

**THE BENEFICE OF GLOUCESTER ST GEORGE
with WHADDON**

ANNUAL REPORT for 2019

**Presented at the Annual Parochial Church Meetings
St George's 12.00noon on Sunday 5 July 2020 TBC
St Margaret's 5.00pm on Tuesday 7 July 2020 TBC**

VICAR:	Revd Bruce Clifford
READER:	Canon Jonathan MacKechnie-Jarvis
PIONEER:	Helen McGeoch
PASTORAL ASSISTANT:	Susan Scothern
CARING CO-ORDINATOR:	Linda Medwell
MUSIC LEADER:	Paula Rix
ST GEORGE'S CHURCHWARDENS:	Michael Brammer Sylvia Evans
ST GEORGE'S DEPUTY CHURCHWARDENS:	Linda Brown Jayne Close Derek Kingscote Dot Martin
ST MARGARET'S CHURCHWARDENS:	Jonathan MacKechnie-Jarvis Hans Rackham
ST MARGARET'S DEPUTY CHURCHWARDENS:	Jill Ponter Kath Senior
PCC SECRETARY:	Rosie Clifford
ST GEORGE'S PCC TREASURER:	David Westcott
ST MARGARET'S PCC TREASURER:	Hans Rackham
BENEFICE ADMINISTRATOR:	Glenda Stevens
ST GEORGE'S ELECTORAL ROLL OFFICER:	Margaret Barber
ST MARGARET'S ELECTORAL ROLL OFFICER:	Jill Ponter

BENEFICE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCILS' ANNUAL REPORT

Status: The PCCs are charities, excepted from registration with the Charity Commission, under the Charities (Exception from Registration) Regulations 1996.

Address for correspondence:

St George's Vicarage, Grange Road, Tuffley. GL4 0PE.

The PCCs and Standing committees of the two churches elected to meet jointly four times in 2019, as they had done the previous year.

The following ad hoc committees met during the year: Authorised leaders; Church Centre management; Connections; Finance and Funding; Pastoral Care; Pioneer Steering and Social.

Gloucester St George Parochial Church Council

The following members served during the year:

Revd Bruce Clifford	Chair	Ex-officio
Jonathan MacKechnie-Jarvis	Lay reader	Ex-officio
Michael Brammer	Churchwarden	Ex-officio
Sylvia Evans	Churchwarden	Ex-officio
Derek Kingscote	Deanery Synod	Ex-officio
Roger Meadows	Vice Chair	Elected
Joceline Blunt		Elected
Linda Brown		Elected
Jayne Close		Elected
*Dawn Dolphin		Elected
*Helen McGeoch		Elected
Linda Medwell		Elected
*Stuart Mitchell		Elected
Susan Scothern		Elected to 9 April 2019
Darrell Stevens		Elected
David Wescott	Treasurer	Elected
Rosie Clifford	Secretary	In attendance

*Elected from 7 April 2019

Independent examiner: Mr A Leach,
Melrose, Cheltenham Road, Painswick, Glos.

Bank: Yorkshire Bank, 5 Northgate Street, Gloucester

Average attendance: 11 members

At the last Annual Parochial Church meeting on 7 April 2019, the electoral roll stood at 65. Average attendance on Sundays in March and April 2019 was 47, three less than it had been in March and April 2018.

ST GEORGE'S STATISTICS

	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010
BAPTISMS	13	14	21	24	16	20	20	26	22	33
CONFIRMATIONS	0	0	02	0	0	01	01	0	03	0
COMMUNICANTS	2613	2648	3564	2990	3737	3279	3688	3828	4018	3860
ATTENDANCES	6156	5794	6761	12210	5928	8637	8283	7804	4354	3589
WEDDINGS	0	02	0	02	0	04	0	01	0	02
FUNERALS	28	25	31	35	38	47	47	57	58	45
ELECTORAL ROLL	65	74	80	83	82	85	88	100	97	81

St Margaret Whaddon Parochial Church Council

The following members served during the year:

