

St Mary's Church West Chiltonton
Faithful Hopeful Joyful Prayerful

Rector's Report to APCM April 2019 for the Year ending 2018

I love being your Rector and consider it a privilege and a joy. This report covers the first 9 months of my ministry.

Beginning- Due to the Rectory flooding, Rosemary and I were unable to physically move into the parish until May following my induction on 20th March 2019. That notwithstanding, we hosted 38 churchgoers and 36 other parishioners to events on 28th July and 4th August- these included a band, a getting to know you quiz and fabulous food and drink. This will be re-run in summer 2019.

Values and Vision- New values of *Faithful Hopeful Joyful Prayerful* featured on all St Mary's posters, website and communications.. The PCC sub-committees were restructured with an increased focus on growth, mission and fundraising. A mission action plan (MAP) was developed outlining our priorities for growing the church, re-imagining worship/ministry and contributing to the common good. A MAP development day was held for PCC in October led by Rev'd James Russell. The demands of GDPR legislation and safeguarding requirements were embraced fully.

Discipleship and Resourcing- The Rector supported Chris and team in the week of accompanied prayer in October (19 participants) and attended both the home study groups (Overton-Smith and Carlson-Hedges). New books were made available in the church to buy or borrow and the lady chapel developed as a resourced prayer zone. During advent and Christmas, books were made available for adults and children to borrow to gain a fresh understanding of the importance of the season. *Faith Pictures* ran in the church hall (4th-25th November with 20 different people attending at least 1 session) for those who wanted to explore how to share their faith more effectively.

Services and Worship- Evensong was restored on a monthly basis and a new informal fourth Sunday communion introduced. The Rector developed a new liturgy for family service when Tim was unable to lead these. A new baptism service booklet and preparation put in place for the 5 children baptised in 2018. A marriage preparation course was devised for the 4 couples married in 2018. All people requesting home or hospital visit received one (or more) and regular home communions commenced for some parishioners. The Remembrance Day Service was revised to ensure more community involvement and had record attendance. Numbers were good over the Christmas season 9 lesson and carols was up on 2017 and 2016 at 124. At 291 Christingle was up on most other years. Midnight communion at 71 was the highest turnout since 2015 and we had the largest attendance for Christmas Day in the past 5 years with 100.

Community involvement- After liaison with the Parish Council, a plaque was installed on the churchyard wall to commemorate our 2 VCs. The Rector attended meetings of the Parish Council, Village Show Committee, presented prizes for the horticultural society and attended meetings of the Smythe Trust. Carols in the pub was hugely enjoyable and very well attended thanks to Tony for leading this so well. The Rector has continued to build links with the spouses of those for whom he has taken funerals. St Mary's generated 2 teams for the school PTA quiz. School Harvest and Christmas carol services were hosted in St Mary's. A very successful Flower Festival was held in the autumn co-ordinated by Sue, Brenda and team with an excellent supported display coordinated by Andy around the theme of the centenary of WW1 and RAF. Numerous concerts and events were hosted in the church to make a significant contribution to church funds.

Communication- The website was improved and refreshed, thanks to Frances, and a new presence on social media (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram) established. The porch noticeboards were refreshed as was the pew sheet. Good coverage was achieved in the local media for a number of church events in 2018 (Licensing, Flower Festival, Light Stop, Christmas services).. Each home in the parish received a St Mary's Christmas Card together with details of our 2019 services. There was also coverage in the Community Bulletin, Sussex Local and Faith in Sussex. The Rector contributed regularly to the Parish magazine with his well-received View from the Rectory column.

Children and Families- A new children's area was developed and resourced with a sticker book for children attending church. Fortnightly assemblies were delivered at the village school and the brownies were proactively involved in the life of our church (reading and making poppies for Remembrance Sunday, making stars for our magnificent Christmas installation and holding their nativity service in the church). 31st October a *Light Stop*, co-ordinated with local parents, was held (invites went to all children at WCCS, brownies, rainbows and guides and posters were put around the village) 30 children and adults attended. '*Open the Book*' discussion about children's provision was launched.

Giving and legacies- A rededication Advent Sunday was held as an attempt to secure more financial, prayerful and discipleship commitment from the membership. All church members received a letter explaining the importance of commitment to the church. The Rector liaised closely with the family who donated £10k to St Mary's and worked with FGL to provide input to their plans for a whole parish appeal scheduled for 2019. A legacy policy was developed with Ian and Clive. Weekly basket collections began with an offertory hymn. The Rector has maximised the amount of giving possible from congregations at weddings, funerals and baptisms. Significant money was raised for the Royal British Legion, The Children's Society and Crisis from our Remembrance, Carols and Christmas Crib services.

Ahead – The Rector will continue to exploring how we can grow the church family at St Mary'. He will explore and develop further our links with West Chilmington Community

School, groups that meet in our church hall and the village hall and other groups and individuals on the edge or fringe of church life. He will look to help assist occasional attenders to become more regular and committed to church life and to support and encourage discipleship, generosity in giving and developing a more diverse service and worship pattern. He will explore how we contribute to Chichester Diocese's strategy for growth within the context of working out what it means for us to be faithful hopeful joyful and prayerful as we know, love and follow Jesus.

Please continue to pray and encourage The Rector as he does you. This ministry is very much a shared-enterprise as together we seek to discover and respond to the mission God has for us in our community and our world.

Rev'd David Coleman, April 2019