

ANNUAL REPORT
and
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS of
the
PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL of the ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH of
ST MARK'S HIGHCLIFFE DIOCESE OF WINCHESTER

For the Year ended 31st December 2019

Priest-in-charge: The Reverend Gill Nobes (until 23rd
September 2019)

Independent Examiner:

Sue Wintle MFAAT

Solicitors:

Aldridge Brownlee Solicitors LLP, Highcliffe

Bankers:

HSBC Bank plc, Christchurch

St. Mark's Church - Annual Report for 2019

Aim and purposes

St. Mark's Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent, (the Reverend Gillian Nobes until September 23rd), in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish, the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. The PCC is also specifically responsible for the maintenance of the Church, the two churchyards, St. Mark's Hall and Library. A Parish Office is situated within the complex.

Objectives and Activities

St Mark's Church is here to serve God, each other and the community. Our Christian faith is at the heart of our mission in Highcliffe. We are a friendly, varied and supportive group of people who meet to worship and minister together to share our love of God in our community.

The PCC is committed to enabling as many people as possible to worship at our church and to become part of our parish community at St Mark's Highcliffe. The PCC maintains an overview of worship throughout the parish and makes suggestions on how our services can involve the many groups that live within our parish. Our services and worship put faith into practice through prayer and scripture, music and sacrament.

When planning our activities for the year, we have considered the aims we set in our pMAP which has been updated this year and approved by the Diocese and Deanery in September. We try to enable ordinary people to live out their faith as part of our parish community through:

- Worship and prayer; learning about the Gospel; and developing their knowledge and trust in Jesus.
- Provision of pastoral care for people living in the parish.
- Missionary and outreach work.

To facilitate this work, it is important that we maintain the fabric of the Church of St Mark's and the Church Hall and Library.

Achievement and Performance

Worship and Outreach

The PCC is keen that we offer a range of services and events during the week and over the course of the year that our community find both beneficial and spiritually fulfilling.

During 2019 we celebrated

- The Parish Act of Remembrance was held during the 10am service leading to the Act of Remembrance at the Memorial at 11am, bringing the whole community together with an Ecumenical service involving both Highcliffe Schools, the Uniformed groups and members of the whole community many of whom stayed and enjoyed the refreshments provided. As in 2018 the Methodist church cancelled their service and joined with us.

- We repeated the Alpha format used in 2018 in the autumn 2019 and this was again well received.
- All the activities and services for Advent and Christmas were well received and numbers attending were good, especially as we are currently in Vacancy.
- This year we were able to offer two Lent courses both of which were well supported by our own congregation and some from other local churches.
- Building on Revd Gill's work developing Ecumenical links in Highcliffe, Ecumenical partners continue to meet regularly for lunch and discussions to bring us closer together. An ecumenical Palm Sunday Walk of Witness was repeated and was a great success. During the Week of Prayer for Christian unity pulpit swaps involved 4 churches: Burton and Holy Redeemer, Highcliffe Methodist and St Mark's. At St Mark's we welcomed Revd David Ellis from the Methodist Church and Revd Gill preached at the Methodist Church. Several Ecumenical activities took place during Highcliffe Food and Arts Festival including "Say one for Me" and Craft Activities.
- Both Thy Kingdom and Come Quiet mornings continue to be well received and attendance is growing, members of other churches have also attended.
- Individual Prayer Ministry at the 10am service continues to be well received.
- Our Taizé service continues to be well supported and attendance is growing.

Children and Families ministry:

Work in Highcliffe St Mark's Primary School continues to grow and develop, our teams are welcomed each week to lead

- Open the Book: Now reaching over 200 children each week with some team members invited by the Deputy Head to go into RE lessons to share their faith stories.
- Awesome After School Club: This continues to be supported.
- Church Club: This continues to be well supported.

Play and Praise in church and visits to local playgroups continues to go well, Breakfast @ 9 our informal weekly worship continues to grow in number with more adults who only attend this service. All Baptismal families are told of B@9 and we continue to pray some may attend this service.