Revd Bruce Clifford	Chair	Ex-officio
Jonathan MacKechnie-Jarvis	Lay reader, & Churchwarden	Ex-officio
Hans Rackham	Churchwarden, & Treasurer	Ex-officio
Michael Mumby	Deanery Synod	Ex-officio
*Lorraine Best		Elected
*Peter Best		Elected
Jenny Hyett		Elected
Jill Ponter		Elected to 9 April 2019
*Michael Smith		Elected
Rosie Clifford	Secretary	In attendance

*Elected from 7 April 2019

Independent examiner: Sarah Padam
Padam Walburn Accounting Services
80 Forest View Road; Glos: GL4 0BY

Bank: NatWest Bank; Eastgate Street, Gloucester

Average attendance: 6 members

At the last Annual Parochial Church meeting on 9 April 2019, the electoral roll stood at 36. Average attendance on Sundays in March and April 2019 was 16, as it had been in the same period the year before.

Review of developments and issues discussed

Worshipping

- A sermon series on the book of Daniel
- Paula Rix, music leader, accepted for Reader training
- Recording of Sunday worship at St George's for those unable to attend
- A new carol service booklet for St Margaret's church
- Joining with Grange Baptist church and English Martyrs church in:
 - Good Friday worship and procession through Tuffley
 - A Youth Alpha course
 - Refresh evenings of study and worship
 - Messy Advent

Pioneering

- Monthly Messy church gatherings
- An Explore Christianity course on Saturday mornings
- Explore Easter with pre-school and infant children and Explore Pentecost prayer stations with local schools.
- A weekly Reflect club for pupils at Harewood School
- The fourth Tuffley festival on Tuffley Rovers ground on Saturday 5 July. Jointly organised by community groups, it again attracted over 1000 people and featured children from local schools singing songs they had learned with ISingPop leaders.

Caring and discipleship

- A pastoral care team, visiting in the community.
- The offer to hold contact details for church members in case of emergency.
- The compilation of a list of trusted local traders
- A continued commitment to care for the environment
 - reducing grass cutting in the area behind St George's church, allowing the land return to meadow.
 - Installation of new windows and doors to the church centre
- An agenda item on safeguarding at every PCC meeting; attendance by PCC members at Diocesan safeguarding training. A response to the Bishop's case review exercise revisiting the handling of previous safeguarding concerns
- Lent, summer and Advent study groups
- A welcome pack for new residents of Yew Tree Gardens

Infrastructure

- Improved external church signage at St George's
- Approval for a plaque for the Te Deum window in St George's honouring Dinah Freke, following her death
- Investigations for the siting of a defibrillator outside the St George's Church Centre
- The possible underpinning of St Margaret's church porch

Governance

- We agreed on terms of reference for the PCC and sub-committees. Each member was encouraged to serve on at least one sub-committee.
- We revised our safeguarding policy
- Giving has increased following concern over the financial position at St George's, where expenditure had exceeded income for the last three years. Weekly giving rose during the year by 75% of the shortfall required to meet the outgoings. The treasurer updated the congregation regularly for on-going prayer and action.
- St Margaret's financial position was stable throughout the year.

- We approved a template to help organisers of events track income and expenditure.
- We decided to continue as two separate parishes in the one united benefice in preference to becoming one parish but continuing to meet jointly as PCCs and Standing committees.
- We identified the major risks faced by the churches and adopted measures to reduce the risks.

	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013
BAPTISMS	7	6	4	4	5	11	13
CONFIRMATIONS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
COMMUNICANTS	919	624	715	-	-	-	-
ATTENDANCES	2720	2643	1995	-	-	-	-
WEDDINGS	6	2	3	5	6	5	7
FUNERALS	6	7	2	1	2	2	6
ELECTORAL ROLL	-	36	-	34	-	-	38

TUFFLEY FAMILIES AND COMMUNITY PIONEER

The last few months

It was good to get back into work last term, albeit with a few interruptions here and there. My study path has changed to a more local position with less demands on scheduled time which means I have been able to be more flexible with my week. I have enjoyed some useful time networking and meeting with new members of the Gloucestershire pioneer teams. It's always good to share ideas and be encouraged together. As a part-time worker, I find it challenging to limit what we do and get involved with. There is always so much more we could be doing and many more people we could be supporting and loving.

