



The PARISH of
Treharris, Trelewis, Bedlinog and Llanfabon

THE PARISH OF TREHARRIS TRELEWIS BEDLINOG AND LLANFABON

Saint Matthias, Treharris | Saint Mabon, Llanfabon | Saint John the Baptist, Nelson

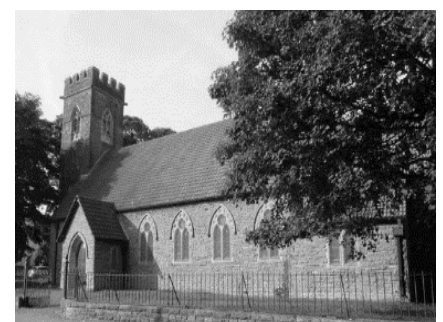
PARISH ANNUAL REPORT 2018

Priest-in-Charge:

Rev'd. Fr. Gareth J. Coombes
The Vicarage
13 The Oaks
Quakers Yard
Treharris
CF46 5HQ

Independent Examiner:

Gary Meredith IPFA
Park Lane
Treharris
CF46 5LT



THE PARISH OF TREHARRIS TRELEWIS BEDLINOG AND LLANFABON

Saint Matthias, Treharris | Saint Mabon, Llanfabon | Saint John the Baptist, Nelson

NOTICE is hereby given that the Annual Vestry Meeting of the parish will be held on Wednesday the 10th of April 2019 at 7:00pm in Saint Matthias', Treharris.

All lay people whose names are on the Electoral Roll of the Parish are entitled to speak and vote and are strongly urged to attend.

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence.
2. To receive and confirm the minutes of the last Vestry Meeting.
3. The Parish Report
 - [3.1] The Chairperson's Report
 - [3.2] The Parish Accounts and Treasurer's Report
 - [3.3] To receive the 2018 Parish Report
4. To receive any reports from the Deanery and Diocesan Conferences and the Governing Body of the Church in Wales.
5. Elections
 - [5.1] People's Parish Warden (1)
 - [5.2] People's Sub Warden - St. Matthias (1)
 - [5.3] People's Sub Warden - St. John's (1)
 - [5.4] People's Sub Warden - St Mabon's (1)
 - [5.5] Parochial Church Councillors (2) (2) (2)
 - [5.6] Sides-persons
 - [5.7] Triennial elections as are necessary
6. To appoint an Independent Examiner of the accounts.
7. To consider any other business of which notice has been given to the Chairperson and to which the meeting consents.
8. The Blessing

G. J. Coombes

The Reverend Gareth Coombes
Parish Priest | Chairperson of the Vestry Meeting

DRAFT COPY OF THE PREVIOUS AVM MINUTES

The Parish of Treharris, Trelewis, Bedlinog and Llanfabon

Annual Easter Vestry Meeting 2018 held on 12th of April 2018

Saint John's Church, Nelson at 6:00pm

Father Christopher Smith, Archdeacon of Morgannwg took the Chair in the absence of Father Gareth Coombes who was on compassionate leave following the recent death of his mother. He offered Fr Gareth his condolences on behalf of the meeting at this sad time and observed a short time of prayer before opening the meeting.

22 members were present:

Vicky Morgan; Lynne Farr; Audrey Wiltshire; Patreesa Humphreys;
Margaret Edwards; Margaret Lloyd; Kate and Richard Thomas;
Mary Williams; June and Michael Lewton; Fiona Parsons; Alison Francis;
Crissie Stock; Jane Grandon; Alison Knight; Shirley Drane; Isabel Jones;
Simon Shaw; Dilys Powell; Mildred Hughes; Pauline Faulkner.

1. Apologies:

Apologies for absence were received from Len Jones, Alan Hoskins, Anna Webb-Price, Ann & Marika Savage-Lewis, Judy Ford and Vanessa Morgan.

2. The minutes of the previous Vestry Meeting:

Meeting held on the 25th of April 2017 at St. Matthias Church, Treharris were presented & accepted as read being proposed by Alison Francis and seconded by Mary Williams. These were duly signed by Fr Christopher.

3. The Parish Report

3.1 The Chairperson's Report:

Copies of the report had been e-mailed to PCC Members with printed copies made available in each church prior to & within the meeting. In his report Fr Gareth commented that it had again been a very busy and challenging year with so many opportunities & events that had continued to shape & build the parish while incorporating the communities. The "Restore & Refurb Project" for St Johns had moved to the next stage with a "Faculty of Works" granted. Hopefully the necessary grant-funding would be secured to begin the work in early 2019.

Smaller grants already received had enabled long overdue improvements to kitchen & toilet facilities in St John's Church Hall. Although the future of the Church Hall was uncertain the improvements had made a huge difference to those using the hall reflecting our service & commitment to the communities of Nelson & Llanfabon. He added that each church served a distinct community yet benefited from being one parish sharing one's gifts.

It had been challenging however when new & exciting opportunities had been met with negativity, lack of enthusiasm & even disapproval. This he added could be overcome as everyone continued to be enthused & energised by each other & the wider community of which we were a part.

During 2017 a significant number had visited St Mabon's Church as reflected in the 'Visitors Book' experiencing for themselves the sacredness, beauty & peace that is St Mabon's. Fr Gareth referred to the church as a precious gem entrusted to the parish, silently touching the hearts of those who pushed the door which remained open, accessible & available daily.

2017 also saw a significant number of pastoral enquiries; liturgies for Holy Baptism & Welcoming; requests for Christian Funerals in Church, Private Chapel & Crematoria as well as providing care & support to the bereaved at such a difficult time. The ministry to the sick at home, in hospital, care & nursing home had been shared & supported by those called to this distinct ministry & licensed as such by the Bishop.

There had also been several liturgies offers for marriage, the renewal of marriage vows & marriage blessings. He emphasised that by sharing in times of both joy & sorrow the Church has had the privilege of walking alongside individuals & families in both their darkest & happiest of times

A further highlight of 2017 was to welcome Bishop June's agreement to renew Dr Fiona Parson's licence as Reader in the Parish & Fr Gareth offered his gratitude for Fiona's willingness in offering to serve the Parish once again.

The parish had various opportunities during the year to develop & strengthen links with communities within the parish: Nursery Infant Junior & Primary School, Clubs & Associations, other Churches & Chapels & also links within the Cluster shared with Ystrad Mynach & Gelligaer.

Another full programme of social events, fund raisers & special services had been held during the year & Fr Gareth offered his appreciation for the time, preparation & effort by various individuals.

Fr Gareth emphasised the need for the whole parish to share a ministry requiring commitment strength & determination as we moved forward through 2018. We should be prepared to adapt & change to the benefit of the communities of which we as the church are part. This we should do with a real sense of joy, excitement & privilege in our hearts.

He concluded his report by thanking each & every person who had supported the life, mission & ministry of the parish within 2017 & looked forward to continued service within the communities of Treharris, Trelewis, Bedlinog & Llanfabon, together he stated a difference could be made.

Archdeacon Christopher added his own thanks & praise to the parish which together with all other parishes in the Diocese of Llandaff faced changes with the appointment of Bishop June. Working & moving together he was assured of new & exciting times.

3.2 Parish Accounts and Treasurer's Report:

Simon Shaw, Parish Treasurer presented a concise & detailed report which had been examined as required by Gary Meredith (Independent Examiner). He commented there had been a slight improvement in the Parish finances & were largely stable in 2017. The net worth at the end of December at £11,287.10 was only £709.33 less than that of Dec'16. He remained concerned that the Parish Income of £36,027.34 from collections i.e. Gift-Aid envelopes, Plate & Tax reclaim, Gift- Direct, cash donations, again fell short of the Parish Share of £39,936.56 with a shortfall of £3,909.22. On a positive note he added that due to the "My Donate" scheme the Churchyards had been maintained with a surplus of £678.49. Simon highlighted it was imperative that we remain cautious in our spending and was ever hopeful that the congregations would realise the benefits to the parish regarding signing up to the Gift- Direct & Gift-Aid Scheme. This he stated would be a challenge to all parishioners for the forth coming year.

Isabel Jones commented on an excessive amount of flower money spent in St John's Church. Simon agreed to address this before the first PCC Meeting.

The report was accepted being proposed by Alison Francis & seconded by Mary Williams

3.3 Parish Reports 2017:

The following Parish Reports which had already been received & accepted electronically by PCC Members were presented and accepted by the meeting being proposed by Alison Francis & seconded by Vicki Morgan.

Deanery Conferences | No Report available

Diocesan Conference Report | This was presented as observer by Alison Francis

Governing Body Report | No Reports available.

