

## All Saints' Church – Reports for Annual Church Meeting 2019

### Rector's Report

*We are a good church.* That is not a boast – it is only by God's grace, and all praise and glory for that statement ultimately goes to Him – but it is worth saying, and giving thanks for. There are many strengths, and many things which we can rightly celebrate. The rest of these reports give you the details, but at its heart we have both a rootedness – in God and in our community – and at the same time an exciting journey taking place before our eyes.

*We are a changing church.* We are more diverse than ever – both culturally and in terms of our church traditions – and have been privileged to welcome many new people into the life of our family: more than a third of our current membership have joined the church in the last four years, and more than a quarter of us are proud to represent cultures from across the world. We celebrate this! Our Go4th initiative is taking us to new places (literally) and connecting us with new people. At the same time, many other things have remained constant and familiar – the broad patterns of our worship, the warmth of our welcome, our relationship with schools, our popularity for life events such as baptisms and weddings.

As we stand at this moment in 2019, I sense we are at something of a crossroads. We are a good church, and we celebrate this. The question I believe God is now asking of us is this: do we want to be a great church? This is not a 'life or death' question – we can 'stay where we are' and God will bless us. But I sense that God is calling us onwards, to something bigger, even more exciting – and the next couple of years will determine which path we choose.

*What separates the good from the great?* That's the million-dollar question, and I think it's about 3 things:

**Vision** – great churches are inspired by a vision. This is just forming for us, but I sense that for us, *our name is our vision*. We are All Saints. And both of those words matter – we are a local church for *all* people, where everyone from every background and culture is welcomed. And we are *saints* – which is the bible's word for all Christians, and means 'set apart'. We offer something distinctive to every other local group and organisation – the love, hope and purpose of the good news we have to share.

**Hunger** – great churches are hungry for more of God, regardless of where they've got to. For those of us who've been Christians a long time, it is tempting to think that we've got as far as we can go – that spiritual life reaches a plateau which is 'far enough'. But the truth is that there's always more! God's grace is inexhaustible, and so we remain hungry for more of God. It is often a personal crisis that stirs a new hunger, but I've never believed that is the only way. We can be hungry for more of God whenever, wherever. *That is why I've set the priorities of prophecy (seeing), prayer (seeking) and power (God's, manifested through His gifts – 'stirring') for this year.*

**Love** – great churches are characterised by great love. 'See how they love each other' was a cry which enemies of the early church were forced to admit (an admission copied down by the great early church leader Tertullian), and many centuries later, that remains as true as ever. This year we will offer more social events as a simple 'way in' to cultivating deeper relationships – picnics on the green after church, weekend walks – and all other ideas welcome!

Vision, hunger, love. These are the priorities which lie before us. To be for all people, but retain our distinctiveness. To stay hungry, to renew our desire to grow in faith and following Jesus wherever He leads. To deepen our relationships with each other – especially outside of Sundays – that we become a deeper community into which others will likewise find healing, hope and purpose for the future.

I hope you will join me on that journey. But as I write I am conscious that this is something I cannot create or coerce. I will do all I can (within my very obvious limitations) to encourage, to pray, to model – but *it is for all of us to decide who we are to be over the next few years*. I'll close with a provocative thought someone gave me some while back: 'The good is the enemy of the best.'

I am so grateful to be sharing this journey with you. And may God continue to stir our hearts to be all that we can be as a church – for His kingdom, power and glory.... Amen! With my love, blessings and continued prayers,

**Matt, March 2019**

**Churchwardens Report**

There have been encouraging and joyful times during this last year and also times of some sadness. Whilst our community has grown and welcomed new members to church, some long established friends have moved away to the next stage in their lives. We are especially thankful for all that these members have brought to All Saints over the years and to the new beginnings that are also emerging in many aspects of our church life.

Firstly a confirmation of the maintenance of the formal areas recorded in the documents below:

- the terrier – a list of land belonging to the church
- the inventory – a list of all the items belonging to the church
- the log book – a detailed record of all the alterations, additions and repairs carried out in relation to the church, its land and its contents.