Soul Space

This is a new service of worship held once a month at St George's Church. It's run café style with a simple intention of just being in God's presence and offering worship together. We plan to have our young people get more and more involved in the leadership and development of this. Last month the talk

was given by a very inspirational 15-year-old young lady from Grange Baptist and this month our music team will consist only of young people. It would be wonderful to spread the word across Tuffley and see this service become something that non-church goers would feel comfortable to be part of and find Jesus for themselves.

The Church in Tuffley

I was overwhelmed at the generosity of our congregations who contributed and achieved an amazing target of putting together 40 hampers for families in Tuffley. A wonderful team has been built who will be fully able to continue the work next year. At a recent meeting, the leaders expressed their wish to find ways to increase the help we can give.

We also realise that the need for help is not only at Christmas time and are looking at projects that help feed children throughout summer holidays. Working with our partners in schools would be essential for this to go well. There is possibly some knowledge amongst members of our steering group of schemes that have worked in other areas that may be useful to share.

I have had the pleasure of running the Alpha course with a small group, initially hosted by English Martyrs Church, but now held in my home. We have decided to continue meeting – the sessions are good and the conversations very helpful.

Our plans for Easter events together are already in place and we are encouraged that our regular community attendees are becoming part of our teams running the events.

Schools Work

We had some really lovely Christmas events at the end of last year. All the local schools came to church to do something with us. Links are improving and I have become a governor at Harewood Infants School. Planning is already in place for Explore Easter and we look forward to building relationships and confidence with more community and Church in Tuffley volunteers who are getting involved.

I have chatted with a couple of mums about coming to a craft group after school drop off or just before pick up. It would be a safe space for mums to

come together and encourage each other whilst doing a bit of craft. I'm planning to look at available spaces for this next term - it could even be an unused class space in one of the schools.

Community Projects

Meeting with other members of the community to organise projects and events is most rewarding. There's another of our loved events coming up in one of the local supported care homes – an afternoon of Songs of Praise together. Various members of the church support these events where they can. For our Christmas special we were supported by members of all three congregations.

We are currently putting together a project to thank our young members of the community who we consider to be heroes and our Tuffley Festival will be in its 5th year! The team is not as big as we would like, and we know that there are many community groups yet untouched.

Finally...

I consider the best part of my job just to be amongst folks going about their daily lives, sharing my life with theirs, loving and supporting each other as we go and taking every opportunity to love as God loves and share the good news of the gospel with anyone with an ear to listen.

HELEN McGEOCH
Tuffley Pioneer

PASTORAL GROUP

Thank you again to all the pastoral team for their continued help and support.

Thank you to all those members of the congregation who continue to visit the elderly and vulnerable in the parish, often quietly in the background.

During 2019 we met every three months to coordinate our activities, to report on visits, to update each other on those in particular need of support and arrange further visits where appropriate.

On June 18th we held a coffee morning in aid of the Gloucester Alzheimer's Society. This was attended by Andy Richardson from the Society who mingled and chatted about their work. The coffee morning raised £330.00 which went to the Gloucester Alzheimer's Society.

During 2019 we compiled a Trades' Directory from parishioners' contributions. The list is available from either Glenda or Linda.

In November we planned that the regional director of MIND would join our pastoral meeting to talk about mental health issues. However due to sickness this did not happen, and it is now scheduled for 7 May 2020.

Can I ask anyone who is aware of a parishioner needing support, be it a vulnerable neighbour, elderly person or a young family to make it known to Bruce, Linda or any member of the Pastoral team.

Plans for 2020: -

Pursue the mental health issues already planned.

Continue to work to make our church and premises more dementia friendly. We recognise there is more to be done in this area. There is a review pending of the church signage and toilets and it is intended to ensure any proposals are dementia friendly.

LINDA MEDWELL
Pastoral Coordinator

DEANERY SYNOD

The normal format for Deanery Synod is a talk or presentation followed by a business meeting. Anyone can attend these talks, tea & coffee is taken during a refreshment break, and the business part of the evening takes place after the break. Visitors for the talk slip away after the break.

Deanery Synod met 4 times and talks have included:

February: The speaker was Revd Pauline Godfrey, Head of Discipleship and Vocations and Deputy Director Department of Mission and Ministry in Gloucester Diocese. She spoke on "Setting God's people free: Developing confident disciples."