Church Wardens' Report | This was presented by Alison Francis & Lynne Farr

Treharris Mothers Union | This was presented by Vicki Morgan / Branch Leader

Mothers Union Llanfabon | This was presented by Mildred Hughes / Branch Secretary

St Matthias Church Choir | Presented by Patreesa Humphreys / Choir Mistress

Gift Aid | Presented by Richard Thomas / Gift Aid Secretary

Merthyr-Cynon Food Bank

Churchyard & Cemetery Maintenance

Messy Church

Compassion UK | Presented by Ann Savage-Lewis / Passion Compassion Advocate

St John's Community Food Co-op | Presented by Alison Francis

5. Elections

Priest's Wardens:

Alison Francis agreed to serve as Priest's Parish Warden for another year.

Dilys Powell agreed to serve as Priest's Sub-warden at Llanfabon for the coming year.

5.1 Two nominations were put forward to serve as Peoples Parish Warden:

Lynn Farr (St John's) & Vicki Morgan (St Matthias) resulting in a ballot.

15 votes for recorded for Vicki Morgan & 7 votes for Lynne Farr.

Vicki Morgan was duly elected as Peoples Parish Warden

The following nominations were presented & accepted:

5.2 Peoples Sub Warden / St Matthias Dennis Sullivan

5.3 People's Sub Warden / St. John's Jane Grandon

5.5 Parochial Church Council:

Nominations to serve on the Parochial Church Council were duly elected as follows in accordance with the decree set up 1st of January 2013 that as a Parish of three churches – two members to be nominated from each church at the Easter Vestry:

St. Johns, Nelson Pauline Faulkner & Simon Shaw

St. Mabon's, Llanfabon Margaret Edwards & Mary Williams

St. Matthias, Treharris Audrey Wiltshire & Len Jones

5.6 Sides-persons were as listed for each church.

5.7 Triennial Elections as are necessary:

Fr Christopher pointed out that these were not due to be held until 2019 but accepted a nomination for Alison Francis to act as Diocesan Conference Representative following the resignation of Sue Carlick.

6. Independent Examiner of Accounts:

It was assumed that Mr Gary Meredith would be asked to continue as Church Examiner. This would be confirmed at the first meeting of the PCC.

Before concluding Fr Christopher offered his appreciation to Fr Gareth / Parish Priest for his continued work within the parish & community & to all Wardens, Officers, PCC Members & laity for their help & support.

7. Any other business:

As there was no other business the meeting was closed with prayer.

INTRODUCTION

The three churches that make up the Parish of Treharris, Trelewis, Bedlinog and Llanfabon are Saint Matthias, Treharris; St. Mabon, Llanfabon; and Saint John the Baptist, Nelson which are in the Archdeaconry of Morganwng, in the Deanery of Caerphilly and Merthyr Tydfil, in the Diocese of Llandaff in the Church in Wales.

Priest in Charge: Father Gareth Coombes

Independent Examiner: Gary Meredith, IPFA

Bank: Barclays Bank

Architect: Hook Mason Ltd.

The Parish of Treharris, Trelewis, Bedlinog and Llanfabon is part of the Diocese of Llandaff within the Church in Wales. The Church in Wales is a province within the Anglican Communion and, as such, exists to advance the Christian religion through world-wide mission. The object of the Parochial Church Council, hereafter the PCC is to ensure that the life and work of the Church within the parish helps to fulfil that mission, both locally and more widely.

The PCC is not a body corporate. Its composition, procedures and powers are regulated by the Constitution of the Church in Wales, as amended from time to time by its Governing Body, set up in section 13(1) of the Welsh Church Act 1914. Elections are held at the Annual Vestry Meeting which must take place on or before the 30th of April. All persons whose names are entered on the Electoral Roll are entitled to vote and to stand for election, age restrictions apply. Before assuming office, every member of the Council must sign a declaration that he or she will be bound by the Constitution.

The Representative Body of the Church in Wales holds the land and property of the Church in Wales, including the churches of St. Matthias, St. John the Baptist and St. Mabon's their contents and churchyards. The Representative Body is an Exempt Charity and was set up under sections 13(2) of the Welsh Church Act 1914. It acts on behalf of the Province in paying the Stipends of full-time clergy; and administers the Church in Wales' Gift Aid scheme and recovers tax on behalf of parishes.

The PCC is responsible, inter alia, for promoting the mission of the Church, the parochial budget and all expenditure thereunder, the care and maintenance of the church fabric and of the churchyards, and for action on any other matter referred to it in accordance with the Constitution. The Council is also the normal channel of communication between the parishioners and the Bishop of the Diocese.

MEMBERSHIP

During the year the following served as members of the Parochial Church Council:

Parish Priest and Chairperson:	Rev'd. Fr. Gareth Coombes
Parish Reader:	Dr. Fiona Parsons (Bishop's Permission to Officiate)
Priest's Parish Warden:	Mrs. Alison Francis
People's Parish Warden:	Mrs. Vicky Morgan
Sub Wardens:	Mr. Dennis Sullivan Miss Dilys Powell Mrs. Jane Grandon
Parish Treasurer:	Mr. Simon Shaw
Secretary to the PCC:	Mrs. Audrey Wiltshire
PCC Members:	Mr. Len Jones Mrs. Audrey Wiltshire Mr. Simon Shaw Mrs. Pauline Faulkner Mrs. Margaret Edwards Mrs. Mary Williams

CHURCH ATTENDANCE

There are currently **118** parishioners on the Parish Electoral Roll (2018)

Number of communicants:

	2018	2017
Easter	86	107
Christmas	96	108

Average Sunday attendance figures:

St. Matthias, Treharris	36	41
St. John the Baptist, Nelson	19	23
St. Mabon, Llanfabon	6	10

The following liturgies have been offered by the parish:

Holy Baptism	11	8
Holy Matrimony	8	5
Marriage Blessing	2	1
Christian Funeral	78	63

THE PARISH PRIEST'S REPORT

I'm sure that you will agree that 2018 has been another busy year for the Parish of Treharris, Trelewis, Bedlinog & Llanfabon.

As we take another opportunity to look back over the last year, we can recognise again many opportunities and events that have continued to shape and build the parish as we reach out into each of the communities of which this parish is a part.

Everything we do as God's Church is only achieved by pulling together as we continue in that mission of building the kingdom in our time and place.

2018 has been somewhat of a difficult year for me personally with the loss of my mother after a relatively short illness. I am extremely grateful to you as a parish, to Fiona, and all those who ensured the Easter liturgies were offered around the parish last year at what was such a difficult time for us as a family.

2018 has seen a number of significant grants supporting the 'Restore, Repair & Refurb Project' at St. John's; thanks to the continued support of Helen Embling, the Diocesan Grants Consultant who has been invaluable to us as a parish. The project team are hopeful that work will be able to begin on phase one during 2019.

Each of the three churches lives by serving very distinct communities yet benefits from being one parish. As part of the established cluster with our friends at the Parish of Gelligaer and the Parish of Ystrad Mynach we share with one another fellowship, support, talents and gifts.

It remains a challenge when many opportunities are frequently met with negativity, a lack of enthusiasm and even disapproval; we are all called to tell our joyful story, grow the Kingdom of God and build our capacity for good.

That said, it is most humbling when we hear how the Church has been able to make a real difference to those we encounter day by day; reflecting aspects of God's love in a very practical and real way in the name of Christ himself.

I have no doubt that the Church has a place in today's often fragile and hurting world.

This is most reflected in those aspects of parish life that often go unnoticed; services of holy baptism and welcoming, requests for Christian funerals in church, private chapels and crematoria, as well as those opportunities to offer care and support to the bereaved. Our ministry to the sick at home, in hospital, those in care and nursing homes is shared with those who are called to this particular ministry.

Throughout 2018 there have been a number of liturgies offered for marriage, the renewal of marriage vows and marriage blessing. Sharing in times of both joy and sorrow, the Church has had the privilege of walking alongside individuals and families in the darkest and happiest of times, which has come to mean so much.

2018 has again seen various opportunities to develop and strengthen our links in the various communities around the parish; nursery, infant, junior and primary schools, clubs and associations, other churches and chapels within the parish and further afield in the established cluster.

A programme of social events, fundraisers and special services has continued to be a means by which the life of the Church can be lived out; requiring a great deal of time, preparation and effort by various individuals of which we must always be thankful.

The ministry that we share together is a calling that requires commitment, strength and determination. May our willingness, positivity and support continue to build one another up in this ministry to which each of us has been called, as we strive to build the Kingdom of God in our time.

Friends, as we look back to 2018, yet look ahead and move forward through 2019 may our hopes and prayers unite as we listen, discern and respond to everything that God is calling us to do with a real sense of joy, excitement and privilege in our hearts.

May I take this opportunity to thank you all; especially those who hold a particular office or responsibility, and those who have supported the life, mission and ministry of this parish throughout 2018.