As in our pMAP we have considered Messy Church but needs more thought and discussion when our Vacancy ends.

Little Fishes continues to be well supported and valued by the community. The team are thanked for this valuable outreach.

A series of A4 Posters have been drafted outlining various Church activities. These are displayed on notice boards including the one in the hall. Further posters will be drafted.

Church Foyer: has been tidied and further developments will take place following the completion of the heating project. It is already being used for meetings and a trolley has been purchased to allow for coffee etc to be served there.

- Our parish magazine "Parish News" editorial team continues to produce the magazine 10 times a year. The advertising revenue helps with running costs with any surplus monies going towards church funds. During the last year two new volunteers (Michael Williams and Sally Russell) came forward to take over as Editor and Marketing Manager respectively. We thank everyone else involved in all the other aspects of its production including printing, collation, subscription collection and distribution of the magazine. We thank also the previous Editor Anthony Nash and Advertising Manager Michael Clode for their past efforts in these roles.

- Ladies' Group membership has dropped a little this past year to 26. This has been due to illness and infirmity. However, there have been some new members joining the group. Attendance has remained constant with an average of 20 per meeting. Meetings are held on the first Thursday of each month (except August) at 7.30pm in the Church Library. It is always a friendly gathering, listening to interesting, varied talks and having other activities during the year. The Ladies' Group has been responsible for serving coffee after the 10.00am Service on the 3rd Sundays in March, June, September and December. Unfortunately there has been a problem in assisting with fund-raising activities organised by St Mark's due to our small membership and not being able to find a suitable activity since being unable to produce Welsh Cakes at the Rotary Club Fete due to the cooking appliance failing stringent Health and Safety regulations. The Leader wishes to express her appreciation for all the hard work and organisational skills demonstrated by the Committee throughout the year, and to members for regularly attending meetings. Tricia Sheppard (Leader)
- The Mothers Union Members continued to meet monthly and join in activities and events in the Christchurch Deanery and the Winchester Diocese. The traditional Lent Lunch was held with the proceeds going to AFIA, the Diocesan Family Holiday scheme. The major contribution to the life of St Mark's was in the support of the Baptisms. A small team of one or two members attended the baptism and presented the candidate with a book of prayers or a small Bible. Each child is sent an Anniversary of Baptism card up to the 5th year. It became apparent that the committee members could no longer serve due to family commitments, and one member began plans to move away and sadly and reluctantly it was decided to close the branch. Stella Roberts, Deanery Co-ordinator and Diocesan President Elect visited the branch in June and encouraged the members to continue their membership. On Tuesday 6th August a corporate communion and special service of closure of the branch was held. This was a sad occasion but a time to celebrate all the work which has been achieved over the years. There have been three separate periods of a Mothers' Union Branch in this parish over the years, beginning in 1926 with the current incarnation beginning in the mid-1950s.

Some members have taken up Diocesan Membership and a small fellowship group who meet for coffee occasionally has been formed. The baptisms and distribution of cards are still supported. Any member of the Mothers' Union is invited to attend meetings at a neighbouring branch or in the Deanery or Diocese.
- The Friends of St Mark's Church

The Friends have made a tremendous difference to the Church over the past year, with grants to pay for resurfacing of part of Church Avenue and a new path in the new Graveyard, both of which have been urgently needed for some time, but will now last for years. Over the past two years they have been raising money towards the new heating in Church. This has been helped greatly by a generous legacy from Margaret Lloyd but is still short of the total of £130,000 we need. They have therefore applied for several grants to help achieve the full amount. Thanks to all friends for their continued help. Ann Nash, Acting Chair.
- Flowers at St Marks.

We have a small, but dedicated team of ladies who look after the flowers at Church. We have been very lucky over the past year with several very welcome donations which help us to keep the Church looking beautiful. At the Annual festivals, Easter, Harvest, Remembrance and Christmas we try to fill the Church with flowers, which are appreciated by everyone. Thanks to all who have donated. Ann, Jill Mitchell, Susan Ivemy, and Maureen Green.