She began by asking us to think about what difference we, as Christians, make when we are at home, at work, at school, or wherever we are. She asked us to liken ourselves to either an orange or a peach. Are we like an orange, made up of different segments, compartmentalising the various activities and parts of our life, which rarely overlap? Or are we like a peach, allowing our faith, our friendships, our hobbies to come together as one? Do we mix with our fellow worshippers outside of church?

April: The meeting was in Discover de Crypt (St. Mary de Crypt Church) when we had an opportunity to look around and see the results of the restoration work before our meeting.

At the beginning of the meeting Canon Nikki Arthy spoke for a few minutes about the vision and mission underpinning the restoration work.

The main speaker was Revd Steve Morris, on his work with Deaf and Hard of Hearing People, and during the business part of the meeting Revd Mike Smith spoke briefly on Christian Giving.

June: the speaker was Revd Tim Hastie Smith, from the South Cotswolds team ministry, who is currently taking the lead on shaping the Wellsprings Sports Ministry Project in the Gloucester Diocese, the aim of which is to reach out and engage with children, young people and their families in sports and wellness centres right across the diocese, such as sports halls and schools.

New Interim Area Dean

There was an introduction to Revd Canon Michael Garland, who has agreed to be Interim Area Dean for the next twelve months. Michael introduced himself and spoke briefly of his ministry in Swansea, Birmingham and latterly Charlton Kings, from where he retired in 2017. Having subsequently thought about and decided against taking up an offer to work in the Falklands, he was asked by Bishop Rachel if he would be willing to serve as Interim Area Dean of Gloucester

City. This offer he accepted, and he will be working alongside Rev Ruth Fitter. Eventually it is hoped that a collaborative model of Synod leadership will be formed, with members of the team serving each other's needs and the needs of the city. He thanked Ruth for her hard work in holding the fort during the transition period.

October: the guest speaker was Revd Canon Andrew Braddock, Diocesan Director of Mission and Ministry, who spoke about the Deanery Strategic LIFE Plans – a process aiming to ensure the most efficient use of resources for ministry, mission and evangelism across deanery boundaries and across the diocese.

He asked how can we ensure that we have strategies in place today which will support ministry in a way that affirms God's grace? To do this we need to have conversations, and a process to engage in these conversations.

Strategic planning will be a supported process, and Canon Dana Delap, currently Team Vicar of Vale and Cotswold Edge Benefice, has been seconded to roll out the programme. She will work with the Bishop's Council to support each deanery. During this process she will map particular concerns, and from there will help deaneries develop strategic plans to support the sharing of resources and potential to further the mission of the church.

All the Business Meetings follow a conventional format:

Apologies

Matters arising (from the minutes)

Deanery Finance and Parish Share

Deanery Mission and Pastoral (Covers parish vacancies and appointments)

Area Dean's Notices

Any Other Business

Date of next meeting

So, the meetings are not onerous, why not think about being the other Deanery Synod representative for St. George's?

DEREK KINGSCOTE
St George's Deanery Synod Representative

ST GEORGE'S CHURCHWARDENS

Greetings! Here we are again for yet another scintillating report for our last year! Don't get too comfy as it's only a short one. Sadly, we said a fond farewell to Dinah Freke, but Dinah will be remembered. The church and grounds continue to be looked after by our work party and we are extremely grateful to all of you who look after our church, the centre or take an active role in our services. Whether you make coffee, serve, are a welcomer or just attend and smile at us, we think you're all terrific. Earlier in the year we had our church cleaning week. Many of you volunteered to make our lovely church spick and span. What a fine job you did too! We also had a car park fundraise and to the few fabulous people who turned up to help thank you. We raised £230.49 for St George's Church funds. Here's to our next car park fundraise.

In the background, throughout the year we sort out jobs that need doing. We don't always spot everything though, so if you're aware of something or you have an issue that needs raising, please let your Churchwardens know. We are here for you, anytime and value all your support.

MIKE BRAMMER AND SYLVIA EVANS

ST MARGARET'S CHURCHWARDENS

This time last year, I was the sole Churchwarden, and I was worried about the lack of new blood among church officers. In my report last year, I said: "we need people to fill the vacant roles, otherwise we are on borrowed time".