May God's blessing be upon us as we continue to serve the communities of Nelson, Quakers Yard, Treharris, Edwardsville, Trelewis, Bedlinog and Llanfabon together.

Rev'd. Fr. Gareth J. Coombes
Parish Priest | Priest in Charge
The Parish of Treharris Trelewis Bedlinog & Llanfabon

THE TREASURERS REPORT

Parish of Treharris, Trelewis, Bedlinog & Llanfabon

Parish of Treharris, Trelewis, Bedlinog & Llanfabon

Treasurers Report for Year Ending 31/12/2018

Executive Summary

The Parish finances were largely stable in 2018 with our net worth increasing from £11,287.10 at the beginning of the year to £116,686.94 at the end of December. This figure includes £102,050.00 received in grants, the majority of which were for the St John's refurbishment project.



Summary

Cash	£116,686.94
Credit Cards	£0.00
Investments	£0.00
AT RISK	£0.00
CASH	£0.00
Mortgages & Loans	£0.00
Assets	£0.00
Liabilities	£0.00

The *Standard Form of Accounts* accompanies this report.

Major Expenditure Items

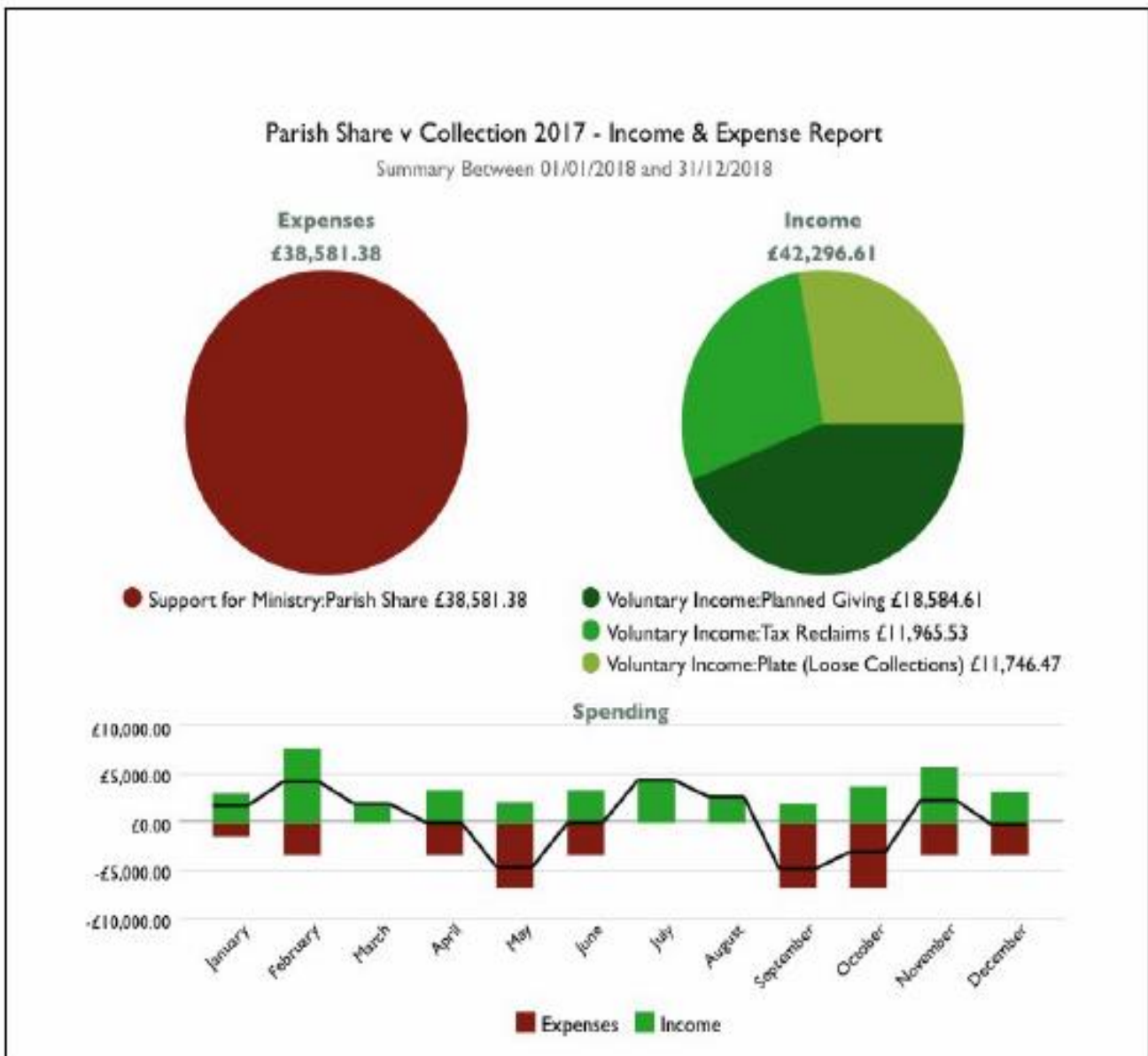
Parish Share

The *Parish Share (net of the rebate)* totalled £38,581.38 - representing 57.6% of total expenditure compared with 60.7% in 2017.

Voluntary Giving increased by 17% year over year to £42,296.61

It is worth reminding readers of the various ways which are available to each member of the congregation in helping us meet our costs. These include making a one-off gift to the parish to support the ministry and mission of the Church, considering increasing giving to meet the challenge of inflation, signing up to Gift-Direct which enables the parish to receive a regular gift each month, and of course maximising your gift if you are a UK Taxpayer through the Gift-Aid scheme - all at no cost to you. The challenge of meeting this burden continues to be a challenge for us all.

A graph showing the comparison of Voluntary Giving against Parish Share is shown below



Churchyard Maintenance

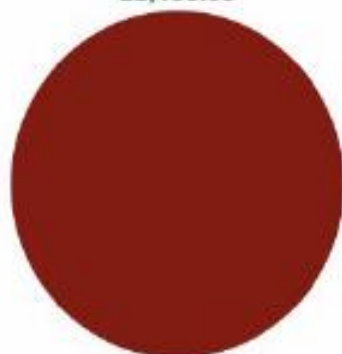
The BT "My Donate" scheme continued to be a big factor in raising funds for maintaining the two graveyards and the success of the *Sunday Night Quiz* in *The Lord Nelson* pub together with individual donations and a grant from Nelson Community Council all contributed to the Parish raising over £5,280 for this purpose.

The breakdown of income & expenses for churchyard maintenance is shown on the following page.

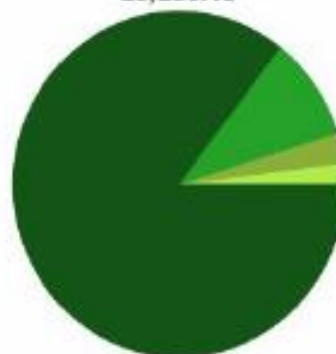
Churchyard Maintenance - Income & Expense Report

Summary Between 01/01/2018 and 31/12/2018

Expenses
£2,400.00



Income
£5,280.43



- Church Property: Maintenance of Other Property: Churchyard
- Voluntary Income: Donations: Churchyards £4,513.30
- Voluntary Income: Tax Reclaims: Gift Aid: Llanfabon £515.88
- Voluntary Income: Grants Received: Nelson Community Council £150.00
- Voluntary Income: Tax Reclaims: Gift Aid: St Cynons £101.25



Income & Expenses by Category

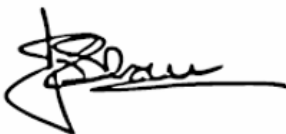
Category	Total
Income	
Voluntary Income: Donations: Churchyards	£4,513.30
Voluntary Income: Donations: Churchyards: Llanfabon	£3,664.97
Voluntary Income: Donations: Churchyards: St Cynons	£848.33
Voluntary Income: Grants Received: Nelson Community Council	£150.00
Voluntary Income: Tax Reclaims: Gift Aid: Llanfabon	£515.88
Voluntary Income: Tax Reclaims: Gift Aid: St Cynons	£101.25
Income Total	£5,280.43
Expenses	
Church Property: Maintenance of Other Property: Churchyard	-£2,400.00
Church Property: Maintenance of Other Property: Churchyard: Llanfabon	-£1,200.00
Church Property: Maintenance of Other Property: Churchyard: St Cynons	-£1,200.00
Expenses Total	-£2,400.00
TOTAL	£2,880.43

Utilities

The parish spent £4,402.34 on gas, electricity and heating oil in 2018 compared with £3,775.48 in the previous year which is a 16% increase.

