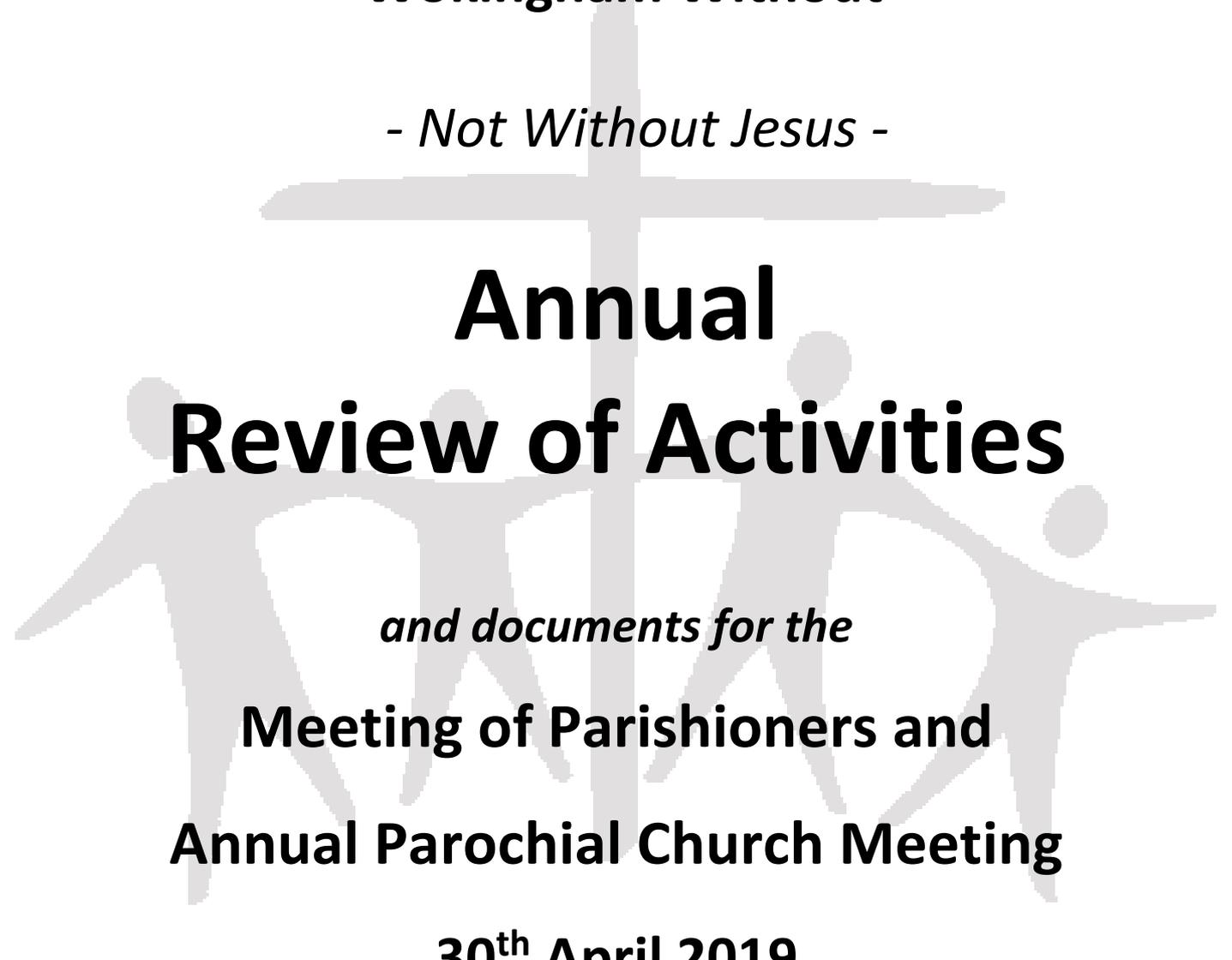

**St Sebastian's Church
Nine Mile Ride
Wokingham Without**

- Not Without Jesus -



**Annual
Review of Activities**

and documents for the
**Meeting of Parishioners and
Annual Parochial Church Meeting**

30th April 2019

*This document should be read together with the
separate Annual Report*

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INTRODUCTION TO THIS ANNUAL REVIEW OF ACTIVITIES

Our 2020 Vision: *'To glorify God and to serve the local community, sharing the heart of Jesus'*

Welcome to this Annual Review of Activities of St Sebastian's Church in 2018-19. St Sebastian's has always been an extremely active church and even those on the Parochial Church Council are sometimes amazed at how much we have going on!

If you want a simple overview of our activities, you should read our Annual Report for 2018. As last year, this is a separate document, in which you can find the Financial Statements and Accounts as well as an overview of our activities for the year. It is in line with the requirements of The Charity Commission and gives you all the information we need to provide by law.

But there is so much more to say and so we have produced this Annual Review of Activities, giving you much more detail about the various areas of the life of the church. I hope you will enjoy reading it, or at least dipping into the parts that interest you! My thanks to everyone who has had a part in putting it together and indeed to all the staff and volunteers who make possible the activities described here and who serve Jesus so faithfully in both the church and wider community.