I'm glad to say that at the 2019 APCM, Hans agreed to join me as Churchwarden. More than that, Mike Smith, Pete Best and Lorraine Best have all joined the PCC, bringing fresh ideas and experience. Mike Smith is often in Manchester on weekdays but takes part in PCC meetings by Skype: an arrangement which works remarkably well, thanks to Hans's technical oversight.

We reported last year that the two PCCs and Standing Committee of the benefice are meeting jointly. This has continued to work well. In March, the

two PCCs considered going a step further by initiating a scheme for a united parish. In the event, this did not secure unanimous support and we decided not to proceed further at the moment. No doubt this will be considered again at some future stage but meanwhile the present arrangements have shown the advantages of closer working.

Jilly Ponter has stepped down from the PCC but is continuing as Electoral Roll Officer. Hans Rackham is continuing as Treasurer but is working closely with David Westcott, Treasurer of St George's, so that the accounts are presented in a similar way.

Care of the Building and its contents

The **new nave roof** has generally settled down well, but we had one leak in early April 2019. This was at the W end of the N side, where the roof abuts the stonework. Our surveyor David Newton has modified the detail of the lead soakers and the flaunching, and this work was done by D A Cook's, who have now been paid the final retention.

We have not made a lot of progress with the **structural repair of the porch**, referred to in last year's report. Trial pits were dug in the summer by Chiz Harward, who is an archaeologist. His report gave us not only the vital information about soil and foundations but also set out the archaeological situation.

Our Structural Engineer, Sinclair Johnston, now considers that underpinning may be too difficult and risky. We may instead be "stitching" the outer wall of the porch to the main fabric of the church. We are still awaiting guide prices. Mike Smith has agreed to review and guide the PCC as to its options: his engineering background will be very helpful.

There have been no other significant issues. We must however mention our new "Virtual Christmas Tree" which was used on the tower for Christmas 2019. Hans has made this from scrap wood. It is roughly the same size and shape as a real tree but comes at zero cost. After dark, you would barely know the difference! Another first for St Margaret's: thank you, Hans.

Church Life and Worship

Attendances at our services have remained stable with no significant changes. Family Praise continues in good heart, and as in recent years we had united All-age services at Christmas, Palm Sunday and Harvest. The Thursday 1030 communion service has a small but faithful congregation and is a much-valued part of our church life.

A Churchyard service took place in late September and was well-supported, notably by people who look after graves but who don't normally attend church. This is something to repeat and to develop.

The Candlelit Carol Service for 2019 saw the introduction of a new large-print carol book, also an informal seating area in the chancel, which was used, as we hoped, by young families.

Our new rota system for reading and leading intercessions has worked well for its first year. It is good to involve more people in the planning and running of our services.

Newsletter

As usual, we circulated two newsletters, in spring and autumn. These are really aimed at friends of St Margaret's who live at a distance or who for whatever reason can't regularly be part of our congregation. A copy is also pinned up at St George's and of course any who would like one are welcome to have a copy. The last few newsletters can be found on the benefice website under "What's on". Go to <http://www.glos-stg-stm.org.uk/>

New Housing

Construction of the 250 new houses at Yew Tree Gardens, to the S of Grange Road, is well under way and we will soon be considering ways of reaching out to the new population. Meanwhile draft plans are now being discussed for no fewer than 2000 houses stretching all the way to Naas Lane, with local community facilities and industrial units as well. This is a major political issue and raises huge concerns about transport, infrastructure and flooding. It could be that within ten or fifteen years Whaddon parish will be transformed.

Tanzania Link

During the year, we were able to send a gift of money to our partners at Eden church in Tanzania. This went with a message of goodwill, conveyed by a group visiting from Hucclecote church. We had a first-hand report and talk at an evening service, from Margaret Edwards, who was a member of the group that visited.

Onward giving and social action

We have always been fortunate to have generous supporters, without whom St Margaret's could not function. We believe in the principle of onward giving, to promote God's work in the world, and we continue to support a number of charities including Gloucester Foodbank.