Rental Income

Rental Income was down slightly to £2,543.40 in revenue compared with £2,803 in the 2017.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Simon Shaw', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Simon Shaw - Treasurer

March 2019

Parish of Treharris, Trelewis, Bedlinog and Llanfabon

Financial Statement 31/12/2018

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with section 42(3) of the Charities Act 1993 using the Receipts & Payments basis

The Parish has no outstanding loans or liabilities.

Receipt & Payments of Accounts

Account	Balance at 01/Jan/2018	Receipts	Payments	Adjustment	Balance at 31/Dec/2018
Barclays 70582956 <i>Current Account</i>	£5,264.66	£173,050.71	£166,850.00		£11,465.37
Barclays 60582883 <i>Llanfabon Churchyard</i>	£1,352.38	£3,144.87	£0.00		£4,497.25
Barclays 73623203 <i>St Mabon's Restricted</i>	£2.68	£0.01	£0.00		£2.69
Barclays 83726673 <i>Mission</i>	£741.38	£0.55	£616.71		£125.22
Barclays 73473104 <i>St Mabon's Buildings</i>	£0.30	£0.00	£0.00		£0.30
Barclays 33931803 <i>Grant Monies</i>	£2,675.49	£5.38	£0.00		£2,680.87
Barclays 93498875 <i>St John's Project</i>	£0.18	£96,823.85	£0.00		£96,824.03
Barclays 23971074 <i>St Cynon's Churchyard</i>	£1,250.03	£2.85	£161.67		£1,091.21
Total	£11,287.10	£273,028.22	£167,628.38		£116,686.94

The amount paid to the Clergy to cover costs & expenses was £2,711.44

There were no other payments to employees during the year.

Approved by the PCC of the Parish of Treharris, Trelewis, Bedlinog & Llanfabon on

3rd April 2019 | Circulated and approved electronically.

and signed on their behalf by Rev'd. Gareth J. Coombes Position Priest-in-Charge

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

Parish of Treharris, Trelewis, Bedlinog & Llanfabon

Parish of Treharris, Trelewis, Bedlinog and Llanfabon

Independent Examiners Report to the Members of the Parochial Church Council

I report on the Financial Statement of the Parish for the year ended 31/Dec/2018 which are set out herein.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The PCC considers that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act)) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act);
- to follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners (under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act); and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements

- to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; and
- to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act have not been met; or

(2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Independent Examiner:

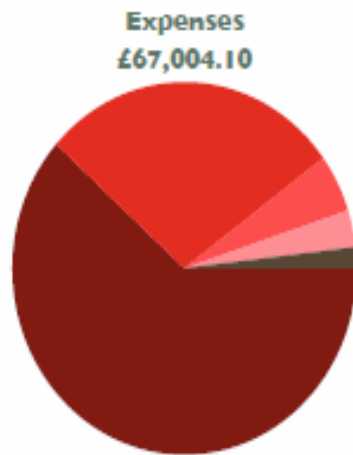
Signature Date:

Name:

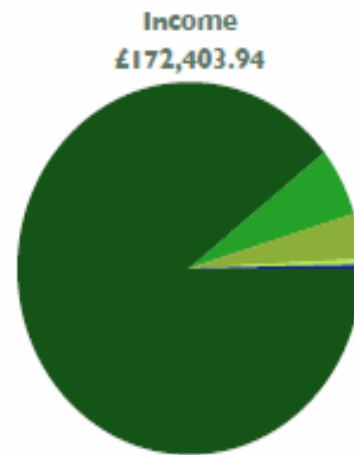
Address:

Standard Form of Accounts 2018 - Income & Expense Report

Summary Between 01/01/2018 and 31/12/2018



- Support for Ministry £41,292.82
- Church Property £18,950.14
- Parish Activities £3,393.28
- Other Resources Expended £2,148.58
- Mission & Grants £1,219.28



- Voluntary Income £154,016.15
- Other Trading Activities £10,216.58
- Charitable Activities £6,801.00
- Investments £795.11
- Appeals Income £575.10



Income & Expenses by Category

Category	Total
Income	
Appeals Income	£575.10
Appeals Income - Other	£575.10
Charitable Activities	
Charitable Activities:Fees:Funerals	£6,012.00
Charitable Activities:Fees:Interment	£154.00
Charitable Activities:Fees:Weddings - Other	£490.00
Charitable Activities:Fees - Other	£145.00
Investments	
Investments:Interest Earned	£45.94
Investments:Investment Income	£749.17

Income & Expenses by Category (Continued)

Category	Total
Other Trading Activities	£10,216.58
Other Trading Activities:Money Raising:EasyFundRaising.co.uk	£32.94
Other Trading Activities:Mon...Raisers:Christmas Prize Draw	£981.00
Other Trading Activities:Mon...as Raffle:St Johns & St Mabons	£1,374.85
Other Trading Activities:Money Raising:Fund Raisers:Crucifix	£160.00
Other Trading Activities:Mon...aisers:Festive Fun Day:St Johns	£847.21
Other Trading Activities:Mon...rs:Festive Fun Day:St Matthias	£1,185.41
Other Trading Activities:Mon...g:Fund Raisers:Light Up A Life	£32.00
Other Trading Activities:Money Raising:Fund Raisers:Marmalade	£84.15
Other Trading Activities:Mon...rs:Parish Dance & Prize Draw	£1,133.00
Other Trading Activities:Mon...d Raisers:St Mathias:Bonus Ball	£1,374.00
Other Trading Activities:Mon...thias:Christmas Lights & Santa	£87.23
Other Trading Activities:Mon...d Raisers:Summer Prize Draw	£16.00
Other Trading Activities:Mon...aisers:Traidcraft:Orders Taken	£121.40
Other Trading Activities:Mon...rips:Exeter Christmas Markets	£85.00
Other Trading Activities:Mon...ng:Fund Raisers:Trips:Stratford	£108.84
Other Trading Activities:Money Raising:Magazine Sales - Other	£50.15
Other Trading Activities:Mon...St John's:2nd Nelson Brownies	£840.00
Other Trading Activities:Mon...:Rent Received:St John's:Be Fit	£10.00
Other Trading Activities:Mon...ived:St John's:Flower Arranging	£15.00
Other Trading Activities:Mon...ived:St John's:Gelligaer Players	£15.00
Other Trading Activities:Mon...ceived:St John's:Knit & Natter	£297.40
Other Trading Activities:Mon...eived:St John's:Slimming World	£360.00
Other Trading Activities:Mon...:St John's:Thespians in Church	£26.00
Other Trading Activities:Mon...ceived:St John's:Young Farmers	£410.00
Other Trading Activities:Mon...t Matthias:Local Health Board	£420.00
Other Trading Activities:Mon...Matthias:PeopleTogether Club	£150.00
Voluntary Income	£154,016.15
Voluntary Income:Donations:Altar Frontal	£500.00
Voluntary Income:Donations:Churchyards:Llanfabon	£3,664.97
Voluntary Income:Donations:Churchyards:St Cynons	£848.33
Voluntary Income:Donations:FForest Lodge	£50.00
Voluntary Income:Donations:Flowers:Gift Aid:St John's - Other	£140.00
Voluntary Income:Donations:Flowers:Gift Aid:St Matthias	£20.00
Voluntary Income:Donations:Flowers:St John's:Christmas	£20.00
Voluntary Income:Donations:Flowers:St John's - Other	£125.00
Voluntary Income:Donations:Flowers:St Matthias - Other	£70.23
Voluntary Income:Donations:Paper Shop Treharris	£16.50
Voluntary Income:Donations:Parish	£850.55
Voluntary Income:Donations:Sanctuary Lamp	£69.00
Voluntary Income:Donations:St John's	£25.00
Voluntary Income:Donations:St John's Project	£1,441.70
Voluntary Income:Donations:St Matthias:Trelewis Primary School	£100.00

Income & Expenses by Category (Continued)