With all good wishes and my prayers,

Rev Canon Andrew Marsden

Vicar

April 2019

AGENDAS

ST SEBASTIAN'S CHURCH

MEETING OF PARISHIONERS

Tuesday 30th April 2019

AGENDA

1. Opening Worship
2. Appointment of clerk to take minutes
3. Apologies
4. Minutes of Meeting of 25th April 2018
5. Matters Arising
6. Election of Churchwardens

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

Tuesday 30th April 2019

AGENDA

1. Appointment of clerk to take minutes
2. Apologies
3. Minutes of Meeting of 25th April 2018
4. Matters arising
5. Report on Changes to the Electoral Roll
6. Election of 2 members to the Deanery Synod
7. Election of 4 members to the Parochial Church Council
8. Election of Sidesmen
9. Presentation of the Annual Report for the year ended 31st December 2018
 - a. Financial Report and Accounts
 - b. Review of Activities
10. A.O.B.
11. Looking ahead – Rev Canon Andrew Marsden

MINUTES

St Sebastian's Church Meeting of Parishioners Minutes of a Meeting held at 8:00pm on Wednesday 26th April 2017

PRESENT: Rev. Canon Andrew Marsden + a well-attended church of 38 Parishioners.

APOLOGIES: Jane Tudor	Rachel Jeremiah	Mike Jeremiah
Celia Waters	Judith Boulton	Jill Gardener
Mary Unwin	Brian Hart	Barbra Rossell
Arthur Rossell	Christina Gorham	

1.00 OPENING WORSHIP

Andrew Marsden opened the meeting with a short session of prayer and worship

2.00 APPOINTMENT OF CLERK TO TAKE THE MINUTES

Rod Sturdy was appointed as clerk for the meeting.

3.00 APOLOGIES

Apologies were accepted as above

4.00 ACCEPTING OF MINUTES of 26th April 2017

The minutes of the meeting held on 26th April 2017 were agreed as a true and accurate record of events and they were duly approved and signed by Andrew Marsden.

5.00 MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

6.00 ELECTION OF CHURCHWARDENS

The two Churchwarden posts are elected each year and nominations had been received in advance of the meeting from Mike Page and Rory O'Connor. There were no other nominations, so Mike and Rory were duly elected. Andrew Marsden thanked Mike Page and David Boulton for their service in the role during the previous year.

Further, Andrew thanked David Boulton for his three and a half years of wisdom and contribution to the PCC from which David this year is standing down. A small gift of thanks was given to David.

The meeting closed at approximately 8:16pm

Signed: Date:
(Chairman)

**St Sebastian's Church
Annual Parochial Church Meeting
Minutes of a Meeting held
at 8:00pm on Wednesday 25th April 2018**

PRESENT: Rev. Canon Andrew Marsden + a well-attended church of 38 Parishioners.

APOLOGIES:	Jane Tudor	Rachel Jeremiah	Mike Jeremiah
	Celia Waters	Judith Boulton	Jill Gardener
	Mary Unwin	Brian Hart	Barbra Rossell
	Arthur Rossell	Christina Gorham	

1.00 APPOINTMENT OF CLERK TO TAKE THE MINUTES

1.01 Rod Sturdy was appointed as clerk for the meeting.

2.00 APOLOGIES

2.01 Apologies were accepted as above.

3.00 ACCEPTING OF MINUTES of APCM held on 26th April 2017

3.01 The minutes of the APCM held on 26th April 2017 were agreed as a true and accurate record of events and they were duly approved and signed by Andrew Marsden.

4.00 MATTERS ARISING

4.01 There were no matters arising.

5.00 CHURCH ATTENDANCE & ELECTORAL ROLL

5.01 The Electoral Roll for this year consists of 236 Parishioners. This is up two from last year (five names were removed and seven added).

The average Sunday attendance (at all services), measured during October 2017 was 124 compared to 134 during the same period in 2016.

6.00 ELECTION OF THREE MEMBERS TO THE DEANERY SYNOD

6.01 Nigel Wickens has stood down as he has returned to his previous church. St Sebastian's now has three vacancies for the Deanery Synod. No nominations had been received prior to the meeting; however, during the meeting, John Congram was nominated by Richard Tudor and seconded by Janet Rogers. Andrew Marsden declared that John was elected. Two vacancies remain.

7.00 ELECTION OF MEMBERS TO THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

7.01 There is a total of three vacancies available on the PCC. This year Mary Unwin, Terry Dungate, and Andy Gorham have come to the end of their tenure. However, nominations were received for Sue Thomas, Andy Gorham and Terry Dungate. Further nominations were invited from the floor, but none were received, so Sue, Andy, and Terry were duly elected un-opposed.

8.00 ELECTION OF SIDESMEN

8.01 Andrew Marsden thanked all members of the Welcome Team for their service during the past year. A list of all volunteers is published in this year's Annual Report. It was agreed that those named in the report were re-elected as sidesmen.

9.00 FINANCIAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS For year ended 31st December 2017

Janet Rogers provided the assembled parishioners with an explanation of St Sebastian's financial accounts for the year ending 31st December 2017. Janet explained that finance should follow priorities; finances need to support the priorities of the Church and this is what has under-pinned both the 2017 and the forthcoming 2018 budgets. Highlights of the report included:

- A big thank you to the finance team; the finance team were introduced and thanked.
- A big thank you to the regular givers, making up the vast majority of St Sebastian's income. Three quarters of contributions are from regular monthly giving, which really helps effective decision-making by the PCC.
- An explanation of The Parish Share; how much it costs and the broader value to the Church.
- Mission and Charitable giving; St Sebastian's should be proud of the major grants that it has been able to award to a wide variety of causes.
- Exceptional expenditure; costs that aren't expected to be budgeted for. Examples this year include closing of the school prize fund, and costs associated with repairing the faulty Church flat roof.
- Explanation of Creditors and Debtors this financial year which are broadly equivalent.
- Explanation of 'Reserves' as represented in the accounts. The goal is to operate with sufficient funds readily accessible to serve the needs of the Church for approximately two months. Currently, St Sebastian's is operating with around seven and a half weeks of reserves.

