

Rector's Report on 2018 – APCM 2019

1. 2018 was yet another year of positives. I was immensely blessed with a 3 month sabbatical (May – August) the high-points of which were a week-long silent retreat in Wales and a month spent travelling with my family and some friends around Western USA where I took the opportunity to visit several well-known churches. During my sabbatical Danny picked up the leadership reins and did really well learning much in the process. The smooth running of BPC in my prolonged absence speaks volumes of the commitment and high quality of all our staff and volunteers.
2. Lucia and I hosted six welcome suppers at The Rectory for some 55 newcomers.
3. Growth has been offset with some drifting away and so as ever we need to guard the back door.
4. In February three of us spent 10 days in India on a very successful mission trip which has laid the foundations for a further trip in 2020.
5. Tom Brice our half time kids team leader stepped down and Jayde Crouch stepped up. George Pinnegar departed and moved to London.
6. Jacob Ash was appointed a part-time outreach worker and John Earle our part-time caretaker.
7. We said goodbye to Rosie Hayes as Operations Manager in September.
8. The Seder Meal with Dr Richard Harvey (a Messianic Jew) was a huge success. It was profoundly moving and hugely informative.
9. A team attended Spring Harvest at Minehead after Easter and enjoyed a faith-building few days together.
10. The summer camping trip to Focus was wet but happy with relationships deepened around the camp fire.
11. Our new 'full-immersion' baptistery arrived and was soon in use.
12. Our service offerings were unchanged although we continued to talk (at length) about the timings of the two morning services. The 8am dwindled further numerically, the

contemporary services both grew and the 11am remained steady.

13. The Community Lunch went from strength to strength.
14. The Centre continued to attract new bookings and became firmly embedded in the community.
15. Alpha courses saw many make commitments and have borne much fruit.
16. Members of the staff team and PCC attended two 48-hr learning communities called Lead Academy which has helped our thinking about our vision and strategy.
17. We transferred to a new Church management information system called ChurchSuite which after a steep learning curve proved a great success.
18. I was elected to Diocesan Synod.
19. Holiday Club went very well indeed and what was Venue 2 has been transformed into a more outreach-orientated evening activity.
20. Our Connect Groups continue to thrive under Michael Greig's leadership with 180-200 members.
21. The pastoral care load, including caring for the homeless, helping those with addictions, ex-offenders and handling complex safeguarding issues – particularly with vulnerable adults – remained a challenge.
22. It became clear that our aspirations to build a new church primary school came too soon and that this would have to wait for the numbers to stack up.
23. Revd Gussie Walsh retired in October after eight productive years running the villages' ministry.
24. Four of the Benefice's five villages agreed to cede from us and form their own new benefice leaving us with a single parish – Radclive-cum-Chackmore. A large housing estate is being built West of Buckingham in their parish so it makes sense for us to keep this area under our wings.
25. Our glass doors were beautifully engraved after many years of battling with the Diocesan Advisory Committee.
26. As ever I am indebted to
 - a. the Wardens (Paddy Collins & Mike Evans),
 - b. Jan and her heroic team of volunteers in the Office
 - c. Sarah Dumbleton for serving as the PCC secretary and for pulling together the Annual Report
 - d. our dedicated staff team,
 - e. the PCC,
 - f. all you volunteers.