Category	Total
Voluntary Income:Donations:St Matthias - Other	£1,208.30
Voluntary Income:Donations:Votive Candles:St Matthias	£222.26
Voluntary Income:For Mission:World:Compassion	£297.70
Voluntary Income:Grants Received:Garfield Weston	£95,000.00
Voluntary Income:Grants Received:Lottery Funding	£2,000.00
Voluntary Income:Grants Received:MTCBC	£400.00
Voluntary Income:Grants Received:Nelson Community Council	£150.00
Voluntary Income:Grants Received:Restoration Fund	£2,000.00
Voluntary Income:Grants Received:Tesco	£2,000.00
Voluntary Income:Grants Received:Welsh Water	£500.00
Voluntary Income:Planned Giving:Envelopes:St John's	£3,854.10
Voluntary Income:Planned Giving:Envelopes:St Mabon's	£476.64
Voluntary Income:Planned Giving:Envelopes:St Matthias	£4,899.75
Voluntary Income:Planned Giving:Gift Direct	£9,354.12
Voluntary Income:Plate (Loose Collections):St John's	£3,801.17
Voluntary Income:Plate (Loose Collections):St Mabon's	£1,569.56
Voluntary Income:Plate (Loose Collections):St Matthias	£6,375.74
Voluntary Income:Tax Reclaims:GASDS	£8,650.87
Voluntary Income:Tax Reclaims:Gift Aid:Compassion	£1.25
Voluntary Income:Tax Reclaims:Gift Aid:Gift Direct	£2,263.53
Voluntary Income:Tax Reclaims:Gift Aid:Llanfabon	£515.88
Voluntary Income:Tax Reclaims:Gift Aid:Parish	£87.75
Voluntary Income:Tax Reclaims:Gift Aid:St Cynons	£101.25
Voluntary Income:Tax Reclaims:Gift Aid:St John's Project	£345.00
Income Total	£172,403.94
Expenses	
Church Property	-£18,950.14
Church Property:Maintenance of Churches:Boiler Repair:St Mabons	-£264.00
Church Property:Maintenance of Churches:Electricity:St John's:Church	-£122.31
Church Property:Maintenance of Churches:Electricity:St John's:Church Hall	-£302.41
Church Property:Maintenance of Churches:Electricity:St Mabon's:Church	-£102.94
Church Property:Maintenance of Churches:Electricity:St Matthias:Church	-£1,730.70
Church Property:Maintenance of Churches:Gas:St John's	-£465.87
Church Property:Maintenance of Churches:Gas:St Matthias:Church	-£1,119.55
Church Property:Maintenance of Churches:Heating Oil	-£558.56
Church Property:Maintenance of Churches:Improvements:St John's	-£1,634.44
Church Property:Maintenance of Churches:Insurance:St John's:Church	-£624.28
Church Property:Maintenance of Churches:Insurance:St John's:Church Hall	-£701.71
Church Property:Maintenance of Churches:Insurance:St Mabon's - Other	-£433.90
Church Property:Maintenance of Churches:Insurance:St Matthias:Church	-£338.78
Church Property:Maintenance of Churches:Insurance:St Matthias:Church Hall	-£1,342.39
Church Property:Maintenance of Churches:Insurance:St Matthias - Other	-£546.88
Church Property:Maintenance of Churches:Repairs:St John's	-£311.00

Income & Expenses by Category (Continued)

Category	Total
Church Property:Maintenance of Churches:Water:St Matthias Church Hall	-£256.22
Church Property:Maintenance of Churches:Water:Vicarage	-£567.80
Church Property:Maintenance of Other Property:Churchyard:Llanfabon	-£1,200.00
Church Property:Maintenance of Other Property:Churchyard:St Cynons	-£1,200.00
Church Property:Maintenance of Other Property:St John's:Hall	-£3,240.00
Church Property:Maintenance of Other Property:St John's - Other	-£725.00
Church Property:Maintenance of Other Property - Other	-£1,161.40
Mission & Grants	-£1,219.28
Mission & Grants:Home/World:Christian Aid	-£50.00
Mission & Grants:Home/World:Compassion	-£1,000.00
Mission & Grants:Home/World - Other	-£80.00
Mission & Grants:Parish:Food-Co-op	-£89.28
Other Resources Expended	-£2,148.58
Other Resources Expended:Money Raising Costs:Christmas Events	-£1,823.28
Other Resources Expended:Money Raising Costs:Licences	-£137.42
Other Resources Expended:Money Raising Costs:Prize Draw Tickets	-£78.00
Other Resources Expended:Money Raising Costs:Traidcraft:Invoices Paid	-£109.88
Parish Activities	-£3,393.28
Parish Activities:General Parish Expenses:Key Cutting	-£12.00
Parish Activities:General Parish Expenses:Printing:Hire Charge	-£547.20
Parish Activities:General Parish Expenses:Printing:Usage Charge	-£181.68
Parish Activities:General Parish Expenses:Professional Fees	-£91.80
Parish Activities:General Parish Expenses:Flowers:In Loving Memory	-£26.34
Parish Activities:General Parish Expenses:Flowers:Mothering Sunday	-£57.30
Parish Activities:General Parish Expenses:Purchased Flowers:St Johns	-£225.00
Parish Activities:General Parish Expenses:Stationery	-£274.96
Parish Activities:General Parish Expenses - Other	-£269.25
Parish Activities:Maintenance of Services:Altar Requisites	-£1,317.75
Parish Activities:Maintenance of Services:Organist	-£390.00
Support for Ministry	-£41,292.82
Support for Ministry:Clergy Expenses:Fr Gareth	-£2,441.23
Support for Ministry:Clergy Expenses:Locum	-£270.21
Support for Ministry:Parish Share	-£38,581.38
Expenses Total	-£67,004.10
TOTAL	£105,399.84

DEANERY CONFERENCE REPORT

No report available

DIOCESAN CONFERENCE REPORT

This report is from the Presidential address at the Diocesan Conference September 29th 2018 where Father Gareth, Alison Francis and myself attended. The Bishop of Llandaff, June Osborne, introduced the Strategic Plan for the future in her presidential address to members of the Llandaff Diocesan Conference. She outlined how the new strategy, compiled following extensive consultation, would help guide the work of the diocese over the next five years. More than 300 people attended the conference held at Bridgend College, Bridgend. In her address, Bishop June said, "When I spoke at the Diocesan Conference last year, I was very new to this diocese and to being a Bishop. I spoke about creating a new map for ourselves as a diocese. Since then I've been mapping out for myself the diverse parts of this wonderful diocese and listening to all that you've had to tell me. Thank you for an exhilarating year. I've done my best to get to know you and your parishes and to be known. Things I've enjoyed have included all eleven deanery visits, Lent addresses in the three archdeaconries, a lot of confirmations, licensing able new clergy and Readers, celebrating the creation of new teams, opening new churches and schools, blessing roofs, porches, car parks and people, entertaining more than 700 at Llys Esgob including the active and less active retirees who are great company and make crucial contributions to our desire to maintain parish worship: and my learning of Welsh is coming on very slowly. Although I live on the edge of Cardiff by the Cathedral, most days I head somewhere out of the City. Last weekend it was Skewen and Dyffryn, this weekend will find me in Sully and Penrhys. Bishops are the living embodiment of the church catholic. Parishes are connected to one in a diocese, to the wider church through the Anglican communion and to the historic church through our traditions of faith and the three-fold orders of ministry. Parishes are not independent congregations but individual parts of a living organism. In our diocesan cycle of prayer we pray daily for the Anglican family (it was a real delight for me to entertain Bishop Paul Saker, Moderator of the Church in Bangladesh and Archbishop Justin Badi, Archbishop of South Sudan this summer) and of course we pray for the whole Diocesan family. Cardiff Deanery can't prosper unless Rhondda Deanery prospers. The Vale of Glamorgan Deanery is enriched by understanding what Neath might be doing in mission enterprises. Thank you for the privilege of being your Bishop and serving in this extraordinary diocese. I love it and like you all I want it to prosper and to tell a joyful story. Thank you to my senior colleagues, Bishops Staff and Area Deans especially, who have such wisdom and insight and kindness and good humour. I know they're excited about the years which lie ahead and I'm thrilled to be working with them as first-class colleagues. Thank you to the clergy who serve us with such dedication and often lifelong commitment. Ministerial priesthood is costly and sacrificial. The number of our clergy, how we deploy and resource them and how we enable them to feel valued will be a measure of our character as a diocese. Thank you too to our more than 400 Readers, lay ministers