JONATHAN MACKECHNIE-JARVIS

MOTHERS' UNION

We began the year with our AGM and once again there were no changes to the officers, Sylvia remained as Branch Leader, Dianne as Secretary and Mike as the Treasurer. I would like to thank both Dianne and Mike for their continued support and good work. We are few in number and I feel it is incumbent on us all to try and encourage new members. I am happy to approach anyone in the congregation so if you know of anyone who might be considering joining Mothers' Union please let me know.

The speaker for our February meeting was unable to be with us following an administrative error and we will book him for 2020. Our meeting was therefore quite short with tea and biscuits enjoyed during a chat.

March saw us welcome Ann Apperley from the English Martyrs church to talk to us about how Lent is observed in the Catholic faith. This is not very different from our own Lent celebrations although they do observe the saints' days during this time.

In April we were thrilled to welcome back Lorraine Parsloe to speak to us on "Queen Mary did not approve". This talk was all about two famous music hall artists, Marie Lloyd and Vesta Tilly. Marie was known for her saucy lyrics and

innuendo in her songs and fell foul of the Purity Committee. Privately she suffered severe domestic abuse. She was refused entry into America because she had shared a cabin with a man on the sea journey across the Atlantic. She was also not allowed to perform at the Royal Command Performance. Her health began to fail, and she died in 1922 at the age of 53. Vesta Tilly was born in Worcester and her first performance was in Gloucester at the age of four. She was mainly known as a male impersonator and she did make it to America on several occasions. Vesta also appeared in the Royal Command Performance although Queen Mary and the ladies in the royal box showed their disapproval by holding their programmes in front of their faces during her act. During the first World War she used her songs to recruit young men to the army. Lorraine finished her talk with music hall songs which we could all join in with.

Margaret Daniels was our speaker in May. She is known as the Bard of Barnwood and she regaled us with some of her poems. These ranged from the amusing to the thought-provoking. Her subjects covered memories of her childhood and her time at university. There was even a poem about her dog's flatulence which had us all laughing. Margaret finished with a poem about the Mothers' Union as she had been taken to a meeting as a child. A very enjoyable afternoon.

Unfortunately, the attendance at our June meeting was fairly small. This was a great shame as Nigel Warwick had come to talk to us about Severn Freewheelers. They are a group of volunteer motorcyclists who transfer medical scans, blood, baby milk and other vital supplies between hospitals. The "blood bikes" connect and cover Gloucester, Worcester and Hereford. The bikes supplied by BMW have been bought by various other means, including Morrisons. Their shifts run from 7.00 p.m. to 7.00 a.m. with many of the volunteers holding down fulltime jobs as well. Nigel said that some nights are very busy while other times it can be quite quiet, but they must be alert at all times.

Our July summer social was cancelled due to illness and holidays.

In September we enjoyed a talk from Arlene Howard from the charity Beyond Boundaries. This was begun in 2003 to help save the life of a small boy in China who needed heart surgery. The charity worked in China with vulnerable children

until 2016 when the laws changed. They now carry out their work with the children in Uganda and Cambodia, providing education and nutrition particularly for children who have been abandoned or orphaned, giving them shelter, medical care and above all love.

The title for our October meeting was Bible Sale. This was bible readings which included some reference to goods which could then be sold to our members. The money raised will be going to AFIA (Away From It All) which is a MU initiative which provides holiday breaks for families in crisis.

Our November meeting was when Mike and Laura shared pictures and tales of their trip to India. Laura's first husband came from India and there are still many of his relatives living there. The slides showed us not only the tourist parts of the country, but also the side of life which the locals live a much poorer way than we have. Mike told us that quite often families have to move their corrugated homes to make way for a new road or other building. All in all, it was an interesting insight into life in India.

As always in December we held our Christmas social with refreshments provided by members. We also listened to some thought-provoking and amusing seasonal readings. We exchanged small gifts and had carols playing in the background while we enjoyed a chat and a cup of tea.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Mike & Dianne for their continued good work and support; also, Sue Bailey and Ann Humphris for providing tea & biscuits each month.

We look forward to a happy 2020 with once again a varied programme. Please spread the word of the work of MU.