10.00 PRESENTATION OF THE CHURCH ANNUAL REPORT

10.01 Andrew Marsden presented the detail of the Annual Report to the assembled parishioners. Andrew also described the highlights of church events that had been identified at each of the bi-monthly 2017/18 PCC meetings. The points which the PCC had noted included:

May 2017

- Angela Platt's contribution to the Jubilee Club
- The evangelism activities as reported by Ian Seymour
- Suz Powell's report and testimonies to the Children and Youth activities
- The recent healing service
- Filling almost all the posts at the APCM

July 2017

- The conduct of the Youth and their contribution to the Family and Youth Pastor selection day
- Suz Powell! We have been truly blessed by her presence and contribution to the Church
- A generous donation towards the worship services
- The continued dedication of the Pastoral Life team

September 2017

- Those who helped in the Parish Centre office during Judith Boulton's absence
- Soul Survivor
- Suz Powell's farewell lunch
- Alpha Course, with large numbers

-
- Morgan Rec summer activities – largest numbers so far.
 - The new head of St Sebastian's Primary School has had a very good start

November 2017

- John Cooper's time and effort regarding Church grounds maintenance
- The PCC meeting – sensing the direction of the Holy Spirit
- The Alpha Holy Spirit Day and the recent Alpha Course
- The appointment of Marvin and Amy Vogel to the role of Family and Youth Pastor

January 2018

- Strategy Sunday (14th January)
- Christmas services and events
- Crib service Puppet show, organised by Marvin and the young people
- New Year's Eve Ceilidh

March 2017

- Easter Messy Church was huge – 133 attendees of whom 79 were children
- 'On the Way' Lent Course
- Mothering Sunday all age service
- The new sound system is great

Andrew then continued by providing a broad explanation of the four key aspects of the PCC strategy and some of the progress which has been achieved in the first few months since the strategy was formed.

1 People of God

- Successful completion of The Lent Course
- Introduction of new home groups
- The sermon series on 'Generous Lifestyle'

2 Services and Worship

- We have taken the step of faith to implement the new sound system in the Church

3 Church Site and Buildings

- The site topographical survey has been arranged.
- Next month (May) there is a meeting with the Diocese to discuss viable options for improvement to the main Church building

4 The Wider Community

- The first round of 'cake visiting' of new communities within our parish has taken place on the Oakham Park development

Andrew gave thanks to God for all the great progress that is being achieved in these aspects of the Church strategy.

The Annual Report and Financial Accounts were approved by the assembled parishioners and duly signed by Andrew.

A.O.B.

11.01 No A.O.B.

12.00 LOOKING AHEAD – Rev Andrew Marsden

12.01 Andrew closed with a spiritual view, looking to the future.

Beginning with a reminder of St Sebastian’s 2020 vision: *To glorify God and to Serve the Local Community Sharing the Heart of Jesus*. Andrew continued by citing and discussing elements of both the Old Testament and New Testament, in particular drawing inspiration from ‘We as a Church have a priestly role’ and how this may be interpreted and implemented by us all in our daily lives.

We have the authority to bless the community around us and we should do this through our prayers. Andrew, expressed his belief that the fruit of those prayers is extremely powerful and we mustn’t underestimate that power, and that we should exercise these blessings.

The meeting was closed with final prayer, worship through song and a final blessing.

The meeting closed at approximately 9:15pm

Signed: Date:

(Chairman)

CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILY MINISTRY

Amy Vogel – Annual Report March 2019

I am writing this report as the Family and Youth Pastor but have taken into account the thoughts and opinions of Rachel Jeremiah (Children and Family Worker) and Marvin Vogel (Pioneer Youth Worker) in this document. This year has been one of great change for the children, youth and family ministry. We praise God for the way in which he has given us the opportunity to move the people we know through various outreaches into a place where they can experience Church. While this year has been a time of laying things down, it has also seen growth in new ministries. All three of us are very grateful for the support of all the volunteers and believe the changes that have taken place have allowed the volunteers to shine in their specific gifts. Thank you to the PCC and Church leadership for being willing to take the risk on the vision of The Base.

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

Rachel Jeremiah returned from her maternity leave at the end of May 2018. On her return, we had many discussions about the way we felt God was leading us as a new team in the children and families work of the church. Rachel has noticed that her role has somewhat changed from before, mostly down to it being a new team of people and the introduction of a new role in the Pioneer Youth Worker. We all find it very beneficial to meet all together with Andrew on a Monday morning. Amy and Marv also meet regularly with Rachel and Mike. We now have clear channels of communication and see the benefit in praying and sharing together regularly.

Space Trekkers – At the end of 2018, Space Trekkers was brought to a close, in order for the new vision of The Base to take place. While Space Trekkers had supported many children on their journey of faith we now felt it was time to move into a new season away from what might be seen as the typical 'Sunday School' method. We are so grateful for all the volunteers who have given their time and energy to Space Trekkers over the years - and we are even more grateful that they have all decided to stick with in this new chapter and be volunteers at The Base. A group of six children who would have attended Space Trekkers for many years are now doing the Communion Course, which is proving to be a great space for the older children to explore their questions.

The Space Place – As with Space Trekkers, Space Place also came to an end at the end of 2018. However, we saw the Space Place as being the most fruitful area of the children's work on a Sunday morning. Initially it was the idea that the Space Place should take place every Sunday. This idea then evolved into the vision for The Base.

The Prayer Space – As above the Prayer Space has been laid down. Prayer is now an integral part of The Base.