and lay officers who are similarly essential to the life of our parishes. Thank you to the Heads and staff and governors of our church schools which not only offer spiritual formation for the next generation but are an important part of reinforcing our Anglican identity. It's been great to welcome our new Director of Education Andrew Rickett into the Diocesan team this year and to know he's already making a great impact. The first thing I want to ask of us all is Big Relationships. Llandaff and its diverse communities are no stranger to the importance and quality of relationships. It is why many of our communities have survived with great endurance and dignity when under threat from social change or economic adversity or even tragedy. We can dream dreams, plan projects, restructure parishes, repair buildings but everything will falter and fail unless we invest in what I call 'big relationships' – strong, healthy, honest, grown-up relationships which matter to us. 'See how they love one another!' was the observation of pagans of the church in its early days. Roman society took note when love and big relationships characterised the church. 'By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another' was the core of Jesus' mission strategy. The first thing I heard you ask of me was clarity. Clarity about who we are and where we're going. Clarity about our priorities – that's what a Strategic Plan is, an elaborate phrase for putting first things first. Without clarity we've no signposts, we don't know which direction we're heading, we can't make coherent decisions, can't set a budget, can't know how to deploy our resources. Clarity with confidence was what people said they wanted therefore I've been in the business of helping us develop a shared vision, a picture of what we'd like the diocese to be in five years. A clear sense of both our ambition and our confidence in the gospel. I started by listening and learning, rejoicing and praying. Then we tested what I thought I'd heard you say in two consultations. If you didn't take part in either of them you can't have been paying much attention because the invitation to do so was everywhere and as a result of them we changed what we first thought. For instance, one of the things you said was important to you is education, church schools and our work with young people. So at this year's Diocesan Conference instead of opening the marketplace to everybody we've asked our church schools to show us something of what they're up to. Please go and engage with the children and staff who've given up their Saturday to be here. Ask them questions about their schools, take an interest in what they're up to, and send them home knowing they're valued as part of the Llandaff family. One consultation was on the draft of the Strategic Plan itself. The other was on our understanding of the nature of Christian ministry and I want to thank Stephen Adams who chaired this diocesan conversation and the representatives from each deanery who facilitated those discussions. Their findings are finding their way into our planning as we shape the delivery of our goals. If we wish – as it says in the section defining our character as a diocese – if we wish to have clergy who are less under strain, who feel valued and who lead by example then we need to strengthen our understanding of both priestly and lay ministry to better effect. So, let me now introduce to you the Strategic Plan which was agreed unanimously by the Diocesan Standing Committee, representatives from each Deanery, at the beginning of this month. I say unanimously. What you need to know is that we are of one mind that these are our priorities for the next five years.

These are the aims we share and the ambitions which we think will make a real difference to the diocese. Changes we care about and which excite us. Yet we weren't unanimous about how to communicate them, how to convey these aims to our parishes and deaneries. Firstly, we weren't sure that the strapline 'Where faith matters' was the right overall title or mission statement. If people have any chance of remembering it, we know it has to be very short but some were worried that 'where faith matters' implies that anyone without faith or searching for faith would feel excluded. Well we can't have that so we're still considering our strapline – the short, memorable phrase which helps people recognise the Llandaff Diocese. Incidentally the text is a result of feedback in the consultations that we need to be more explicit about our rootedness in God. This isn't a management plan but us together discerning where God is leading us and how the Church needs to change in the face of some challenging conditions. We are people moving forward, following God's lead, believing that he is present in every community and circumstance. Our job is not to involve him but to discern what he's already up to and for us to get involved in recognising and building a good future. Faith matters because it can change the story we tell and we want to tell a joyful story. Faith matters because it brings us closer to a relationship with God through Jesus Christ. Faith matters because through it we live lives to the full, abundantly. I'm not going to talk about every aspiration within the Plan but let me highlight some things which will be our pledges as we tell a joyful story, grow the kingdom of God and build our capacity for good outcomes.

- There's the theme of outreach. So many of our parishes already have a marvellous instinct for reaching out into their communities, responding to the needs they find there and becoming part of what builds up the common life of where they are. It is where sustaining our future lies. It's the best possible way to celebrate our faith. It's who we are as Anglicans: the small miracle of sustaining a Christian presence in every community. We could do it better. Our buildings are often a limiting factor rather than fit for the purpose of outreach, but some have produced fantastic solutions. Make a visit to St Paul's Aberavon if you want to see an innovative solution to an intractable problem motivated by a desire to serve the local community.

- But not everyone can build a brand, new community centre and so our buildings are another theme in this Plan. Can we share the burden of our buildings better in the next five years and how urgent is this? We heard many people put the issue of buildings high on their list of concerns. Later in the morning you can express a view.

- There are a number of aspirations around communicating better. Getting our message of transforming love and a transformational community into the public sphere. In particular we want to better reach children and families but especially young adults. We risk becoming an exclusively elderly church and so we need to take some initiatives which will convince those under 35 that the Church in Wales has something to offer them. We're a diocese packed with Colleges of Further and Higher Education: 80,000 University students in Cardiff alone and our ministry to that age group is negligible so we need to take some new initiatives.

- The support and well-being of clergy and the formation and equipping of lay Christians to be confident in their faith are both high on my agenda. Yes, we need to increase vocations to the ordained ministry if we have any chance of replenishing the parish clergy in the future. But we also need to nourish, teach and pastorally support every person who is living the joyful story of being a Christian in their family, in their neighbourhood and at work. We also need to encourage those Christians to help contribute to our decision-making processes and to build the diocese as a healthy and authentic organisation.
- One of the ways we hope to do that is by taking advantage of the special centenary year for the Church in Wales in 2020. It also happens to be the 900th anniversary of our Cathedral so there's every good reason for marking and celebrating our history as a diocese and as a Province in that year.

With my colleagues I decided that a profound way to honour that history would be to mark a Year of Pilgrimage. Pilgrimage has a very long and distinguished history within our land and as an expression of journeying in faith. There are ancient pathways of pilgrimage across our Welsh landscape which we hope to recapture and make available to parish or community groups. There are traditions of inner pilgrimage and patterns of prayer and spirituality which we hope to give access to both for those too infirm to set out on the Cistercian Way and for those who need to find their spiritual resources in daily life. But pilgrimage is also one of the established means by which people who have lost or never found faith choose to engage with the Christian message. Memorialisations, ceremonials and pilgrimages draw people into an encounter with their own spiritual hunger and we need to become more adept at drawing alongside them and telling our story of how Jesus laid claim to our lives and how he might have something to offer them. So, my hope is that all our parishes will find some expression of pilgrim life in 2020. It may be that your congregations will consider joining the Diocesan Walsingham Pilgrimages or your young adults will join me on a Diocesan Youth Pilgrimage to Taizé in July of that year. It may be that you invite everyone in the parish to walk to a site sacred to your community, perhaps a war memorial or to a place of local historic significance. We'll launch our Year of Pilgrimage at the Diocesan Conference this time next year and receive from the Diocese of St. Asaph the pilgrim's staff which symbolises a similar year they had in 2013/14 following the Diocese of Monmouth in the previous year. In this context let me say a word about the Clergy School next May. Clergy Schools are a routine element in the way dioceses support and equip their clergy. All dioceses have them and Bangor Diocese has just taken all its clergy to London. They are never cheap but nor are they frequent and I'm certainly open to doing them differently in the future. Our own clergy have, on a number of occasions, gone to Christ Church, Oxford and benefitted from some intellectual challenge whilst also having time to find out what each other's ministerial experiences have to offer. And let's be honest: it is also a way we can express how we value the clergy who work tirelessly on our behalf. My decision that the next Clergy School should be in Santiago de Compostela in Northern Spain takes our clergy to the historic

heart of pilgrimage. Pilgrims from all over the world and for many centuries, including many from Wales, have walked 'The Camino' and Camino' and prayed at the shrine of St James. We are connecting with that spiritual experience and will come back better equipped to play our part in a Year of Pilgrimage in Llandaff. We will be staying together at the Pilgrim's hostel next to Santiago Cathedral, so less lavish accommodation than many Clergy Schools but I know our clergy will have an opportunity which many have only dreamed about, bringing back wider horizons and a stronger sense of a pilgrim faith. Today we endorse our Strategic Plan. We'll launch it to a wider audience and distribute it around the Diocese once it's polished and printed. But here today it's presented to you, for you to tell us what excites you, and to identify what in it you consider to be most urgent. We own these priorities in the full knowledge that our society is losing touch with the core of Christian believing: whilst at the same time it feels uncertain and anxious, longing to engage with hope, faith and love both as individuals and as communities. Simply urging them to attend Church on a Sunday morning is unlikely any longer to have much impact. But telling a joyful story, engaging confidently with our local communities and walking alongside them, able to tell them why it is that faith matters - that aim may well enable them to see us as fellow pilgrims on life's journey, able to give account of a Christian hope which then might become attractive to them. Such is our ambition and the goal for which we are shaping our diocese in the next five years. As the Apostle Paul once said "Be joyful because you have hope."

