

**The Parish Church of St Mary Magdalen, Ripley  
Annual Report  
and  
Statement of Accounts  
of the  
Parochial Church Council  
for the year ended 31st December 2016**

**Incumbent**

The Rev'd Christopher Elson BD AKC  
The Vicarage  
8 Grove Heath North  
Ripley  
WOKING  
Surrey  
GU23 6EN

**Bank**

Lloyds Bank plc  
147 High Street  
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GU1 3AG

**Independent examiner**

Mr Steven Cliff  
Avon House  
The Green  
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GU23 6AR

Called by God's grace into membership of the Church,  
**We thank God** for his blessings to us and to all mankind.  
**We acknowledge** our sinful nature and accept God's  
forgiveness through Jesus our Saviour  
**We commit** ourselves to the work and ministry of the Church.  
**We will** acknowledge our faith publicly by word and deed

## Information about the Parish & Parochial Church Council (P.C.C.)

**The Parish Church of St. Mary Magdalen** is in the High Street, Ripley and is in the Diocese of Guildford.

There were 58 people on the **Electoral Roll** in 2016.

**The Parochial Church Council** aims to co-operate with the Vicar in promoting in the parish the whole mission of the church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.

### Membership of the PCC for 2016

Incumbent & Chairman: Rev'd Christopher Elson BD AKC. (ex officio)

**Churchwardens:** Monica Pashley & Phil Paul (Vice Chair)

The Churchwardens are elected at the Annual "Vestry" Meeting which immediately precedes the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) under the terms of the Churchwardens Measure 2001. They are ex-officio members of the Parochial Church Council (P.C.C.).

(The year in which the representative's term of office expires is in brackets below)

**Our Deanery Synod** Representatives (elected for a 3 year term):

Roger Cox	(2017)	<b>Also Chair of the Buildings Committee</b>
Mary Trevill	(2017)	<b>Also Chair of Church Life Committee</b>

**Our 'Ordinary' Elected P.C.C. Members:**

Diana Cox	(2017)	
Terence Ratcliffe	(2017)	
Alastair Heslop	(2017)	<b>Hon Treasurer</b>
Valerie Clothier	(2017)	
Frances Hodgson	(2018)	
Rosemarie Orchard	(2018)	
Claire Carlton	(2019)	
Juliet Baker	(2019)	<b>Hon Secretary</b>
Dreda Todd	(2019)	
Jamie Hogg	(co-opted in May 2010)	<b>Child Protection Officer</b>

With effect from the Annual Meeting in 2016 the number of "Ordinary Members" was reduced to 9 (all elected for a three year term) so normally one third of these - 3 - stand down each year with the right to stand for immediate re-election. Of the four obliged to stand down this year (if they wish to continue to serve) three can be elected for a three year term and the other can be elected for just one year.

## **Meetings of the P.C.C. in 2016**

Between January and December 2016 the PCC met 5 times; this included an extraordinary meeting which took place on the 7th August. In addition there was a continuation meeting after the APCM held on the 10th April which took place on the 17th April 2016.

With the 14 members on the P.C.C and a co-opted Child Protection Officer the average attendance was 11 people per meeting.

During this year two subcommittees of the P.C.C. ran: the Church Life Committee and Building Committee.

**The Church Life Committee** was chaired by Mary Trevill who was joined by Claire Carlton, Valerie Clothier, Frances Hodgson, Rosemarie Orchard, Monica Pashley, Terry Ratcliffe and Dreda Todd.

**The Buildings Committee** was chaired by Roger Cox who was joined by Phil Paul, Diana Cox, Alastair Heslop & Juliet Baker.

**The Standing Committee** consists of the chairman (vicar), vice chair, honorary secretary, honorary treasurer, both churchwardens & the sub committee chairpeople. The Standing Committee deals with urgent P.C.C. business between the arranged meetings of the P.C.C.

## **Church Life Committee Report:**

We meet regularly throughout the year on Monday evenings in the church room.

Apart from the regular happenings during the year highlights were:

**The purchase of a votive candle stand** thanks to Terry and Frances. The long - lasting candle is lit each morning and then visitors can light a tea light in memory of a loved one. This seems popular and is used daily.

**May 15<sup>th</sup> The Veteran Cyclists service** was held again as last year. It is proving popular and really successful as a regular annual event.