SYLVIA CHAMBERLAIN

ST GEORGE'S CENTRE

2019 was a fruitful year which culminated in the start of replacing windows and doors of St George's Centre. My thanks and those, I am sure, of St George's Centre Committee must go on record for those who provided donations and grants towards the cost of the work which was carried out by Warmseal Windows. I would remind everyone that the doors and windows are but phase one of what is turning out to be an ongoing project to bring up to date the many fixtures and fittings which date back to the Church Hall's construction in the early 1970's. Looking forward to phase two which will be the stripping out of the Gents and Ladies toilets and replacing the fixtures and fitting to hopefully carry the Centre through to the distant future. Other parts of this ongoing project may well include heating, roofing and flooring. So, fundraising may well be a big part of our business meetings in 2020 and beyond...

I am looking forward to the future of St George's Centre and I anticipate that your Management Committee and the community in general, are as well.

St George's Centre Management Committee members are: -
Darrell Stevens, Mike Mumby, Glenda Stevens, Roger Meadows, Linda Brown, Jayne Close, Margaret Whittle, Jill Ponter and Mike Brammer.

Should you have any concerns regarding any aspect pertaining to St George's Centre please speak to one of the above members who will be pleased to help you themselves or pass your concerns to our next meeting.

Many thanks for your help and support during 2019 and for our future decision making together.

DARRELL STEVENS
Chair

FAMILY PRAISE

Family Praise has been running since about 1995, so we are about to clock up a quarter of a century of all-age worship at St Margaret's.

We regret to say that there has not previously been an annual report that we can remember.

The present pattern is to meet on the first Sunday of each month at 10.30pm, also on Mothering Sunday and Easter Day. On Christmas Day, and Palm Sunday and Harvest Sunday we have a joint all-age service which is then the main (or only) service for that day.

Our services normally last 30-45 minutes. There is a loose liturgical structure, but each service has a different theme, with teaching, activities, prayer and songs to suit.

From November to Easter, the services are largely driven by the Church seasons, then during the summer months we try to work along a given theme. These have included Old Testament figures, episodes in Mark's gospel, and in 2019, events from Acts.

A reminder email is sent out each time in the middle of the preceding week. There are currently 25 recipients

Attendance has been variable over the years, with peaks and troughs. To a degree these are dependent on weddings. Our practise for some time has been to read banns at Family Praise, and this has often had the effect of bringing young couples, sometimes with children as well, into the FP congregation ... at least for a while. There have been some notable exceptions to that pattern: we have attracted faithful members through weddings, while others come back intermittently, especially for baptisms.

For 2019 we had a total of 183 people attending 15 services, an average of 12.2. Very roughly, these would be about one-third children and two-thirds adults. NB These figures do not include the service leaders, nor members of the regular St Margaret's congregation attending the three joint all-age services.

At the time of writing (early 2020) we have not a single wedding booked at St Margaret's, and this means we are at a rather low ebb for numbers. But at Family Praise we have learned to expect the unexpected, and to trust in God's providence. New people have a lovely habit of coming along to see what we do, and old friends re-appear. Perhaps families moving into Yew Tree Gardens will try Family Praise at their new parish church.

JONATHAN MACKECHNIE-JARVIS
Lay Reader, St Margaret's

SUSAN SCOTHERN
Pastoral Assistant

SOCIAL COMMITTEE

Hello! What a fun year we have had. St George's know how to have fun. We sadly said goodbye to Jayne, Linda & Roger who decided to step down from the committee after many years' service. We extend a huge thank you to you all for your help and input.

Throughout the year, we have held quizzes, karaoke evenings, a beetle drive and our fabulous Harvest meal. This year was a truly scrummy meal and thanks was extended to Jill Smith and her team for their great menu. The entertainment was different but enjoyed by the majority!

We need more people to attend our events, or else it's rather an empty hall. Please support us or there isn't any point having a Social Committee. If there is anything you would like to do, let me, or any member of the Social Committee know, and we will endeavour to put it on.

Here's to 2020 where there is already a Beetle Drive and Barn Dance planned.

Thank you for those who support our events

SYLVIA EVANS
Chair

THURSDAY DAY CENTRE

This year's report begins again with the mention of the same problem as we have had in previous years – the need for a permanent cook. Joe and Marlene who had decided to step down at the end of 2017, agreed to continue being the cooks alternating each week with Chris and Sandra, with Hans purchasing the food each week.