These have all been maintained to ensure the day to day functioning of the Church and are available as hard copies in the church. The church Deanery Inspection of these documents, registers, policies, certificates and various other papers relating to church life was made in September by the Assistant Area Dean and the Lay Chair. All was confirmed to be in good order with positive discussions on mission progress and growth in the community and consideration of recommendations to Church councils re annual records.

**Progress on the works for the Quinquennial Repairs approved in 2017 can be summarised as follows:**

The schedule of works, accompanying photographs and repairs specification were received from Adrian Ringrose, Architect from Stimpson Walton Bond Chartered Architects of Northampton in July and quotes for works requested. Tenders were received and all papers circulated with a summary letter from the architect for discussion by the Church Council. The works comprise mainly stone work and external window repairs and following a meeting with the builder with the lowest tender in October 2018 the contract has been agreed with a planned start date of mid-March 2019. The works will be funded from the Church Restoration Building Fund with further possible sums from grant applications and a proposed Gift Day. This will be a significant project in the maintenance of the Church Fabric and the first major project since the addition of cloakroom toilets in 2009. Special thanks to the ongoing support of all who contribute to the Church Building Fund.

**Much practical work has been accomplished during the year** by the able and talented team of maintenance stewards both in the church and churchyard. Brian Quentin has skilfully continued his role of co-ordinating the mowing team and equipment and has welcomed new volunteers and helpers to this vital task. The continuing support of neighbour David Monk in mowing the outer verge to the church ensures the approach is always welcoming and inviting.

**The general maintenance accomplished by the maintenance stewards and congregation team through the year includes:**

- Annual high level cleaning of windows and ledges
- Maintenance repairs to storage heaters
- Conduit repairs and tile maintenance
- Replacement gate positioned on north wall
- Volunteers maintaining the churchyard – clearing, weeding and path maintenance in conjunction with the thorough mowing programme undertaken by the dedicated team of mower volunteers
- The Churchyard working party has continued a programme of work to remove ivy at high level in yew trees, lower yew tree growth to lighten path area, ivy from church and churchyard walls and clearance of weeds from graves.
- Plans to clean the clock stage to the Tower will progress in the summer months.
- The gutters and gulleys are scheduled for annual cleaning

**Routine health and safety requirements** have been addressed through the year:

Lightning conductor inspection and test completed November 2018, Annual fire equipment check completed January 2019, Health and Safety Policy, Fire risk assessment and Safeguarding Policy reviewed.

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| <p><b>It is good to also report on the growing range of services and activities from the past year at All Saints Church namely:</b></p>   |   |   |
| <p>Regular weekly scheduled Sunday services - with Children's Church alternate weeks.<br/>                 Weekly midday prayers – Monday<br/>                 Monthly midweek communion 'Rest' first Wednesday<br/>                 Services for Harvest, Remembrance Sunday, Christmas services – afternoon Carol Service and Crib services<br/>                 Weddings – Church of England, Free Church and Roman Catholic with weekday rehearsals.<br/>                 Baptisms and Thanksgiving services, during services and afternoons, Roman Catholic baptisms<br/>                 Funerals, Memorial services and 'Thanksgiving Service for Departed loved ones'</p> | <p>Monthly coffee morning first Friday of the month<br/>                 Weekly bell ringing team practice<br/>                 Occasional visits by other bell ringing teams<br/>                 Dorcas group alternate weeks including Macmillan coffee morning 2018<br/>                 Children's Easter Eggs-perience<br/>                 Growing Go 4<sup>th</sup> projects with the community – village hall project, litter picking, service to care home, outreach in Oakgrove, Speakers on topics in support of local charities<br/>                 Community events Christmas and Summer fairs held in the village hall.</p> | <p>Visits from schools: Middleton Primary, Monkston Primary and Headstart Nursery.<br/>                 Oakgrove Secondary School Christmas Concert.<br/>                 World Vision Christmas Carol Service.<br/>                 Regular term time weekly hiring by 'Concrete Calves' for woodwind group and concert in summer.<br/>                 Welcoming visitors to church on the annual 'Ride &amp; Stride' day with Bucks Historic Churches Trust.<br/>                 Welcoming walking groups to our beautiful church.<br/>                 Hosting flower arranging workshops.</p> |

Over the year we have continued to welcome occasional visiting ministers to All Saints including Our Area Dean, the Director of Ecumenical Mission and the recently retired Hospice Chaplain. This has been especially helpful to Matt while Keith has been convalescing from surgery. We look forward to maintaining these links as Matt, Keith and members of the partnership lay team continue to reach out with the good news of the love of Christ to our rapidly growing parish.