Little Angels – Meeting once a fortnight, 'Little Angels' welcomes parents and children of all backgrounds into the Parish Centre for songs, crafts and Bible stories, as well as support, encouragement... and cake! This group is a really strong outreach to our local community. We have made a partnership with a charity called Fare Share. This charity looks to combat food waste and bless the local community. We are also really grateful for the people who provide cakes and eats, allowing this outreach to run on very low costs. The group has now moved into the Church Hall. This year we have seen an increase in numbers and now have Dads and Grandparents joining us too. We also have new team members, some of which are parents of children that are now at school, but they could not bear to leave the group. There is a slot in the programme for singing and a story. Over the last two terms we have been looking at the 'I am's' of Jesus. It has been wonderful to welcome some of our Little Angels families to The Base on a Sunday morning.

Lighthouse Breakfast Club - Since September there has been a small group of us running a drop in Breakfast Club on a Tuesday morning 9:00-10:30am. This initiative was in response to the closure of St Sebastian's Pre-School and the fact that some families have not gone anywhere else. The group that comes is fairly small but we find this works in terms of being able to have great conversations.

Holiday Bible Club – The Holiday Club ran in the first week of the Summer Holidays. It had a Safari theme and each day we looked at one of the Big Five and used it to think about the character of God. There were four groups and in total

forty children attended. We would also like to say a big thank you to all the volunteers who worked tirelessly over the four days to make it such a special time. The Celebration and BBQ was a great success at the end of the week seeing most of the holiday club families attend and many of the church congregation too.

Light the Night- This year as an alternative to Halloween we ran a light party event in the School Hall. We worked jointly with people from the Baptist Church in Crowthorne. It was an evening event with games, BBQ, UV disco, UV face painting and a camp fire talk at the end. There were lots of families from many different links and the youth came in force to help with face painting too.

1st St Sebastian's Beavers & Scout groups– Marv has been visiting the Beavers and leading sessions for them. They enjoyed being involved in the Mothering Sunday Service again this year. We have also been meeting with the new Group Scout Leader to see how we can support one another in the work we do.

YOUTH

As with the children's ministry there have been lots of changes to the youth work of the church this year. In all the areas of the youth work we are excited to see new faces as young people have caught the vision and are inviting friends. We saw a couple of young people move on at the end of summer to University and new adventures. We also wish to celebrate the fact two of our young people were confirmed in the summer. In this last year we have felt God has led us to create platforms for the young people to rise up in leadership, which they have thrived in.

Big Breakfast – This ministry came to a close in the summer and has been reinvented as the third Sunday of The Base.

Lasers – Lasers also has been laid down on a Sunday morning, yet we now have the Youth Breakout group two weeks of the month. Thank you to the volunteers for taking this on. In the breakout group the Youth go deeper into the Bible passage we are looking at in the main Base service.

Youth Bible Study – After praying with the other Leaders we felt it was time to lay down this group. It was getting smaller each week and we felt God was wanting to do new things.

Glow Café- This group started in September. It runs on a Friday evening from 6:30-8:30pm in the Church Hall. In that time we eat together, play wide and café games, do youth band and do a Bible study. It has been great to see new faces come along and there have been some of the younger youth joining too. It has been wonderful having the use of the Church Hall making set up so much easier. Marv and I take the lead with this group. We have a couple of volunteers who can help sporadically but we are looking for others.

Mentoring- We are in the early stages of starting a mentoring program with young people who wish to take up this opportunity. It is a great way to have quality time with the young people and really get to know about and support them in their faith journeys.

Youth Event- Marv ran a youth event for year 6s and 7s at the end of the summer term. It was a great opportunity to have fun together and for the year 7s to share with the year 6s about starting secondary school. We have seen a few of these young people pitch up at Sunday Night Live and Glow.

Sunday Night Live- This group was running once a month on a Sunday evening 7:00-8:30pm. It had an event feel about it, with young people leading the various different aspects. There was big Bible topic, talks, games, den building, water fights, worship, doughnuts (homemade) and milkshakes. There are twenty-five young people connected with this group, some of whom are from other churches, making it a really uniting place. Currently the group is on hold as we see how it fits into the new pattern of ministry.

Soul Survivor – In the summer fourteen of us plus Pearl and Mattie went to Week B of Soul Survivor. It was a brilliant week and a chance for the young people to grow closer to God and each other. It was a great opportunity for the young

people to get to know us and, after this event, we found the young people were more able to share their vision for the youth ministry of the church. A big thank you to Peter, Rob and Joe for supporting us in leading the trip. We already have twelve signed up for the final ever Soul Survivor this year.

Youth Socials – We have had various youth socials over the last year from campfires to movie nights and Laserquest outings to meals together. It has been a great way to invite other young people who don't always come to the groups.

Youth-led Service – This has been something we feel has become part of the natural rhythm of the youth work over the last year. After Soul Survivor the Youth led an entire service by themselves and this has now led to them leading one of The Base services each month. We are hoping to start an evening youth service in the near future.

United Youth Work- Marv is involved with the joint youth workers' meetings in Wokingham. Last year he took our young people to a joint youth service at FBC. He meets monthly with the youth workers and sometimes Soulscape to pray and share ideas for the future.

SCHOOLS

Parish Schools – We have the privilege of regularly visiting each of the four schools in our parish: St. Sebastian's, Hatch Ride, Oaklands Infants and Oaklands Juniors. Between us, Andrew and I visit each school once a month to take an assembly. It is wonderful to be able to share the gospel with the children and staff. Many of the children have come to Messy Church as a result of us inviting them in assemblies. We also have opportunities to have coffee with the staff and build relationships in the staff room. We had a slight problem this year in that one of the children wanted to believe in Jesus after an assembly, but their parents weren't too happy- from our point of view it's a good problem to have!