**June 10<sup>th</sup> a Quiz Night** was held with help from Jennie Cliff, who prepared the food and Richard Ayears who ran the quiz. Held in the Church Room the seats were quickly sold out. We hope to hold another in 2017.

**June 12<sup>th</sup> In celebration of the Queen's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday** a service was held on the Green so that all could join in before the band played and the general festivities began.

**A new gazebo** was bought for our stand at the Ripley Event. A different location has been asked for 2017.

**Sept. 11<sup>th</sup> A bring and share lunch** was held in the Paulson's family house after the service. Our thanks to the Paulson's for arranging lovely weather and a good time was had by all.

**Oct. 9<sup>th</sup> We began Harvest festival with a delicious breakfast** prepared for us by the Carlton family. Our thanks to them for once again demonstrating their frying skills.

**Oct. 30<sup>th</sup> an In Loving Memory service** was held in the afternoon with tea served afterwards. This is becoming another regular service.

**Dec. 4<sup>th</sup> the Christingle service** was held after the village Christmas Fayre at 4.30pm

It is to be noted that the village hall is booked for May 20<sup>th</sup> 2017 for our Good as New clothing sale. Proceeds to go to the lighting fund appeal.

The Co-op has been asked if our church could be their "local charity" of the year for 2017

### **Building Committee Report:**

The five yearly electrical inspection of the church uncovered a number of safety concerns that required remedial action. These have now been addressed and test certificates issued. The wiring for the church lighting was identified as unsatisfactory and in need of replacement during the electrical inspection but it was agreed that this could wait until we replaced the lighting system

The lighting in the church is time expired. A proposal for the replacement of the lighting has been received from CES Complete Electrical Services. This proposal has been endorsed by the Building Committee and the PCC have agreed that CES should be appointed to design a new lighting system to our user requirements. However CES cannot be appointed until we have an agreed installation budget for them to design to. Following visits to two other churches where CES have installed new lighting it is considered that an installation budget of around £30,000 will be required. This exceeds our available funds that have been set aside for this project by £10,000. Fundraising is therefore required.

The PCC have authorized £5,000 of repairs to the external stonework of the church. A schedule and specification for the work is being prepared by our selected stonemason in conjunction with our architect in order to progress a faculty.

Repairs have been carried out to the roof of the link between the church and church room.

Guildford Borough Council have completed the restoration of the front boundary wall and painted the railings

A churchyard working party in October trimmed the yew trees and hedges, cleaned out gutters and drains and weeded and tidied up the memorial garden. The churchyard remains in good order

### **Vicar's Report**

We often say to one another that we have great strengths as a Church: we are friendly and welcoming; we are very part of village life and our Church is in the middle of the village ready to serve the community in any appropriate way.

This is all true but it does not seem to be enough to allow us to be more effective in our Mission. Like most parishes of the Church of England we have not found a way to inspire the poorer members of our community with our faith. We have also found that in most other groups within our community there is a high level of disinterest or even antagonism to faith and we struggle to find ways of offering a faithful and inspiring ministry to all. The single most important characteristic of this generation seems to be that we are time-poor; it requires a huge commitment of limited and treasured family time for people to find a way to be involved in anything that we do. We struggle again and again to find a way to squeeze faith opportunities into the busy diaries of those around us.

The recently launched Diocesan initiative "Transforming Church, Transforming Lives" is a challenge and opportunity for the parishes of the Diocese to share ideas and to challenge ourselves to review aspects of Church life. We are asked, as part of this initiative, (which includes a number of specific goals) to prepare a Parish Development Plan. The Diocese is

hoping for our first response in the first few months of 2017; we won't have got far by then but we will be able, I hope, to share our plan to review the goals and form a plan over the next year or two.

### **The Review of Statistics (by the Vicar)**

(The statistics themselves and the graphs based upon them can be found at the end of this report)

The decline in attendance over the last few years has continued. While it seems that the attendance at Family services is on average a little higher than the Communion services the difference is marginal and, as there are two special services - Harvest and Mothering - included in this average, this may not be significant. We have never collected statistics on the average age of those attending services so it is hard to be certain but I think we can be confident that the average age at Family Services is markedly lower than at the other services. Whether this should inspire us to make any changes to our services is something we will discuss as we consider the "Transforming Church, Transforming Lives" goals.