All are welcome to attend our regular services. As at 31st December 2019 there were 144 people on the Church Electoral Roll, 20 of whom were not resident in the parish.

The significant drop in numbers since last year's report resulted from the six-yearly total renewal of the roll which was carried out in March, when we were made aware that a number of people had died or moved away and others were worshipping elsewhere. Not all the renewal forms sent out were returned. During the period April to December two members sadly died and two people joined the roll. The average weekly attendance, counted during October, was 114, but this number increased at festivals.

As well as our regular services, we enable our community to celebrate and thank God at the milestones of the journey through life. Through baptism we thank God for the gift of life, in marriage public vows are exchanged with God's blessing and through funeral services friends and family express their grief and give thanks for the life which is now complete in this world and to commend the person into God's keeping. We have celebrated 14 baptisms and 2 weddings and held 32 funerals in our church this year.

Christchurch Deanery Synod

Three members of the PCC sit on the deanery synod. This provides the PCC with an important link between the parish and the wider structures of the church. There were 3 meetings of Synod during 2019. At the first meeting in February, the pMAP 2019 process was discussed and details given of the resources available in support. Parishes were urged to progress the review and updating of their pMAPs and share the outcomes even as work in progress. In her report, Gill Tybjerg said that the Deanery had contributed nearly £10,000 in 2018 to the activities in Kinkiizi and 4 Deanery members had recently paid a successful visit to the Diocese. The Deanery treasurer informed the meeting that the target CMF contribution for 2019 had increased by some £130,000. Since the Deanery had failed to meet the previous year's target, he encouraged members to discuss this year's targets with PCCs early and flag up any issues.

The main topic at the second meeting of Synod in May was a presentation by Dave Pegg who is a Schools Work Leader with PACE (Programme for Applied Christian Education). PACE is a small charity established in 1994 which partners with local churches in Poole, Bournemouth and Christchurch to provide learning opportunities in schools. PACE's aim is to visit every school, meet every student in 6 assemblies a year, and give talks with a leader and teams which they would build from the churches around. A specific initiative planned for six weeks in November/December is to park a 'Jesus Lives' lorry in a number of primary school playgrounds. The Synod meeting also heard an update on Kinkiizi which included details of 'Kinkiizi Sunday' on 2nd June and the visit to the Diocese planned for May 2020 to coincide with their Silver Jubilee celebrations.

The final 2019 Synod meeting took place in September. Two items of urgent Deanery specific business were dealt with:

- (i) agreeing a motion to go to Diocesan Synod urging the Diocese to organize a Diocesan-wide Stewardship campaign. The aim would be to encourage and enthuse generous giving across the Diocese,
- (ii) agreeing to set up a charity to enable the Kinkiizi Action Group to claim Gift Aid on personal donations.

It was also reported that the Revds Eric and James from Kinkiizi had a successful visit in June. They were mainly here on behalf of the water and sanitation charity, WATSAN, to go on a sponsored walk in the Brecon Beacons. This raised around £17,000 enabling completion of the projects in the schools around Kihihhi.

The new Bishop of Southampton, Debbie Sellin, spoke to Synod about her personal journey of faith. She also advised the meeting that the New Milton Church Plant would no longer be eligible for funding and extra support from the Diocese would now be sought. The closing session of the meeting focused on supporting dMAP priorities, particularly the use of print and digital tools to communicate well.

Pastoral Support

Some members of our parish are unable to attend church due to sickness or age. Revd Gill has when possible visited church members who have requested it, to celebrate communion with them either at their homes or in hospital.