St. Sebastian's School- It's a delight to have the whole school visit the church each month for a service. Since September I have been running a worship club in the school once a month. The worship club has two children from each year group, who change each half term. The worship club is involved in the monthly service, doing the prayers, bible reading and help with the talk. It has been wonderful to see the children's heart for prayer and ability to come up front and pray from the heart.

Holme-Grange School – Marv continues to go into Holme Grange. He now goes twice a week and helps run the CU for both the Juniors and Seniors. The Junior CU now sees forty children some weeks. He also does occasional assemblies for the school.

Pre-School – Many of you will be aware that St Sebastian's Pre-School had to close down at the end of the summer term in 2018. It was a difficult time for the community. I helped support the committee through the difficult decisions that had to be made and am happy to see that plans for the future are looking good with the school now opening a nursery. From the church's point of view it was good for me to be involved in helping support staff and the families of the Pre-School during this time.

FAMILIES

More and more over the last few months we have seen God move in the families' work of the church. It has been a privilege to watch The Base come to fruition and see God work through and in families of the church along with new families. Our main concern was that in starting The Base the two services might feel really separate, but it feels so united through prayer and by regularly seeing each other in the all-age communion service and people coming in for refreshments at The Base.

The Base- So this is the biggest change to the ministry. The Base started in January and has now run for one term. It is a service that runs parallel to the 10am service in the Church, yet is specifically aimed at young families and youth. Parents are able to drop their children at The Base if they want to go into the church service. We are so grateful to all the volunteers from the children's and youth work who have joined us in this venture and for all the new volunteers too,

who help with refreshments and welcome. The Base has a simple structure that involves: Prayer, sung worship, bible time, breakout groups for youth and children, Mike's Banter (key questions about the Bible passage discussed amongst the adults. This has proven to be a highlight and very meaningful discussions have taken place), short talk and a time of prayer response. Coffee and breakfast runs throughout the service and people who have been in the Church come and join us afterwards. On the third Sunday of the month the Youth lead the service and we have bacon sandwiches for breakfast.

All Age Communion Service- This service takes place on the first Sunday of the month. There is no Base that week with the idea that everyone comes together to celebrate Holy Communion. In many ways this service has replaced Sunday 4, yet its content is quite different. We have made a kids' corner in the Church where the children can explore the idea of communion in an interactive way. It is also a great opportunity for us (as The Base Leaders) to still be involved in services in the church building.

Messy Church –Messy Church continues to run every half term. They are what we describe as 'holy chaos'! Great fun, lots of activities, food, songs and a short talk. Thank you to everyone who volunteers at these events - it's a lot of work. We are always looking for more volunteers! The setup has been made a lot easier by the purchase of tables for the church. Thank you! For a large majority of these people this is the only time they would come to church. It's wonderful that people get to see the church opened up in this way.

Good Friday – Last year the Good Friday activities and service saw many people from the school come through the doors. It was a great way to bless the community and share the story of Jesus our rescuer with them. We look forward to doing the same in the coming weeks.

Conclusion – It has been a year of changes for the church. Perhaps for some people it feels like big risks have been taken. Thank you for allowing us to step out in these new ventures and praying for us in it all. We praise God for all he is doing and how he allows us to be involved.

EVANGELISM AND THE COMMUNITY

Rev Canon Andrew Marsden - April 2019

Since the departure of Rev Ian Seymour last year, I have been caretaker leader of the Evangelism Team, though I am still on the lookout for a new Team Leader to take responsibility for this area of the life of the church. In the meantime, evangelism continues, even though I do not have the time to devote to it that I would like.

Evangelism or pre-evangelism takes place through many of the church's regular activities, including the occasional offices like baptisms, weddings and funerals. The baptism of children provides a particular opportunity to present the gospel and all parents are given baptism preparation by the clergy. Last year we also had a number of adult baptisms and confirmations, which took place at a service at Greyfriars, Reading on 10th June 2018. Many of these people had done the Alpha Course and it was wonderful to see them make a public commitment to Jesus.

This year we decided to run Alpha in a home once again using the videos rather than live talks. I am very grateful to Matthew and Alison Goddard, who hosted and led the course which has just finished, on which there were initially 6 participants. The new Alpha videos were much appreciated and those that completed the course either found new faith, or faith was re-kindled in their lives. Thanks should also go to the team who cooked for the course and to all those church members who prayed for the course. It truly felt as if the whole church was involved!

Another area of outreach has been the work with the new communities that Janet Rogers has spearheaded in her role as chair of Churches Together in Crowthorne. Church members have been involved in welcoming people by delivering cakes to the new residents and Janet and I were invited to attend a welcome evening run by the Council at the Pinewood Café. There has also been prayer walking and some of the local ministers were invited to pray over the new Bucklers Park site. Janet continues to work tirelessly to make links with these new communities.

We have also been developing our links with the caravan park on Nine Mile Ride, often through contacts created by involvement with St Sebastian's Pre-School and through attendance at Little Angels. Amy describes elsewhere how the closure of the Pre-School has affected this community and we have been trying to support them through the Lighthouse Breakfast Club and in smaller ways. A murder on Nine Mile Ride also hit the community hard and I was able to visit and talk to the police, whilst a coffee morning took place in the church hall on the following Saturday for any who wanted to come and talk about the shocking events. This was attended by the local PCSO, who was also instrumental in enabling us to go onto the caravan park to sing carols at Christmas. This was so successful that it looks likely to become an annual event.