Susan Carlick | Parish Elected Member - Diocesan Conference

GOVERNING BODY REPORT

No report available

THE CHURCHWARDENS' REPORT

2018 has been another exciting year in the life of the Parish of Treharris, Trelewis, Bedlinog and Llanfabon. We are engaging more with the local communities and this is an important part of the life and mission of the church which is both supported and encouraged by Bishop June, "The church's mission is, at its very best when it recognises the way of Christ in the shared life of the community." The refurbishment of St. John's is ongoing and at times seems like a very slow process. Fr. Gareth has spent long hours on his computer filling in forms to apply for grants and this hard work has been very successful. Thanks to a large grant from Garfield Weston we, at last, reached our target figure of £200,000 and can look forward to the tendering process and actually beginning work. Garfield Weston came to visit St. John's and their emphasis was on our work with the wider community in order that our bid for the grant should be successful. Other grant providers similarly focussed on our work with the community as a prerequisite for success. Hopefully, next year will see the completion of this phase of the project. One of the positives of beginning this process was the discovery that we still have barn owls in the tower. We, and many of the local residents, are proud of

our owls. They were spotted at dusk last spring flying around the church and the Old Rectory and were photographed by neighbours so that everyone could enjoy watching them on social media. As part of this emphasis on outreach and working with the wider community we enjoyed two very successful 'Festive Family Fun Days' in November in St. John's and December in St. Matthias. Father Christmas was able to fly in and greet the long queues of children waiting to share their Christmas lists as well as to receive a gift from him. A warm summer night at the end of June saw Bedlinog Rugby Club as the host of our second and hugely successful Summer Dance and Prize Draw. We would like to thank the members of Bedlinog Rugby Club for allowing us to use their premises and for looking after us so well. We hope our third dance will be equally successful and will be held in the Dan-y-Graig Club in Treharris in June 2019. The dance followed hard on the heels of our Summer Trip to Stratford upon Avon. As people left the bus they asked about the next trip. This was to the Christmas markets in Exeter and had local people so eager to sign up that we filled two coaches. Everyone said how much they had enjoyed themselves and are looking forward to the next trip. These activities are quickly becoming parish annual events. Another important service that has been introduced in the last three years is the "In Loving Memory" service. This year it was held in St. John's in November and next year it will be held in St. Matthias'. People who have been bereaved are invited; finding the service a great source of comfort along with the daffodil bulbs which flower the following spring. Towards the end of 2018 St. Matthias' Church Hall became the new home of Treharris People Together Club meeting every Wednesday Afternoon. The hall is used for various community courses throughout the year. Treharris Scouts and Beavers use the upper hall. St. John's Church Hall is used by St John's Crochet, Knit and Natter; St John's Community Food Co-op and Larder; Slimming World; Brownies and Gelligaer Young Farmers as well as Gelligaer Players. Both branches of the Mothers' Union continue to support the mission of the church by attending weddings and baptisms as well as providing refreshments after special services. During Lent a simple meal of soup, bread and cheese is provided and donations go to help the work of Compassion. Dr. Fiona Parsons is our Reader, and we would like to thank her for her work assisting Fr. Gareth weekly and especially during the weeks last year when he was away from the parish. Finally, we would like to say thank you to all those people who work so tirelessly to make our services special and keep our buildings and their grounds looking so good: St Matthias' Choir and Patreesa, our organists Martin and Alan; flower arrangers, Audrey, Marjorie and Mary; those who keep our grounds and gardens looking so good, Michael Lewton, Mary Dare, John Coombes and Dilys Powell as well as all the welcomers' who are the first faces visitors see.

Vicky Morgan | People's Parish Warden
Alison Francis | Priest's Parish Warden

SAINT MABON'S CHURCH LLANFABON

Everyone in the parish was delighted when Father Gareth informed us that St Mabon's church was to remain open. It is indeed the 'jewel in the crown' amongst our churches, and has been a religious site since the sixth century. Over the last few years it has been the scene of a number of baptisms, weddings and funerals. Every Sunday at 4:30pm it is open for Evening Prayer and for the Holy Eucharist on the first Sunday of each month. The services follow the liturgy of the 1984 Book of Common Prayer for use in the Church in Wales (the Green Book), and it is good to hear these time hallowed words at these services. St Mabon's is also open from 10am - 8pm every day, and the visitors' book makes interesting reading. People from various parts of the country and from abroad have come there, often because of past family links with the church, or because they have stopped off while out walking in the countryside. Comments they have made reveal how much they have appreciated the beauty, peace and tranquillity of this special place. Last Easter Sunday St Mabon's was the setting for the 6am dawn Mass of Easter and Confirmation, and Bishop June was very much enamoured with the church. The Parish Quiet Days are held here and through the Offices of Morning Prayer, Evening Prayer and Compline, in addition to the Holy Eucharist, there is opportunity for worship and quiet reflection. At first a number of parishioners attended services here, but in recent months numbers have dwindled. Father Gareth and I would like to see more parishioners showing their support of St Mabon's by setting time aside on some Sundays to attend a service here and enjoy the special atmosphere it engenders.

Fiona Parsons | Parish Reader

TREHARRIS MOTHERS UNION

The year began with the Wave of Prayer at the end of January. The theme this year was "In Mary Sumner's Footsteps" and those of us who were able, met in the church hall for ten minutes of prayer. Our AGM followed at the beginning of February. The annual report was read & accepted. The financial report had been examined by Gary Meredith & was also accepted at the meeting. The election of officers for the year, Vicky Morgan branch leader, Audrey Wiltshire secretary and Shirley Drane Treasurer. At the beginning of Lent we decided to dedicate two meetings to Lenten deeds. In February we cleared the church of flowers and greenery & any other items not appropriate for Lent. Afterwards we enjoyed refreshments of pancakes and scones. In March we met in the vestry and cleaned all the brass items ready for Easter Day. At the Mothering Sunday Eucharist our members gave MU bookmarks to accompany the posy of daffodils given by the parish to all who attended church. At the end of April all the MU Deaneries in Llandaff Diocese came together for a fundraising Rainbow Fayre at Twyn Community Centre Caerphilly. Our deanery's colour was orange and so members collected and donated items for the orange stall. Over £2,000 was raised on the day for the MU caravan in Porthcawl. In early May the deanery branches met at St Catwg's Gelligaer to celebrate the MU Deanery festival led by Fr Gary Powell. It was a lovely service celebrating the work of the Mothers Union and afterwards we shared

fellowship and an excellent buffet provided by their branch members. In June some of our members supported Llanfabon MU when they held a Dutch auction and strawberry tea, which raised over £100 for the MU caravan. In August although we don't meet as a branch, members enjoyed a visit to McArthur Glen Outlet and Porthcawl. Unfortunately, the weather wasn't at its' best but we enjoyed a bit of retail therapy followed by a hearty meal in Porthcawl. In September after the summer break we unanimously decided to support the Merthyr Tydfil Homeless Outreach by collecting warm clothing and filling Christmas gift bags with some small presents & treats. The response from the congregation together with our efforts produced over 40 bags of warm clothing and gifts that were taken to Treharris Library by the end of November to be distributed before Christmas by Jayne Edwards and her helpers. Also, in September, our branch was asked to help out at the MU caravan, as it was Merthyr & Caerphilly Deanery's turn on the rota. So, Audrey & I travelled to Trecco Bay Porthcawl on changeover Saturday to sort the laundry & make up the beds for an incoming family. We also took a welcome pack of tea, coffee, bread, milk plus some other essentials to start their holiday. Afterwards we enjoyed a well-earned lunch at the resort. During the year we sponsored two families from Treharris who were in need of a welcome break at the caravan. September was also the month we elected a new Deanery Leader for Merthyr & Caerphilly Deanery. Judy Hopkins had decided to step down at the end of 2018 after completing three years. Lowrie Washington-Jones was nominated and duly elected at our Deanery meeting that was presided over by the Reverend Canon Steven Kirk, Area Dean. In November, the branch officers enjoyed an evening meal at the Llanfabon Inn. This was a lovely opportunity to thank Judy for all her hard work as Deanery Leader. At the beginning of December, the parish held a Festive Family Fun Day at St Matthias church. Our contribution was a gift bag stall & "name the dragon" which raised over £100 combined. We also helped with the mulled wine & mince pies after the Christmas lights ceremony in early December when the church was full as parents brought their children to see Santa in the grotto. Before we finished for the Christmas break members & friends enjoyed a Christmas meal at the Tommy Box Carvery in the Navi Treharris. Fr Gareth, Emma and Tom joined us. Sadly, at the end of November one of our former members passed away suddenly. Winnie Morgan had been a member of our branch from 1992 to 2014 ...she was also a member of the church choir and a faithful communicant at St Matthias.