- Bereavement Support: Introduction cards have been designed giving the details of the support we offer. The cards have been given to all the priests who perform funerals in our Church to hand to the bereaved and are also available at the back of Church. A lot of bereaved families do not live locally but we are currently offering support in two instances.
- Home Visits: Unfortunately, the group offering this support is shrinking in number now but the requests for home visits have not increased of late. We are currently expanding a telephone call system for those who want to hear a friendly voice.
- Home Communion: This is a small group of people who visit 2 people in their homes and 10 in Silverways on a monthly basis. This outreach is greatly appreciated, and the Home Communion team feel very privileged to support our church family by undertaking this task.
- Welcome teams at services: Role descriptions for Sides persons at all services are currently being produced to ensure that the welcome teams at all services carry out their duties in the same way. It is important for us to identify new people as well as receiving existing members of the congregation with a smile.
- Welcome Packs: These have all been recently updated and are available at the back of Church to be given to new residents, either in their home or at services.
- Dementia Support: We monitor this group with care, the group meets in the Library at St Marks it is flourishing and is much appreciated. There was a well supported fund-raising coffee morning.

Charitable Support

The Group meets twice a year and more often when necessary. It functions to make recommendations to the PCC and its members, with great help from many church members, and to run the appeals for the charities mentioned.

The following are charities, that with PCC approval, through the Charitable Support Group continue to be supported by St Mark's Church. Poole Maternity/Neonatal Unit, Bournemouth Women's Refuge, Mary's Men, Christian Aid, Kinkiizi Projects, Christmas Boxes, Christchurch Foodbank, Toilet Twinning, USPG, Children's Society. The list is not exclusive but at present the Group itself is not increasing the number for which it organises support. However, if with PCC approval and organisation by a willing leader, there is interest in other charities, the Group would assist with advice and the project's coordination in addition to existing Church charities.

It should be noted that a debate exists about the extent to which a church should identify a few charities it formally supports or whether this is a private, personal matter, the church solely raising funds in order to continue to support the fabric and its organisation.

Once again St Marks Church has been very generous to several charities.

Kinkiizi. The 2019 Lent Appeal raised £1400 which went towards funding a second Sonographer in Kinkiizi. The training has been completed.

Christine Clode reported on the Poole Maternity and Neonatal Unit, The Eve Project, Bournemouth Women's Refuge, MU Projects.

The Workbox group:

In the Summer our gifts were delivered to the Neonatal Unit at Poole hospital in the order of 55 crib blankets, 132 hats (which included 86 red ones) 24 canula sleeves, some tiny christening gowns for the stillborn babes and a good supply of cardigans. The unit was once again overwhelmed by the quantity of gifts given. Two members attended a thank you Tea Party in December and received feedback and information on gifts that are currently required by the unit, which include some sewn items

Our contributions for the Women's Refuge were collected from church and once again, with much appreciation. Also, we were able to present them with 5 x £10 Tesco gift cards which are given to the families.

We also sent 5 x £10 Tesco gift cards to be used as gifts for the families who attend the Away From it All Holiday run by the Winchester Diocese Mothers' Union.

Workbox group supplied a vast number of knitted hats, gloves, scarves together with the parish collection of more clothing items and toiletries for Mary's Men. These were gratefully received at the MU Deanery Advent Service in December.

Gifts of food and toiletries were collected at the Harvest Festival and delivered direct to the Refuge in Charminster, but it was indicated that the only gifts they now require would be in the form of Toiletries and Cleaning Packs for the flatlets.

Eve Project:

Gill Tybjerg surprised us with a visit to Kinkiizi in early February and we were able to work quickly and produce 26 Kits. Since then we have been continuing to meet and build up a stock of 40Kits for the girls and 10 Post Partem Kits for the Health Clinic. These will be distributed in May 2020. The visitors from Kinkiizi who came to the parish in June were shown the components of the Kits, Revd Moses taking particular interest.

Members from both groups overlap and we always enjoy our meetings together, experiencing fun and fellowship together and I am extremely grateful to them for all their hard work and enthusiasm.