The other initiative that is very significant from an evangelistic perspective is the launch of 'The Base' all age service in the church hall in January 2019. Amy describes this in detail elsewhere, but it is good to see that this has already attracted quite a number of new families and provides an opportunity not just for children, but for parents as well, to talk about issues relating to faith in God. We are praying that we will be able to provide opportunities for these people to explore commitment to Jesus in a more focused way in the days to come.

The Base is a good example of the way that evangelism is not just done by one team but should be part of everything that we do as a church. Those who deliver the Prayer Drop leaflets, for example, contribute to the church's evangelism, as do those who provide refreshments to visitors on a Sunday morning. My thanks to all of you who have a heart for sharing the love of Jesus with the wider community!

FABRIC AND ENVIRONMENT

Rory O'Connor - April 2019

Introduction

This year, as in past years, there have been numerous routine maintenance tasks and a smaller number of larger tasks. As always, we are extremely grateful to a number of parishioners who generously gave their time, skills and effort to help with the necessary work.

Quinquennial Inspection

Having read the Quinquennial inspection, I am mindful of the recommendations and where possible, carrying out recommended work.

Grants

In my role as Church Warden this year, with expert help and guidance from Janet Rogers, I have been able to obtain grants for the sum of £6000 from Wokingham United Charities and Wokingham Without Parish Council for specific purposes including the purchase of tables and eventually chairs for Messy Church. Also, now that the central heating has been resolved, carpeting for the rear of the church. It is my intention, with help, to continue to explore other areas where we may be able to obtain grants going forward. I would like to express my thanks for the generous giving of church members which allows us to maintain the environment of St. Sebastian's Church and many other activities and projects.

Church Rear Lobby

Following last year's refurbishment of the Church rear lobby, there is some evidence of a recurrence of leaks. No action has been taken yet as it has not deteriorated.

Front boundary maintenance

Following last year's sterling efforts to refurbish the front boundary we are endeavouring to continue pruning and maintaining this area.

Church Heating

The church heating has been inspected by a number of heating engineers. There have been a number of different proposals with regards to what the problem was. We opted for the following which has been completed. I am hopeful that that this has now resolved the problem.

- Drain down and remove old pump
- Power flush system using strong cleansing chemical
- Clean magnetic filter
- Add new auto air vent
- Install new light commercial pump
- Add new inhibitor and leak sealant to ensure best protection for system
- Test and balance system

Drainage

Drainage in the car park has been a problem for years. I am considering how this can be resolved with external support at low cost. Watch this space.

General Site Maintenance

General tidying of the outside areas of the site was conducted by a team of parishioners. This included pruning, removal of fallen leaves, gutter clearance, etc. We also managed to do a significant amount of work on the Parish Centre Garden and general tidying of the outside area was completed by our team of parishioners. I am very grateful for their

assistance. Our thanks, as always, go to Mark Hall for his generous provision of facilities for disposal of the vast amount of green waste, and to all who helped on the day.

General Maintenance & Safety

Many other maintenance and safety-related tasks have taken place this year, including electrical portable appliance testing, fire extinguisher checks, health and safety surveys, boiler servicing, security alarm servicing, small electrical repairs and plumbing repairs. Some were conducted by professional tradesmen, but we used volunteers whenever we could to minimise costs. There are more tasks than hands, but we are very grateful to all who do turn out to help. In particular our grateful thanks go to Brian Hart, once again, for stepping in so often to do so many of these tasks.

Parish Centre Garden

The Parish Centre Garden fence adjacent to the car park and St. Sebastian's Lodge boundary fencing have been replaced.

Church Hall

Sadly, we lost the use of the Church Hall by St Sebastian's Pre-School. However, the exciting new development of services at St. Sebastian's means that the Church Hall is now being used regularly for The Base and other activities. The Scouts and Guides groups continue to use the Church Hall and we are hopeful that other local groups avail of the facility going forward.

Thanks again to those who helped prepare the Hall and garden for use. There is a plan via Legal & General to decorate and refurbish the Hall and kitchen. I am awaiting confirmation of a start date.

MISSION GIVING

David Hare - April 2019

This year has been one of changes to try to ensure that giving is linked to church members or known charities, then we have a positive link that people know about. That might be a personal contact or could be local charities (e.g. JAC, Soulscape) we can support. We have ended, or are running down, our support to charities or individuals who are no longer part of our immediate linkage, while looking to help charities known by our congregation. Although it is important to support fixed ongoing costs we try to ensure some of the church giving is to specific projects. The church enjoys hearing about how our money is used. If you have some immediate links with a Christian charity, we are always it pleased to hear about it and support if we can.

During 2018 the following organisations were supported on a regular basis:

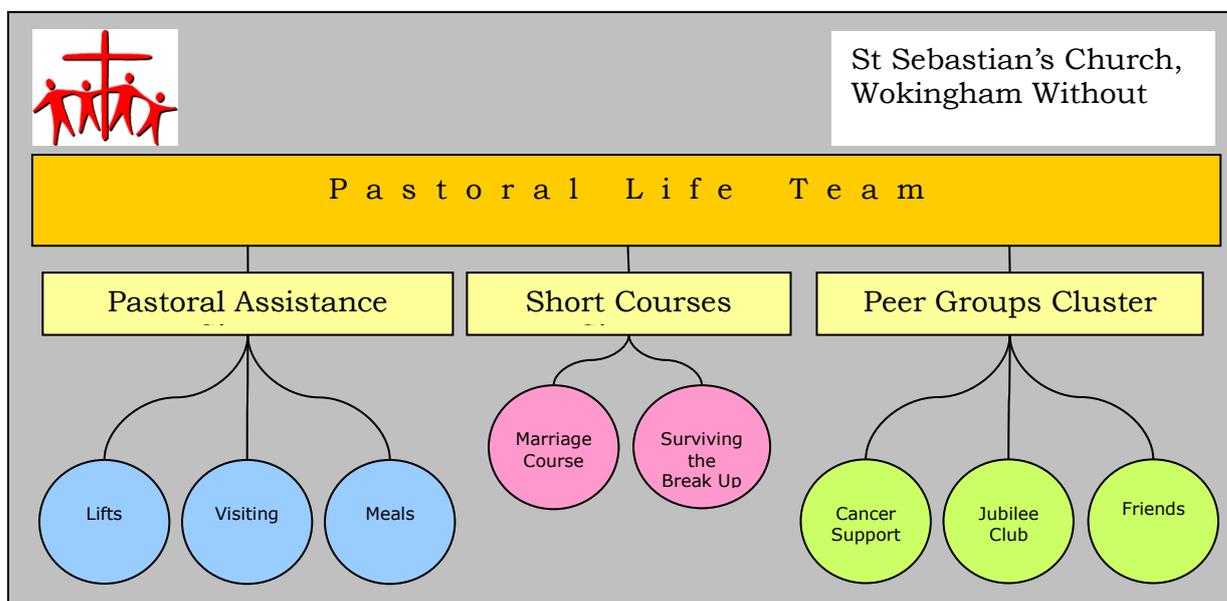
Create Hope, Just Around the Corner, Krasif, Horizons - Malcolm Williams, Mityana, Oasis – Clive Dudbridge, Open Doors, Reading Women's Centre and Soulscape.

Ad-hoc gifts were made for specific projects and appeals as follows:

The Children's Society, The Royal British Legion, Christian Aid, Toybox, Open Doors, Bible Society, Tearfund, Edson Chaoma (Zimbabwean Student), Olivia Clarke, Crowthorne Baptist Church, Crowthorne Summer Activities, Bibles for Children at St Sebastian's School and Nepal Critical Care Development Foundation, Kathmandu.

PASTORAL LIFE

Russell & Angela Shipton - April 2019



The best and greater part of pastoral care happens naturally through members of the congregation caring for each other. The Pastoral life team exists firstly to try to be a reference structure for those 'doing it' and secondly to try to fill in any gaps that naturally occur. If you become aware of any pastoral need, please make Russell and Angela Shipton aware of it.

There are three **Peer Groups** that meet regularly for mutual support:

- **Jubilee Club** – This 24 year old club is a friendly and welcoming social group for the over 60s and meets every Tuesday afternoon in the Parish Centre for tea, cakes, a chat, and sometimes other activities. Contact Jo Golding if you are interested in this group.
- **Friends** – is a relaxed and informal social group, for any who find themselves on their own. They meet regularly for all sorts of social activities. Ro King heads this up.
- **Cancer Support Group** – is a small friendly group of people who meet to share and support each other in their experience of living with cancer, either in themselves, or in a loved one. Anne Bone heads this up.

There are three **Pastoral Assistance Teams**

- The **Lifts Team** tries to help out those who cannot get around so easily. Lifts to church meetings and hospital appointments are examples of how, on occasions, the lifts team helps. Russell and Angela Shipton coordinate this group.
- The **Meals Team** can help out by providing a few meals for an individual or family when illness or adversity strikes. They can usually respond with some meals inside of 24 hours. Russell and Angela Shipton coordinate this group.
- The **Visiting Group** – This very informal group aims to make occasional visits to offer a little companionship, practical help, prayer and a listening ear. Russell and Angela coordinate this group.

The **Surviving the Break-Up Course** runs once or twice a year. This is an informal course and support group for those going through marriage or long-term relationship separation. It offers support and professional practical advice on the implications of a break-up including emotional, financial and family, and is equally accessible to those of any or no faith, and any or no church membership. Pam Carter co-ordinates this course.

PRAYER

Karen de Fraine - April 2019

Prayer is valued as an integral part of the life of St Sebastian's, whether it is in small groups or church services. It is good to be able to praise and worship as well as bring our requests and intercede together before our holy and loving Father God.

Prayer Ministry

Prayer ministry is offered at most services at St Sebastian's. Many thanks to those on the prayer ministry team for their regular, faithful service and also willingness to step in when numbers requesting prayer mean more people are needed. Prayer ministry training was run in Sept/Oct for St John's Church. Six attended from St John's and two from St Sebastian's. This was a joyous event which was enthusiastically received.

Worship and Prayer Services

In the new service format, which started in January 2019, the 4th Sunday of each month has been designated as "Worship and Prayer". This service gives us time to pray corporately in a variety of ways; in worship as well as intercessory and more reflective prayer. The mission slot has been incorporated into this service allowing more time for prayer for organisations that we support as a church.

Prayer Space - Adults

Prayer Space takes place on the 2nd Monday of each month from 8:00pm to 9:00pm. Numbers continue to be small. We pray for the needs of the church and the local community as well as for the organisations we support as a church. We have written to small group leaders to gather their thoughts on the best way to share topics for prayer to allow small groups to participate more effectively in the intercessory prayer of the church.

It is usual for Prayer Space to be suspended during the Summer months, but the decision was made this year to run it every week during the school holidays with renewed focus on blessing the local community, particularly the caravan parks and the school.