I would like to place on record my thanks to all who have contributed to the devising and leading of our Family Services over the last years. This Worship Committee - Juliet Baker, Alastair and Suzie Heslop and Lucie Paulson work hard to come up with ideas and bring them to fruition.

### **Pastoral Assistants:**

**Diana Cox** runs the thriving "Mothers and Toddlers" group and is on the Messy Church organising committee.

**Dreda Todd** is licensed to administer Holy Communion at the Vicar's request.

### **Sacristan:**

Suzie and Alastair Heslop continue in their shared role as Sacristan and do an excellent job of keeping the Vicar and the Vicar's vestry organised.

### **Verger:**

Mary Trevill is now our Verger and we are especially thankful for her dedication (with canine assistance) in opening and closing the Church morning and night, managing Church Room bookings and being the go-to person we depend on in many different ways.

**As well as those fulfilling these traditional roles** many members of our Church look after specific aspect of Church life or respond to particular need; we are very grateful to them all whose contribution is vital if sometimes unnoticed.

### **Churchwarden's Report**

Monica and Phil have continued in office.

The Terrier and Log have been maintained during the year.

We have an excellent team of sidesmen but as usual, we would be grateful to have new volunteers to take on this role and add to the number on the rota.

## **Deanery Synod**

Deanery synod met three times this year in January, May and November and were attended by at least one of our two lay representatives. The January meeting welcomed representatives of the Muslim community in Woking. The May meeting was addressed by Matt Prior, the Adult Discipleship and Development Advisor for the Diocese, on 'Whole life discipleship, what works and what doesn't'. The November meeting was led by Alan Hume, Director & Team Leader for Parish Development and Evangelism Team, on the diocesan initiative 'Transforming church, transforming lives'. Both talks were pertinent to the challenges facing our church and parish.

## **Safeguarding:**

The Council has complied with the duty under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 (duty to have due regard to House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults). Routine DBS checks have been completed as needed and several people have advised of their attendance on training courses.

Looking ahead there are some changes coming and a more focused and structured approach with both training and defining responsibilities. The PCC will carry out its annual review and renewal of the policy after the APCM and will act on revisions of policy or practice as they are notified to us.

## **Other Organisations in the Church**

### **Mothers and Toddlers**

We have had another interesting year , watching our toddlers grow bigger, taller, stronger, and more inter-active.

It is such a joy to watch them gain confidence , forge new friendships and acquire good manners ! Mothers are able to make new friends and tap into other's experiences. We have welcomed new sibling babies and welcomed new families to the area. They have sometimes ventured into our ( the Church's ) other activities eg Messy Church , 'Hallow Wellie' , Family services and the Crib service

My thanks go to members of the Church who have covered for me - Barbara Dreda Jackie Mary and Monica. (DC)

### **Messy Church**

We held one meeting this year , before Easter with the theme of Mary the Mother of Jesus. The numbers were not great considering the amount of work and enthusiasm shown by the team.

Many thanks go to Barbara, Rosemarie , Valarie , Jackie , Margaret, Jennie, Mary and Monica who all provided help and encouragement ! (DC)

### **"Hallow Wellie Day"**

A day to celebrate the lives of saints, men and women who loved and served God.

It came about from a suggestion from Chris for the Messy Church group to put on something for children in the October half-term, to counter-act the trick or treat, the witches and ghouls that Halloween has come to portray. Joining with the worship committee we began planning early September for a water fun day. The weather then was sunny and warm. Our plans for water balloons and bowls of water spilling over the heads of Alistair and Gabriel during a quiz seemed less attractive as the weather became much,

much colder. We were also thinking it would be too cold outdoors on the green from 10.30-3.00 for little children. Still we hoped and prayed for God's blessing on the day and we were very blessed.

Hallow Wellie Day was held on the sunniest day of half-term. The cricket club kindly allowed us to use the clubhouse and their facilities. Every activity was special and lots of fun. Extra helpers just stepped in to help at the last minute. A special thank you to Sophie and Helen who were there whenever there was a need.

There were so many activities:- Tug of war, parachute games, learning about saints, water balloons, wigwams, marshmallows, balloons, a quiz, paddle boats and races, floating flower prayers. Everything kept together by Chris and his portable sound system. He led the children in singing and marching to, "When the Saints Go Marching In". He kept us to the time-table and brought the day to a close with prayers of thanksgiving.