Christian Aid:

A report was received from Mike Goodman, regarding the several projects last year to raise funds for Christian Aid. Several issues around the difficulties of door to door collections are commonly understood. The "Eco veg Quiz" was well received and may be repeated. The "Coffee Morning" organised by Mike and Susie was also very successful. Overall £1400 was raised.

Christchurch Foodbank:

St Marks Church continued to donate regularly throughout the year. Foodbank Plus provides other items for the home but methods of donating larger items has not been clarified.

Christmas Collections:

raised £140.66 for each of the three causes recommended, USPG, the Children's Society and Toilet Twinning thereby twinning two of the church's toilets with an additional donation. The New Year Toiletries Sale raised £33.50 which was added to the Toilet Twinning donation together this almost provided enough to twin a third toilet.

Christmas Boxes 2019: As last year we joined the Highcliffe Rotary initiative

Church Fabric

Church:

- The Faculty has been granted for new heating project, with start date to be decided after Public Consultation and tenders going out.
- Prayers and Notice Bards are now looked after by Maureen, who keeps all displays up to date.
- Cushions on all chairs have been made for us by Sandra Channon.
- All gutters and downpipes have been cleared and will need to be done every year.
- Asphalt roofs have been checked.
- Outside wall of South Transept has been repaired, as well as the foot of the War memorial.
- Damp on the North wall of the Transept is being investigated.
- Ashes Memorial Stones have all been lifted and levelled. Additional limited space has been identified for more ashes to be buried in this area.
- Tree work, there has been quite a bit of work done on old conifers in both graveyards, with permission to work on the big Holm Oak by the West Doors.
- Half of Church Avenue has been resurfaced, funded by a donation and the Friends. The other half will be completed as soon as the weather improves!

Hall and Kitchen:

- A domestic dishwasher has been installed as a temporary measure.
- A new fire door has been fitted by the disabled toilet.
- A time clock has been fitted to the heating system in the Hall.

Graveyards:

- New path has been laid in the new Graveyard but was taking ages to dry. This has been funded by the Friends.
- Maintenance of these are undertaken by Tony Renyard (Church) and the Community group, with Tony Parkinson keeping an eye on everything.
- Land Swap in New Graveyard is still ongoing.

Financial Review

We have maintained our level of giving this year, also with some large donations, on which we have been able to claim Gift Aid. Excluding legacies and grants, we received £k91 compared with £k85 in the previous year.

Profit from Parish Hall letting has increased; we did not have the capital investment of the previous year, and we have moved to an increased hourly letting rate rather than a session rate.

Although it is unpredictable, our fees income has also increased. However, in future years fees for cremation services will only go to the Diocese not the Parish.

Prior to the local government re-organisation and transfer to the BCP council, we purchased a strip of land on the edge of the new graveyard. The cost of this and related legal fees was £k6.

Within the old churchyard, work has been done to level the cremation tablets and trim trees. As well as on-going maintenance of the church – clearing gutters, mending a glass door – new microphones have been bought in memory of a former parishioner.

We again paid for our Common Mission Fund request from the Diocese in full. While we have agreed a temporarily reduced rate for the next few years, the amount due will continue to rise.

Excluding the book gain on our endowment investment valuations, the accounts show a reduction in funds of £k18. This highlights the importance of generous legacies and giving to maintain our solvency.

Looking ahead to 2020, we are embarking on the major expense of a new heating system which is likely to cost in excess of £k130. While we will be supported by the Friends of St Marks, we are urgently looking for further grant funding for this capital expenditure.

Thank you

We have been grateful for the ministry we received from Revd Gill and were very sorry when she left us in September and wish her well in her new role in Guernsey. The PCC would like to particularly thank the retired Clergy who give so much support to us, when Revd Gill was required to fulfil her duties as Assistant Area Dean and especially since September during our Vacancy. We are grateful to the Reverend Angela Gosden, Reverend Cannon Helen Griffiss, Reverend Cannon Terry Pinner, Reverend Cannon Roy Matthews, Reverend Darrol Reagon, for everything they do for us. We would particularly like to thank our LLMs John and Colin and Maureen our LLW for all that they do both leading services and ensuring the smooth running of our services. We would also like to thank Ruth Crossland LLM who is both supporting B@9 and leading worship in school during our vacancy.