The members very much appreciate the fellowship and the hot meal that is provided and also look forward to the weekly bingo and the monthly quiz.

The membership has remained fairly static with an average of fourteen members. We sadly lost one of our oldest members in October - Audrey Webb who is sadly missed.

We made our usual two outings to Highfield Garden World - Spring and late Autumn (for Christmas shopping), and in September some of our members enjoyed another day's outing on one of the Willow Trust boats.

In conclusion, I must again mention my magnificent crew who unfailingly assist each week: - Adam; Chris; Joe & Marlene; Rose and Sandra

Many, many thanks Crewmates.

HANS RACKHAM

RAILWAY SOCIETY

The society first met at Ryelands Junction in February 1992; and has continued to do so nearly every month since.

The six regular steam buffs continue to meet at the Station Master's house, Ryelands Junction (12, Ryelands) throughout the year, normally on the first Thursday of each month.

At each meeting we take a nostalgic look back to the golden era of steam by way of viewing a DVD or two, of which there are many to choose from these days.

Our very select group would welcome anyone who has an interest in the golden age of steam, to join us at our Thursday evening meetings. Do please have a chat with the Station Master, if interested.

HANS RACKHAM
Station Master

CONNECTIONS GROUP

Formed in 2017 the group aims to develop connections with the community and with church members; both listening and 'speaking'.

We have reviewed our use of noticeboards, and work is in progress to re-site and update the current porch notices at St George's. Not all find it easy to locate St George's, so Hans expertly redesigned and remounted the lettering on the church centre to include the word "Church"; it now also has more effective lighting at night. Hans has continued to oversee the website, adding, updating and re-organising material regularly. Helen and Dawn have been increasing the use of the church's Facebook site to promote and report on events.

The weekly newssheet remains a valuable source of information. Jonathan continues to compile a regular informative newsletter for St Margaret's congregation. Upcoming events have been promoted via posters and via the TV screens at St George's, together with photos of recent events. As part of the Church in Tuffley we have liaised with English Martyrs and Grange Baptist promoting each other's services and events.

MUSIC

During the past year the St George's Singing Group has continued to lead the singing on the monthly 'Choir Sunday' communion services. They have broadened their repertoire, to include arrangements of modern worship songs as well as more traditional anthems. At Christmas the singing group led the annual St Georges Carol Service having newly learnt two carols in contrasting styles as choir pieces. Thank you, singers, for your hard work.

Brian Woodruff has kindly returned to play the organ in my absences, which has delighted the congregation, and he has rehearsed and led the singing group for a couple of Choir Sundays.

We have experimented with occasional piano and instrumental accompaniment for some of the hymns, (thank you Helen and David) and this seems to be particularly successful for some of the more reflective music during communion.

The monthly 'Music -makers' has continued during the last year, bringing together musicians and singers from different churches within Tuffley to enjoy playing and singing a wide variety of Christian songs. It has been a good resource for practicing music for the monthly 'Refresh' services, and also for the new cafe style 'Soul Space' services which are being led by Helen our pioneer.

In conclusion, across the different services now available at St Georges, we are using a wider range of musical styles, whilst still maintaining the mainly traditional feel to the 9.30 am Sunday Eucharist.

PAULA RIX

BIBLE STUDY GROUP

Our weekly group continued throughout the year, breaking for the seasonal Lent, Summer and Advent groups. We're studying a 'Discipleship and Evangelism' course over 40 weeks. We look forward to resuming after lockdown; all are welcome!

PETE AND LORRAINE BEST

COFFEE POT

This continued to be 'alive and well' throughout the year, providing a venue for lots of friendships to prosper and new ones to develop. Also, over £1000 was contribute to church funds, plus some for the Alzheimer's Society.

JILL PONTER

ST MARGARET'S ELECTORAL ROLL

Our Electoral Roll number have not changed from last year. We have 36 on the roll but I had been hoping for a couple more names but as we haven't met for a little while I'm hoping that they will still be coming to St Margaret's and will be members of our Electoral Roll.

JILL PONTER