Just a few remembered remarks on the day:- "The best day of half-term", "It was so good to have all ages having lots of fun together", "It was lovely to see the church's fun day out of my window", "I was only going to stay until lunch-time but the children were having so much fun". A truly blessed day.

### **Sunday School**

Attendance of Sunday School age children is unpredictable and so we do not have a formal rota to cover every Sunday. If a child comes to Church we hope to be able to care for them but this is an ad hoc arrangement. (CE)

### **Ripples of Faith**

We have two study groups meeting regularly.

### **The TUESDAY RIPPLES GROUP** meets in the Church Room

Throughout 2016 on most Tuesday evenings we met to read and discuss Matthew's gospel. Our informal meetings are not only to study the bible but are opportunities to talk about items of news and other matters which as Christians, concern us. In meeting together we encourage one another to seek God's council, His will in our lives and realise with gratitude all He provides and the joy of serving Him.

There are no targets, no need for theological knowledge; just a time, in a Christian atmosphere, to try to understand God's word and how it should affect our daily lives. We have been blessed by two more people, not from our church, who have joined us in the latter part of this year. There is no need to "sign up"; no need to make any commitment. Just turn up on a Tuesday between 7.30pm and 9pm or phone Gabriel and Barbara (01483 222646) if you want any more information. (GS)

### **The THURSDAY RIPPLES** meets most weeks at a members home.

Currently we are studying the Fruits of the Spirit using a Scripture Union booklet and the Bible. We aim to support with regular prayer, the church, the diocesan Transformation project and people suffering in any way, both locally and abroad. New members welcome. Details from Dreda Todd 01483 223551 (DT)

### **Traidcraft**

A Traidcraft stall is held after church approximately bi-monthly. All profits go to the third world suppliers of the goods, enabling them to receive a fair return for their work and thus to improve their standard of living, send their children to school etc. Traidcraft also trains producers to improve their products and to manage their finances. Usually our sales raise

over £100. each time. We also aim , where possible, to use fair traded items for church refreshments. (DT)

### **Wednesday Coffee Mornings**

These are proving very popular and attendance has increased to approximately 15 or so regular attendees. Everyone is grateful for the chance to chat with friends in a relaxed atmosphere. Donations are now going to the church, and in less than a year nearly £800 has been collected.

In addition, arising out of the coffee mornings, a small group meet on a weekly basis to play Scrabble. (MT)

### **Mens' Breakfast**

Every first Saturday of the month a small collection of male members of the congregation get together to share a breakfast in the church room; taking it in turn to do the cooking. Six to eight regularly attend. (CE)

### **Charity/Coffee Shop**

Once again the Charity Shop has continued to be successful in raising funds for the two local hospices that we support however 2016 has been somewhat disappointing compared to the amount raised in 2015. Our donation in 2015 to each of the hospices was £490; this year we have managed to donate £333. No doubt this is money that will be received gratefully by the Hospices but naturally we would have liked to have sent more.

In 2016 we made a total of £676.48 and after retaining £10.48 for possible expenses we have sent £333 each to the Woking Hospice and the Phyllis Tuckwell Hospice at Farnham.

### **Church Music**

Our organ tuner, Robin Rust, has retired and we now have Andrew Cooper, who lives in Ryde, Isle of Wight, caring twice yearly for our heritage instrument.

The choir continues to impress with its loyalty and keenness despite the challenges of health and the passage of time. Membership remains constant but we are always ready to welcome new singers. Choir practices are usually great fun.

### **Mothers' Union**

Gifts under the Christmas tree were distributed to the women's refuge "Your Sanctuary" mainly for the many children there this year via the Mothers Union.

Some members of the congregation belong to the MU and although they do not belong to a branch they attend Deanery and Diocesan events throughout the year, including preparing and leading a service in the Lady Chapel of the Cathedral, parading our banner at the Lady Day service and attending a Deanery prayer group

## **FINANCIAL REPORT 2015**

### **Overall position:**

2016 has continued the pattern of recent years inasmuch as we have spent significantly more than we have taken in – by nearly £9,000 this year. Income was down this year, but we also managed to spend less.

We have managed to control cash flow rather better this year, so that there was always enough in the account to cover outgoings, particularly the monthly Parish Share payment, so that we have not incurred any bank charges, but this has been partly down to a rather higher drawdown from the 'Income' account .

