other prominent clergy members. A fun evening of Skittles was held on the 16th at the Blackhorse Findon thanks to the organisation of Liz and Les Allen-Williams.

April 14th Palm Sunday brought Communion with procession and donkeys thanks to the estate of the Duke of Norfolk and Rev. Toovey for securing such a special arrangement. Holy week provided ample opportunities for prayer and reflection. Good Friday on the 19th saw an inter-church Procession followed by three hours of Devotion within our Church. Easter Day on the 21st the Day of Resurrection! Came with 8am Holy Communion, 10am Easter Family Communion and 6pm Easter Evensong. With the Church attired in flowers for Easter thanks must go to the flower arranging team whose skills are much appreciated. Our first Open the Book meeting is held on the 29th with a plan to perform biblical children's plays to Storrington Primary School with one per term. I attend a Faith in Action event organised by the volunteer team of Horsham District Council. In doing so it provided information and guidance for Churches wishing to enhance their opportunities and community

services. We plan to hold a breakfast club for families in need throughout the summer holiday of 2020. This will need careful planning and organisation.

May commenced with Revd Rob Wall and I undertaking six weeks of training sessions for West Chiltington Parish Visiting Team. The training was once a week with 8 volunteers, 3 sessions led by Rob and 3 by me. The training programme was a diocese credited course and previously used to train our own PVT. Christian Aid Week was from the 12th May and expertly organised by Anna Forster and her team of volunteers. In total the amount raised was £3,250.24p from the Storrington community. It is a big task but one once completed is greatly appreciated and acknowledged by those who benefit from it. May 20th in St Andrews Crawley Den and I took the oath to continue in our respective Churchwarden roles for a further year.

1st June held a very successful Paella and Quiz evening in the Old School. Thanks go to Andrew and Sheila Boulton for providing a thoroughly enjoyable but thought-provoking quiz. On the 25th June our Churchyard was judged by South and South East in Bloom with an award nomination being given of Silver Gilt with a total of 168 just two short of the Gold award. The Churchyard team members work tirelessly throughout the year come rain or shine so of course it was felt disappointing for them that Gold was not awarded. Everyone is incredibly proud of how well maintained and managed the churchyard is and the colour of the award is irrelevant to the end result. June also welcomed a Bishop Visitation over 3 days with a meeting at the Rectory with Bishop Mark to acknowledge to members of the PVT both from our Church and that of West Chiltington how vital this role was within our respective communities.

July saw St Mary's team cooking for the Sunday Luncheon Club this is a popular and very successful monthly event. The link between the Catholic, Community and Methodist Churches is both strong and rewarding with the community members benefiting from these gatherings. Thanks must be given to those Church members committed to helping and supporting. Sadly the month of July and August proved to be extremely wet. However the Vicar's Tea Afternoons went ahead thanks to Lee Smith and the committed cake makers from the congregation. On the 30th July Rev Rob Wall presented a talk on his experience in Palestine in the planting of Olive trees for the Palestinian cause. Such was his very insightful and interesting talk that enough money was raised for the purchase of several olive trees for Palestine by St Mary's Church.

However with much regret the Croquet at the Rectory on the 17th August had to be cancelled due to the wet conditions underfoot. This was a great disappointment to many but fingers crossed this event will be back in 2020 when the weather might of improved! Being the 'holiday' month August passed quietly albeit in a wet way.

September bought all 4 Churches together at the Priory for a belated supper on the 20th organised by Rev. Hadley and his wife Felicity. The evening also provided an opportunity to discuss how Christians in Storrington can provide the community with events to promote Jesus's love and care to maybe those who sit on the perimeter of Christian commitment. And by doing a community event it will show how the 4 Churches are united in facilitating such events and praising our Lord.

October 6th was Harvest with a busy Family Harvest Festival Service followed by a successful Harvest Supper held in the Old School. Organised by Viv Stuart and members of the social team proceeds of

the Harvest are given to a charitable fund. Harvest supper was a hot meal with homemade puddings plus entertainment by Jill Arthur.

November brought the sale of poppies for the British Legion superbly arranged by Lee Smith and his team of volunteers. Remembrance service at St Mary's 3pm saw a Church heaving at the seams with a collection of scouts, cubs, sea cadets and air cadets. The service was brought to a conclusion by the laying of a wreath at our memorial stand. The funds raised by the sale of poppies in Storrington were significant and exceeded previous years. Revd Rupert Toovey provided a talk and presentation on the 13th of the History of Art within Churches of the county of Sussex. Tea and cake followed with generous donations given of over £200. Jill Arthur and her students provided an afternoon of song and festive cheer on the 24th. Tea and homemade cake concluded a successful event. Thanks to Jill for being such a willing member of our Church community in providing hours of entertainment.

December 1st we saw our very own Rev. Kathryn Windslow Rural Dean be ordained in Chichester Cathedral to that of Cannon. A party of extremely proud congregation drove together in a 50 seat coach to attend this very special service. Bishop Martin of Chichester officiated with a celebratory glass of wine for all followed. Chichester Cathedral was full but those of us who attended acquired prime position seats to watch the service. On the 4th December members of the Parish Visiting Team and Rev Windslow enjoyed a meal together at the Highdown Hotel, organised by team lead Stuart Lee which proved to be a delightfully relaxed evening. 8th December bought all 4 churches together to celebrate a complimentary Christmas meal enjoyed by all in the Old School. Wednesday the 11th was the Christmas Cafe in the Church where children from Storrington Primary School Choir sang a range of Christmas carols to the delight of those who attended. Cafe in the Church continues to be a very popular event, this is held every third Wednesday in a month. Thanks must go to Jackie and John Peal and all their committed team members. Saturday the 14th was a Christmas Coffee morning with the draw of the Christmas raffle. Gwen Fisher always provides an excellent raffle and in doing so works hard to ensure it is advertised and selective prizes are acquired through negotiation of local business enterprises. A total of £812 was raised for St Mary's Storrington. Pat and Alun Jenkins ensured yet another enjoyable and successful Christingle Service on Christmas Eve the 24th. So much work is involved in order to ensure everything goes to plan and every child receives a Christingle orange. Our heartfelt thanks and appreciation goes to Pat and Alun who deserve a well earned rest but who continue each year without fail to commit to the Christingle Service. Finally I come to Christmas Day where a wonderful band of volunteers provide and cook a Christmas Day lunch for all those folk who would otherwise be on their own. Not only is lunch provided but also afternoon teas treat to take home. How blessed we are to have in our fold those who forego a family day in order to give to their time to those in need. Particular thanks must go to Mr and Mrs Richardson, All the Kibblewhite family members and Jackie and Stuart Lee. I am in no doubt there are others on the list and send warmest thanks to you all.

The year has passed with so many joyous occasions and events that I am unable to feel totally satisfied in the reporting of what our wonderful Church community offers and achieves. We are truly blessed to have Kathryn as our lead together with Charles, Felicity, John, Jacquie, Stuart, Chrystalle and Rob who make up the committed clergy team. To Vivian for her role as parish secretary whose knowledge and skills are at times taken for granted but without them we would be at a loss. For all the brilliant volunteers across the endless teams who ensure St Mary's Storrington runs smoothly a

thank you never seems enough. But Den and I sincerely say Thank you for without you our beautiful Church would not flourish as it does.

Barbara Buchanan Church Warden

Den Cowdrey Church Warden

April 2020