Vicky Morgan | Branch Leader

LLANFABON MOTHERS UNION

On Monday Feb 5th Corporate communion and AGM; we held an enrolment service and four members were enrolled Ann Lock, Jane Grandon, Jodie Burnett Wren, Jane Gibson. This was followed by our AGM where the three officers were re-elected to continue in their roles; Lynne Farr-Branch Leader, Crissie Stock-Treasurer Mildred Hughes-Secretary. Monday Feb 19th Speaker: Sarah Harris Chaplain for Mental Health A really topical evening raising many issues of Mental Health so relevant in our church and community today. A lively evening with discussion and full participation. Sarah's

role is so important and she spoke well on the issues. The Second Sunday in Lent is traditionally a Mothers Union Sunday where members are asked to attend the Sunday Worship and take part in the Service It was a good opportunity to offer our support to Fr Gareth and the Parish. Monday March 5th, Speaker Lowrie Washington-Jones "Aims and Organisation of the Mothers Union" This meeting was cancelled due to the weather Lowrie will come as a priority in 2019 and we look forward to that. Monday March 19th Speaker Margaret Stark Unfortunately Margaret could not make it for personal reasons. We swapped her evening with Marjorie who gave us a very popular evening on flower arranging. Great to see so many displays on Face Book next day. One of our favourites and a big "Thank You" to Marjorie. Monday April 16th Speaker Ann Savage Lewis "Compassion". It was good to welcome Ann, Marika and Rupert. Ann spoke from the heart about Compassion and its work, especially in Haiti. Lynne our Branch Leader also continued her work for our brothers and sisters overseas with her role in Christian Aid. We must keep them in in our hearts and prayers. Saturday April 28th was which the Diocesan Rainbow Fair members collected orange items, attended the Fair and helped on our stall raised £180 Monday April 30th Speaker Dr Fiona Parsons: Women in the bible Fiona gave us a very enjoyable evening as ever, and we will welcome her again I am sure in 2019. Tuesday May 8th Deanery Festival at St Cattwg's church Gelligaer. An excellent evening of fellowship with the deanery members of the MU reminding us of the work and fellowship of the Mothers Union which of course is worldwide. Monday May 21st Speaker Margaret Stark who was a former priest at St John's Church. In June we enjoyed a Keep Fit evening led by Ann Lock. It was very enjoyable and showed us that fitness can be achieved with regular exercise and an individual programmed. Also, in June we attended the annual Skittles evening hosted by Gelligaer MU. It was great fun as usual and Marjorie Davies had the prize for the best individual bowler. An article about the evening appeared in In Touch with a lovely photo of Marjorie and Judy Hopkins our Deanery Leader. Also, in June we held our annual Dutch Auction, we were joined by St Matthias MU and we raised £160 for the caravan. We also received news in June of two donations to the Caravan. One of £150 from The Thursday Club in Nelson, and one of £250 from Islwyn Indoor Bowls Club. We have sent letters of thanks for their generous donations. In July we held our corporate communion and enrolled two new members Pat Miles and Sian Shankland. It was a lovely service followed by a buffet, enjoyed by all. A collection of toiletries from Mothers 'Union and the congregation was collected by staff from Women's Aid As we continue to support them. There were no meetings during August. We began our Autumn meeting with a cheese and Wine Social evening and it was enjoyed by all. Also in September a special evening was enjoyed by everyone. Bev and Simon Shaw gave a picture and video presentation of their amazing 10 week family holiday in Australia from the outback to the Sidney opera house. It was a real polemic and we all shared their memories of a life time Well done to you all for the amazing planning and delivery of a holiday of a life time. Thank you Bev and Simon for sharing it with us all. Monday October 8th we joined the Parish service of Harvest Praise at St Matthias followed by soup and deserts in the church hall now, a traditional evening. It was enjoyed by all. Monday October 22nd "Memories are made of this" was an

interesting evening where member brought items that recalled meaning full events in their live. They were humorous, sometimes sad and often informative. A good evening where we all got to know each other a little better. Monday November 12th, we held our “Simply Christmas” Party Plan. Everyone enjoyed a colourful evening and our gift was a pottery Fr Christmas to be raffled among members for Christmas. Towards the end of November we had an afternoon visit to Culverhouse Cross. It was an enjoyable trip and lots of fellowship and camaraderie. It was in November that The General Meeting for the Mothers’ Union in the Llandaff Diocese was held in Cardiff. At that meeting Fr Gareth gave a presentation of the work of the Mothers’ Union in the Parish and our links with families in the Community through our work with the Food Bank, the Food Cooperative and Women’s Aid. Needless to say, the feedback is that Fr Gareth’s talk was very well received. We have already had contact with one MU branch interested in setting up a Food Cooperative. We held our Christmas meal in The Railway Inn. It was well attended and a lovely evening was enjoyed by all. Our final meeting was a mince pies and coffee evening. At this meeting we were joined by staff from our local Women’s Refuge as they collected the gifts we had donated to them. The gifts had been blessed in church by Fr Gareth. The Mothers Union and the Congregation had given generously and the Women’s Refuge were very appreciative of everyone’s generosity. Once again we have had a happy and fulfilling year at Llanfabon Mothers’ Union. We have extended our Committee, The committee members are: Sandra Smith, Gilda Davies, Ann Lock, Jane Grandon, and Jodie Burnet-Wren. We continue to enjoy the friendship and support our meetings offer. We are always here for each other and for the community, moving forward in the Parish by the example of our priest Fr Gareth who leads us in the way. Finally, we are all looking forward to the restoration Programme at St John’s due to begin in the spring. An exciting year ahead.

Mildred Hughes | Branch Secretary

SAINT MATTHIAS CHURCH CHOIR

The choir continues to be a valued part of the Church that meets at Saint Matthias.

We are very privileged to have a choir, unlike many churches. The dedicated group of ladies regularly assist with the liturgical aspects of worship and other services.

Occasional anthems have been enjoyed at various times throughout the year, and the choir continues to be part of both wedding and funeral services upon request.

We are extremely privileged to have the professional services of Martin Davies, our organist who plays every Sunday and for weddings, travelling from Penarth.

I would like to take this opportunity to personally thank Martin and all the members of the choir for their support and dedication to the life of the Church through 2018.

Patreesa Humphreys | St Matthias Church Choir

GIFT-AID

I am pleased to report that once again there has been a small but significant increase in the number of parishioners who now make their contribution using the 'Gift Direct' donation scheme and paying by direct-debit. I would like to take this opportunity of commending this scheme to all. Please remember that you do not have to pay income tax to 'Gift-Direct' by direct-debit, but the scheme has the very great advantage of giving the parish a guaranteed monthly income and is entirely confidential.

We have also made some small changes to the ways that you can make your donations this year and I am very grateful for your patience in making these changes work so well; thank you all very much because it has made my task much more efficient and indeed has increased our regular revenue for the parish both towards the parish-share and for our mission work within the communities in which we all live.

Richard Thomas | Gift Aid Secretary

COMMUNITY FOOD CO-OP | FOOD BANK | LARDERS

As a parish we continue to support the Merthyr Cynon Food Bank which is run by Cleide Correia in the Christian Centre on The Gurnos Estate in Merthyr Tydfil. All three churches are drop off points for members of the congregation and the wider community to leave their donations. In 2018 we again made this Food Bank the charity we supported from our Harvest Thanksgiving. We would like to thank everyone for their very generous donations and a huge thank you too to the volunteers who transport the food to the Food Bank on a weekly basis. The Food Bank seems to be a very necessary service which we are very glad to help provision.

The St. John's Community Food Co-op has been held in the church hall every Thursday for over a year and is proving very popular with the regular visitors who drop in for coffee, cakes, a chat with friends, a bowl of delicious soup as well as taking the opportunity to buy some fruit and veg. We have also helped others who needed information about setting up their own community food co-ops. These, too, have been successful. In 2018 with so much publicity about plastic, its effect on the environment and the pollution of the seas we were concerned about our use of so many plastic bags. A solution was found and we owe a big 'thank you' to a generous donation of 500 cloth bags which can be returned and reused week by week. We would like to thank all the volunteers who give of their time and work so hard to help the Community Food Co-op become so successful.

The environment, austerity and the huge waste of food are problems affecting us all in the 21st Century. Supermarkets have been criticised for throwing away food when many people are suffering from lack of funds and food. The Co-operative, Tesco and other supermarkets are now committed to offering food to local community groups that has not been sold and has reached its sell by date. From November 2018 every night has seen collections from three local Co-op stores; Mabon Road, Commercial Street and Fox Street to leave in the porch of our churches. Anyone can come and

help themselves as part of the nationwide FoodShare and FareShare schemes; no questions are ever asked. Hopefully, there is the opportunity to team up with other supermarkets in the future.

CHURCHYARD & CEMETERY MAINTAINENCE

The parish has the responsibility of maintaining the old St. Cynon's Churchyard, St. Mabon's Churchyard and part of Llanfabon Cemetery; all of which continue to hold a special place in the heart of many of the communities we serve.

The challenge of the parish being able to maintain these very special places has been met with the generosity of members of the congregations, those from the wider community and further afield who continue to have a connection.

The use of social media, and an online donation process hosted by BTmydonte; a non-commissioned method of processing donations online has been vital to support the 2018 programme of maintenance.

The parish once again acknowledges the generosity of those who have donated throughout 2019; which has allowed us to maintain these important and significant places with respect throughout the year.

The parish also acknowledges those who have carried out this work on behalf of the PCC at the graveyards at both St Cynon's and St. Mabon's; together with the cemetery at Llanfabon during 2018.

BTmydonate will cease operating on the 30th of June 2019; however, a similar online donation portal has been created with Virgin Money Giving for 2019.