The PCC works hard to keep tight control on spending, but this can involve a lot of discussion which detracts from other business. Constant worry about finances means that important projects – in particular the need to replace the lighting – get bogged down in interminable debate.

### **General Fund:**

This section of the accounts (page 2 and top of page 3) summarises most of the income and expenditure.

Planned Giving was up quite a bit on 2015, largely down to a couple of people increasing their planned giving, a delayed payment from last year and a couple of people switching from donating via Gift Aid envelopes to Standing Order. Part, but by no means all, of the reduction in 'Collections and other giving' is explained by the latter switches. Gift Aid relief was lower in 2016 than 2015 because we adjusted the timing of our claims to HMRC.

The income under 'Other receipts' is mainly from Wednesday Morning Coffee (£574) and the Quiz Night (£250), with other contributions including the Ripley Event stall, Harvest Breakfast and Parish Christmas card sales.

Fees income was down significantly from 2015, mostly because there were fewer weddings. Projections are up for 2017, but this is not something we can count on as a regular source.

Expenditure is dominated by Parish Share. Because our financial figures for 2014 were not supplied to the diocese in the Spring of 2015, we were asked for 4% more in 2016 – about £1,200 extra. (If we had supplied the numbers, there would have been no increase). We asked the diocese to review things and the PCC decided to maintain our payments at the 2015 rate pending a reply, which never came. Our 2017 share is the same as was asked for in 2016, but the PCC has not yet decided how to proceed. (The method for calculating Parish Share is under review, so we await the outcome with interest).

Most of our outward giving is the half share of the Remembrance Sunday, Ripley Court carol service and Christmas service collections which go the Poppy Appeal, Cherry Trees and Crisis respectively.

On the maintenance front, we had to have an electrical inspection done, which identified some remedial work needed. We have deferred as much as we could in anticipation of a renewal of the lighting and wiring, but there was some work which could not wait.

The rest of the expenditure has mostly been for insurance and utilities. Our previous fixed term agreements for gas and electricity ended in September, so we compared prices and as a result switched to other suppliers, which will reduce the ongoing costs by a fair amount.

### **Income Fund**

The income fund started 2016 with a balance of £75547; it earned some interest, but we drew nearly £12,000 from the account, leaving a year end balance of £65218. On current projections, we hope that we will not need to draw quite so much in 2017, but clearly this fund will run out within a few years unless we can increase our income significantly.

## **Organ Fund**

The balance in this fund rose from £6820 to £7447 as a result of donations to the fund and Gift Aid thereon, less the cost of having the organ tuned twice during the year.

## **Fabrics and Fitting Fund**

The account increased from £25,983 to £26,105 as a result of interest earned. £20,000 is designated (earmarked) for replacement of the lighting and so may be spent during the course of 2017.

## **Lighting and Electrics Fund**

This is a new fund we established during the year, but it currently does not have a separate account. It is a restricted fund, which means that we can only use the money in it to pay for the relevant work. Anything given for this work will go into the fund to ring fence it. While switching gas and electricity suppliers, we noticed that we had been paying business rates of VAT and another charge on our gas usage, which should not have applied. On submission of the relevant form, we had the excess charges for the last 4 years refunded and the PCC decided to use this £1650 'windfall' as a starter to the fund, which also received a couple of donations during the year.

## **Investment & Accounting Policies and Control**

We continue with our policy to invest our funds in the CBF Church of England Investment Funds managed by CCLA Investment Management Ltd, with day-to-day banking at Lloyds Bank.

Our external examiner is Steven Cliff and we are grateful for the thorough job he does.

## **Looking ahead:**

We have a budget for 2017 which shows us spending £47,500 against an income of £33,000. £5,000 of this is for stonework repairs, which will come out of the Fabrics and Fittings Fund, but there is still a significant shortfall which will continue year on year. We all need to ask ourselves when we last reviewed our Stewardship giving and if we can do more. The budget excludes the project to replace the lighting, which is becoming ever more urgent and will itself need significant fund raising.

## **In Conclusion:**

The Parochial Church Council commends this report to the people of this parish trusting that God will bless us as we plan for the future and build the community of faith in this parish.

Christopher Elson

Incumbent and Chair of the PCC