***Patricia A Sawyer March 2019 (Churchwarden 2011 – 2019)***

**Treasurers' Report** – Attached separately.

**Administration & Communications**

In 2018, Ann Harris has continued to produce a wonderful fortnightly newsletter for All Saints. Continuing thanks to her, and to Brian Quentin for printing the newsletter each week and also for producing a monthly newsletter in the first quarter of 2019 – much appreciated!

The increasing use of Facebook to publicise our services and events to the local community is proving very valuable, especially for Go4th Sunday, which also has its own website and gmail address. Sandy Grey has done a fantastic job of developing this ministry – we even have a twitter feed now! Thanks too to Jane Lee for her work publicising Go4th events on local residents' Facebook pages.

We are also very grateful to Mark Mitro, thanks to whom we now have a new church website, which went live early in 2019. And finally, continuing thanks to Paul North for looking after our web hosting, and providing printing cover for the news-sheet.

***March 2019***

**Pastoral Care Report**

We have continued to offer pastoral and practical support to individuals and families when requested.

A Thanksgiving and Remembrance Service was held in church on a Sunday evening in May last year. People were invited to light candles and to put their loved ones' names in the Book of Remembrance during the service.

We sent Christmas card to bereaved individuals and to families assuring them of our thoughts and prayers at that difficult time of year.

The Dorcas group continues to meet fortnightly in each others' homes, providing support and friendship to each other. This year we have donated our knitted blankets and children's garments to MK-Act for their refuge. We are also collecting bags of toiletries for the helpers to give to the women when they arrive at the refuge.

The aim of pastoral care is to offer people emotional, spiritual and practical support at difficult and critical times in their lives.

*Sylvia Bennett & Gill Farrow, March 2019*

**Children's Church Report**

Children's Church is a precious time. A lovely bunch of children attend: usually 10-12 come along to hear a bible story and do a craft activity and some colouring in.

Sometimes it can be an issue getting helpers on a regular basis and it would be nice to have the occasional Sunday morning sitting in to hear the sermon, but hopefully that will be possible soon. The parents regularly tell me how good it is for them to sit in and hear the sermon without worrying about their children being heard or having to take them to the back of the church.

*Dawn Bromley, Families' Steward, March 2019*

**Coffee Morning Report**

Coffee morning is a real success, a lovely time for people to pop in, have a chat or catch up with friends, and have a walk around our beautiful building.

It is such a blessing to do this together with Cath Segers, a really special privilege which we both enjoy, bringing people together who don't always attend church on a Sunday. People come from other churches too, especially Church Without Walls.

*Dawn Bromley, Families' Steward, March 2019*

**Mission Report**

Ever since the Great Commission which Jesus gave to his first disciples, mission has been fundamental to the life of each and every church. In 'going' as Jesus commanded, we not only obey him and grow our own faith, we also serve the world with the good news of God's love. It takes many forms but however we do it, it is never optional! As someone once observed, the church is only ever one generation away from extinction.

Our commitment to mission here remains strong, though some aspects of it have been more challenging this year:

- Go4th Sunday continues to form an integral part of what we do here, and I am hugely grateful to the team which makes it happen month by month. However, numbers have waned somewhat in the last 6 months and projects have sometimes been difficult to source. Please do continue to support us in prayer and practical help – it has been a great blessing and has so much potential to do even more!
- Go4th has spawned a couple of exciting spin-offs this year – increased contact with Oakgrove Primary School and midweek walking groups coming in to use the church for a post-walk coffee. This complements the excellent work done by Dawn, Cath and all who support our monthly coffee morning (see above).
- Our fortnightly group for 9-14s – Rock Solid – has shrunk considerably in size, but still meets and is definitely quality over quantity! Do pray for our future – we are very keen to keep it going, not least because it reaches some young people who are not from a church background. The Youth Cell Group continues to meet in Walnut Tree and includes teenagers from All Saints. Both of these groups for young people are run across the Partnership and testify to the value of working together.