Prayer Space – Children

Prayer Shack for children has come to a natural end with the commencement of The Base. Prayer is an integral part of the activities within The Base. Many thanks to Alexis Clarke and Sue Thomas who helped Karen and the team leaders over a number of years in the various Prayer Space activities.

Thy Kingdom Come

It was good to be part of the global prayer movement inviting Christians around the world to pray for more people to come to know Jesus. At St Sebastian's we met together on Ascension Day evening. There were a number of different prayer activities allowing us to pray for our families, individuals and the needs of the local community.

Prayer Circle

The Prayer Circle continues to take many requests, which Brian Hart sends out by email to those people who have committed to pray for all needs received. If you have a need for prayer, please contact Brian or the Parish Office.

Prayer Chain

The telephone prayer chain is coordinated by Penny Thurgood. This method of requesting prayer is used only for the most urgent and immediate prayer needs.

SMALL GROUPS

Russell Shipton - April 2019

There are 8 groups, that meet either weekly or fortnightly around Crowthorne and Wokingham. Some meet on a weekday morning or others on a weekday evening. There are around 90 people who are either regular or occasional members.

Some have a distinctive character - for example, nurture of new Christians, or ladies only - while others have a broad spectrum of members. What they all have in common is that they are places where the members share joys and sorrows, ask questions about their faith, learn and grow together. Tea and coffee, biscuits and cakes, laughter and sometimes tears, occasional socials, and many other things are also common to all the groups. They are a great way to get to know a few people better, grow in faith and find fascinating new things about our wonderful God, His word, and life with Him.

SONNING DEANERY SYNOD

Richard Tudor - April 2019

St Sebastian's Church is represented on the Deanery Synod by the Vicar, Rev Canon Andrew Marsden. The laity are represented by David Hare and Richard Tudor; we were joined this year by John Congram.

The Synod meets approximately every second month, in venues which rotate around the parishes in the Deanery. Meetings include a talk or discussion, as well as governance issues; the Deanery Synod oversees the allocation of the parish share. A Deanery away day was held at Finchampstead on 1st December 2018, to discuss the Deanery Plan, which is to run until 2021. Other meetings this year have included a presentation on the Parish Giving Scheme, and group discussions on human sexuality.

The meetings are an opportunity to visit other churches and to meet people from all strands of the Church of England. We would welcome others to join us in representing St Sebastian's in the wider church.

WELCOME TEAM

Paul Brown - April 2019

"Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God." (Romans 15:7)

Many thanks to the Welcome Team who have served the church through the year.

I would like to thank the following for the continued support and service. They have done a great job in making people welcome and putting our visitors at ease in church.

Terry & Sylvia Dungate

Mark & Mary Hall

Keith & Alison Avery

Paul & Ruth Brown

Sue Freeman

Jo Golding

Elizabeth Jenkins

Roger & Susie Holdsworth

Tom & Jean O'Toole

Geoff Ogilvy

Jo Golding has stepped down from the Welcome Team during the year, so I would like to give her a special mention and thanks for the support she has given to the Welcome Team.

The team is always looking for additional volunteers to add to the rota. It would always be great to have some new faces join the Welcome Team. As well as welcoming people into church, it is a great opportunity to get to meet other members of the congregation and visitors to the church.

Please do speak to either Paul Brown, or any other member of the Welcome Team, or the Church Office if you know of anyone who would be interested in joining the Welcome Team.

WORSHIP SERVICES

Jane Clark - April 2019

Our Worship, Sound and Vision teams have continued to be busy this year, serving the congregation by providing music and technical support for almost every service, week by week. This is much appreciated, and I am sure I speak for all church members when I thank each team member for the time and effort they have given. Fortunately, the task is usually an enjoyable one, which does help! Most of all, we thank God for his faithfulness and empowering, as he makes so much more than we could ask or imagine of the gifts we offer in his service.

Sung worship continues to enhance our Sunday morning services, and we are aware when the presence of the Holy Spirit inhabits our praises. This is such a privilege and joy for all who serve and are part of the worshipping congregation. A new pattern of services was introduced in January this year, owing to the arrival of The Base, an alternative informal service taking place in the Church Hall. The new services include an all-age monthly Holy Communion where both congregations join. It will be interesting to see how the new arrangements develop, and if they have any impact on the congregation remaining in the main church, in terms of numbers or in other ways. I hope that we can communicate effectively about the songs being used so that the two congregations are linked in that way.

We had planned to run a Saturday morning workshop on two occasions, but unfortunately were thwarted at the last minute by a bereavement and by bad weather. We hope to find a date for this soon. It is good and important to meet as a team from time to time; we plan to share new material and work on technical issues with the sound team. One of the challenges we face is that everyone is so busy – finding a date for even a few people to meet is very difficult, and sometimes weeks go by before anything can happen.

The 'new' sound system is now a year old – it has made a huge difference to the quality of the sound in the church overall. I think it is safe to say that we have mostly become accustomed to it, and any problems are usually quickly resolved. Quite a few of the worship team have found the new system a challenge, and if we only use it once a month, it is easy to forget what to do! We are grateful to Neil Clark for his continued support, and his willingness to turn up almost every Sunday to make sure that everything is going to plan.

Thankfully, two people have come forward to help on the Sound Team; they are being trained and are sitting alongside the current team members. There is an urgent need still for people to help with the Vision, however. As with many teams in the church, just a few people keep everything going.

Once again, I would like to thank all who are involved in the worship services teams: our worship leaders, the instrumentalists and singers, the sound and vision operators. We all thank God for allowing us to offer our gifts and time to him, and for his power at work through us.