We would like to thank all the volunteers who work so hard to make our church the friendly, family community it is. We want to thank those who lead worship, the choir for the music that adds so much to our worship and the musicians for both their playing and direction of the choir. We also thank our dedicated team of flower arrangers and our brass cleaner who ensure our church looks beautiful for all services. A big thank you to all those who work tirelessly and quietly to support the work and smooth running of our church this includes our sacristans, chalice assistants, sides people, lesson readers, refreshments teams and church openers and lockers.

Structure, governance and management

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. At St. Mark's the membership of the PCC consists of the incumbent (our Vicar), churchwardens, the Licensed Lay Ministers, Licensed Lay Worker and members elected by those members of the congregation who are on the electoral roll of the church. All those who attend our services and members of the congregation are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and stand for election to the PCC.

The PCC members are responsible for making decisions on all matters of general concern and importance to the parish including deciding on how the funds of the PCC are to be spent. The full PCC met five times during the year with an average level of attendance of 80%. The PCC operates

through the *Standing Committee*: This is the only committee required by law. It has power to transact the business of the PCC between its meetings, subject to any directions given by the Council. It consists of the Vicar, the Churchwardens and Treasurer.

Administrative information

St. Marks's Church is situated in Hinton Wood Avenue, Highcliffe. It is part of the Diocese of Winchester within the Church of England.

Our **Parish Administrator**, Lorna Prout, is usually in the office on Thursdays, but monitors emails and telephone messages from home at other times. Much of her work is linked to arrangements for baptisms, weddings and funerals. Lorna also manages bookings for the Hall and Library. All correspondence should be posted to:

The Parish Administrator, St. Mark's Church, Hinton Wood Avenue, Highcliffe, Christchurch, BH23 5AA.

Or by email to: parishoffice@stmarkshighcliffe.org.uk

The Parochial Church Council is a corporate body established by the Church of England. The PCC operates under the Parochial Church Council Powers Measure.

Registration as a Charity. The PCC is registered with the Charity Commission.

Membership of the PCC: Members of the PCC are either ex-officio or elected by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) in accordance with the Church Representation Rules.

During the year the following served as members of the PCC

Priest in Charge	The Reverend Gill Nobes (until September 23 rd , 2019)	Chairman
Licensed Lay Ministers	Mr John Heighes Mr Colin Chatten	
Licensed Lay Worker	Miss Maureen Stringer	
Churchwardens (elected annually)	Mrs Susan Lyonette Mrs Ann Nash	Vice-Chairman Deanery Synod Safeguarding Officer
Representatives of the Deanery Synod		
(elected every 3 years for a 3-year period)	Mr Michael Goodman Mr Anthony Parkinson (until August 2019)	
Elected Members	Mr Francis Bray	Treasurer
(elected every 3 years)	Mr David Cannings	Health and Safety Officer
	Mrs Annette Cheeseman	Secretary
	Mrs Diana Faunce	
	Dr Bob Gilbertson	

	Mrs Susan Goodman	
	Mrs Mary Matthews (until April 2019)	
	Mrs Elizabeth Morton	
	Mr Paul Oastler	
	Mrs Jaqueline Peterson	
	Mr Mark Hadfield (from April 2019)	Legacy Officer
	Mr Michael Williamson (from April 2019)	Data Protection Officer
	Miss Sandra Channon (from April 2019)	

Trustees' Duties: The Trustees have complied with the duty imposed by section 4 of the Charities Act 2006 to have due regard to the guidance published by the Charity Commission in respect of public benefit.

Approved by the Parochial Church Council on 12th March 2020 and signed on its behalf by

Susan Margaret Lyonette

Ann Nash

Churchwardens