## ANNUAL CHURCH MEETING: Reports for 2018-19

- Church Without Walls, after a challenging first half of 2018, has recently seen an upturn in new attendees and the energy they bring. It is solidly established and well-rooted, and has become a foundational part of the life of our team. It continues to have a major presence working among families with special needs, and is recognised as a model of church planting in new-build estates. Now that Ruth's post has been confirmed till 2023, we are working towards establishing a sustainable model of ministry for the long-term.
- We remain hopeful that a second Pioneer Minister will join us in 2020 to engage in church planting in the new estates in Wavendon. After a difficult journey with this in 2019, I am hugely grateful for the support of our Area Dean Tim Norwood in resurrecting the bid and the vision! The massively-expanded St Mary's CofE school (growing from 100 currently eventually to 700 children) remains on target to open in September 2019.
- Our work among schools remains strong. Alongside the church visits and services, multiple Christmas and Easter Events, this year we again took 8 Harvest assemblies to over 2,000 children and also conduct a session with a cub/beaver group. We now have at least annual contact with 10 local schools, and great relationships with most of them. And that's leaving aside all the visits from Bridgebuilder! Do pray for the link with Oakgrove Primary to flourish alongside our existing good relations with Oakgrove Secondary, and Middleton and Monkston primaries.
- Community Carol singing was again a great success this year – now inked in as an annual event – & we welcomed a huge number of visitors to All Saints at Christmas – over 500 on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day combined!
- All Saints maintains a strong link with various local charities, including the Winter Night Shelter, MK Foodbank, Make Lunch and World Vision. This year we also formed a new link with MK-Act, which our Dorcas Group now actively supports. We remain committed to serving the wider mission of God in service and blessing to our community.
- We continue to conduct many baptisms and thanksgivings: 28 across the Partnership in 2018, including 14 at All Saints. We also conducted 7 weddings across the churches, including 5 here at All Saints, and I especially want to pass on my thanks to Keith, Gloria and Pat for their hard work in this important ministry.

Possible new developments this year include:

- Joint prayer event with Grand Union Vineyard in Monkston, to coincide with Thy Kingdom Come around Pentecost weekend
- Church involvement in plans for the old school and a community-led new Community Centre in Wavendon
- Exploratory church plant at Eagle Farm in Wavendon prior to Pioneer Minister arriving?
- Continuing to develop the work in Oakgrove – maybe to include the seeds of a new worshipping community there too?
- Welcome Packs and visits for new residents in Wavendon
- Messy Church in a local school?
- And who knows what else? As our text says: May we 'Awake, awake, and clothe ourselves with (God's) strength!'

**Matt, March 2019**

### Electoral Roll report

Church membership has decreased slightly from 63 in March 2018 to 59 in March 2019 – albeit a renewal of membership is currently being undertaken. Membership by church affiliation is as follows:

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| Anglican                                   | 34        |
| Methodist                                  | 4         |
| URC  | 4         |
| Baptist                                    | 1         |
| Roman Catholic                             | 7         |
| Other: Salv Army/Pentecostal/FIEC/Orthodox | 8         |
| <i>Non-Anglican</i>                        | <i>24</i> |
| Not stated                                 | 1         |
| <b>Total</b>                               | <b>59</b> |

We now calculate Electoral Roll Membership differently – counting all Anglicans, no URC/Baptists/Methodists (to avoid double counting) and ¼ of 'Others' – this means that Electoral Roll membership currently totals 38.

**Deanery Synod, Mission Partnership and Walton Churches Partnership report**

Our relationships with the churches in our team, and the wider community of churches in MK, continues to be very important to us – indeed it becomes ever more important. Some brief highlights of the last year:

*Walton Churches Partnership*

There is much to give thanks for around the Partnership. Church Without Walls continues to flourish in Broughton and there is a growing sense of connectedness with the rest of our Partnership. St Mary's has had a strong year and is on a similar journey to All Saints in terms of reaching out to the local community, albeit this has taken different (but equally exciting) forms. Christ the King has just appointed a new Baptist Minister who will be joining us in the summer – it has been a long vacancy, but the congregation has coped admirably.

Many significant initiatives continue to thrive through our determination to work together for the good of the Kingdom. Prayer remains an important focus, including Daily Prayer, Thy Kingdom Come, the Week Of Guided Prayer and a devotional booklet for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. We share significant events together, such as Ash Wednesday and also have fun together, with our very popular BBQ in July. Youth work is organised across the Partnership, with Rock Solid (for 9-14s) and the new youth group (for 13+).

The events surrounding Remembrance 2018 were a particular highlight this year, and the exhibition in particular will live long in the memory!

Organisationally, the revamped WCP Council continues to work well. My thanks also to Rachael Jenkins for her huge contribution as Safeguarding Officer, and to our Treasurer Julia Davie, who leaves for pastures new in June.

*Mission Partnership and wider MK Christian Community*

There remains much to praise God for, as we seek for our city to become 'A City Alive to God'. The termly Mission Partnership Assemblies continue to provide an inspiring environment for Christians to meet and seek God's heart for the city. The Winter Night Shelter has doubled its capacity, with local churches now offering two locations every night for a longer period. 'The Call' Prayer meeting continues termly and unites Christians in prayer across MK. The coMPass courses continue to challenge and bless us, and I want to give particular thanks to Carolyn Sanderson who has led this important ministry, and also to Rev. Keith who has recently led (for the second time) a coMPass course on the relationship between science and faith.

*MK Deanery*

The major preoccupation for the Deanery last year (and this) is the Diocese's stated commitment to investing in MK, a major initiative which is called 'Celebrate and Bless'. A summary of this is appended to the ACM documents. There are two major priorities – church planting (and the people required to do this) and a learning hub to stimulate discipleship and training. We are very much involved in both, with Ruth and Keith sharing their expertise. We are particularly excited that our Partnership may be among the first to trial some AI learning, thanks to Keith's input. We may also benefit in time to come from further investment in staff.... watch this space!

***Matt, March 2019***

**Appendix: The Stewards' Council**

Throughout 2018-19 the All Saints Church Council has continued to function through a committee of **Stewards** acting as representatives of the congregation with decision-making powers and responsibilities. The stewards have each take responsibility for an area of Church life and have met regularly through the year. These areas have included worship, pastoral growth, building maintenance and administration/communication. The stewards have, in turn, built teams with church members to encourage more people to be involved in the way we serve the community developing mutual and shared ministry.

We have previously used a Standing Committee which alternated with the bi-monthly Stewards' Council meetings, but this has not been needed this year, so we took the decision to reduce unnecessary meetings!

**Membership and Structure of the Church Stewards' Council**

As an ecumenical body, the Church Council operates as an effective amalgamation of both Free Church and Anglican governance. We have Churchwardens (an Anglican role), however the Council appoints Stewards annually (a Free Church method) electing stewards via the Annual Church Meeting. The Rector is ex officio Chair of the Council.

During the year the following served as members of the Church Council:

**Chair:** Matt Trendall (Rector)

**Church Warden:** Patricia Sawyer

**Treasurer:** Ian Corlett

**Secretary:** Marina Rupal

**Mission & Community Steward:** Paul North

**Prayer & Discipleship Steward:** *Unfilled*

**Worship Stewards:** Carolyn Sanderson, Gloria Terrelonge (Weddings)

**Special Events Steward:** Moira North

**Administration / Communication Steward:** *Unfilled*

**Buildings / Maintenance Stewards:** Wayne Webb, Paul Terrelonge

**Pastoral Growth Stewards:** Gill Farrow, Sylvia Bennett

**Families/Children and Young People Steward:** Dawn Bromley

The following roles were also appointed at the Annual Church Meeting in 2018, or subsequently during the year:

**Walton Churches Partnership Representatives:** Carolyn Sanderson, Ayokunnu Otunla

**Deanery Synod Representative:** Carolyn Sanderson (elected until 2020)

**Mission Partnership Assembly Representatives:** Ann Harris, Sandy Grey

**Safeguarding Officer:** Rachael Jenkins (for the whole WCP)

**Responsible Adult (previously Children's Advocate):** Sandra Mills