



St Peter's Church, Didcot

Annual Review & Reports For the 2015 Annual Parochial Church Meeting

Contents

• Message from the Priest-in-Charge	Page 2
• Mission Action Plan	Page 3-5
• List of Members of the PCC	Page 5
• List of PCC Committees	Page 5
• PCC Secretary's Report	Page 6
• Ministry Team Report	Page 6
• Churchwardens' Buildings & Fabric Report	Page 7
• Sidesman's Report	Page 8
• Electoral Roll Report	Page 8
• Communications Report	Page 8
• Website Report	Page 8
• Social Team Report	Page 9
• Music & Choir Report	Page 9
• Head Server's Report	Page 9
• Sunday School Report	Page 10
• Youth Group Report	Page 10
• Little Fishes Report	Page 10
• Wednesday Lunchtime Fellowship	Page 11
• Wednesday Church Report	Page 11
• Northbourne School Report	Page 11
• Willowcroft School Report	Page 12
• CTDD Forum Report	Page 12
• Community and Charities Report	Page 12
• Deanery Synod Report	Page 13

The audited Financial Statements of the PCC for the year ended 31st December 2014 are available in a supplementary booklet

Message from the Priest-In-Charge

2014 proved to be a year of consolidation for St Peter's. We began the year with a Confirmation Service for 6 new Christians, members of St Peter's who continue to grow and to contribute to the ministry at St Peter's week by week.

The solid work carried out by the PCC, particularly the Finance team, has made our work over the next few years a little easier, in that we now know our weak areas and where we have done well and can best focus our energies.

With the restructuring of the ministry team, brought about by Jenny's retiring from active ministry (although she continues to provide valued and valuable support in the parish) and with Julie Mintern now in her second year of training for the priesthood, the mission of the parish is continuing to develop and flourish. There is far more lay ministry, with the gifts of a number of our congregation being put to good use. We were able to introduce the new Healing and Prayer team of Fran Childs, Sylvia Adley, Sheila Good and Joe Jones-Jennings. Our Eucharistic ministers are sharing the ministry at Didcot Hospital, with Fr Ernest Adley, Sheila Good, Fran Childs and Keith Mintern sharing communion with those in the hospital, ably supported by Sylvia Adley on the piano, and also carrying out home visits and seeing 'our' people in The Meadows. I am deeply grateful to all who undertake these essential tasks that allow us to minister to those who are unable to come to church, or who need our prayer.

Our Mission Action Plan for 2014/5 follows on from this note. The PCC spent a number of hours producing and refining this as a working document, which will be revised and updated over the next few years as actions are completed. I would like to thank all on the PCC for the work they do managing and building up the parish of St Peter's.

Mark and the choir continue to work hard week by week offer to God the best worship we can. We are fortunate at St Peter's to be able to offer choral evensong on a monthly basis, something which is appreciated by members of other churches who come to experience the excellent music that we offer at St Peter's. The musical offering in 2014 has far surpassed expectation – I know many of the congregation have been deeply moved by the music Mark has produced with the choir this year.

The Great Western Park "problem" has now been resolved with the licensing of the Revd Mark Bodeker, curate at All Saints, as half-time Minister on the GWP. Mark is a very calm and capable minister and I look forward to continuing to work with him as he develops the Church of Christ on the GWP – a challenging prospect for a place with no church building.

The parish finances continue to be a worry and we must all work at ways to plug the gap between our income and the calls on our budget, not least the parish share. At a time when everyone is feeling the pinch the Church of England is no different. If we are to grow as a parish, we need to continue to work together to build the St Peter's family further and to grow out and into the community.

We owe our thanks to a wide group of people who quietly get the (often thankless) jobs done. Many of them will appear in other places in this report. My special thanks go to Margaret and Maurice Meardon, Graham and Rosemary Fry, Ena Dick, the Sheilas (not a group of Australian ladies – just our stalwart social and ministry workers Sheila Brown and Sheila Good), Henry and Jackie Leighton, Derek Smith, Tim Coutts, Frances Hall, Alan and Debbie Wilson, Keith Mintern, Craig Bull, Mark Stanley and the Church Wardens. My gratitude to them and to all those who do so much for St Peter's cannot be overstated.

The Revd Hannah Reynolds

St Peter's Didcot Mission Action Plan 2014-15

St Peter's: Building a community for Christ in South Didcot.

1. Introduction.

St Peter's Church has a strong Anglo-Catholic history, which is centred in the parish system of the Church of England and the importance of the public ministry of all believers. Since its consecration on the new site of Newlands Avenue, with the easily-accessible building, the church and its congregation have built up many community links, which this PCC wishes to support and to build upon.

The financial resources available to the PCC for mission and ministry at this time are extremely limited. The majority of those actions identified are therefore reliant upon the goodwill of church volunteers. Where there is scope to apply for funds for specific mission activities, the PCC will make an application before committing to taking those activities forward.

2. The Great Commandment

St Peter's bases its Mission upon Our Lord's identification of the greatest commandments:

Hear O Israel: the LORD is our God, the LORD is one. ... You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, and all your soul, and all your mind, and all your strength. ... You shall love your neighbour as yourself.

The focus of St Peter's mission is therefore threefold:

- To love God – through worship and service;
- To love our neighbour – through outreach; and
- To love ourselves – supporting and caring for those in the congregation.

2.1 Loving God

St Peter's will continue to offer the best Anglo-Catholic worship it is able, centred in the sacraments, with lay involvement encouraged and welcomed at all levels.

2.1.1 Continuing activities:

- Monthly healing Eucharist to remain in place.
- The recently re-introduced 8am BCP Holy Communion
- The 10am Parish Mass will continue to be the main worship offered by the parish.
- Full Choral Evensong as a core feature of St Peter's evening worship.
- The new style worship in Little Fishes, with regular use of Godly Play story-telling techniques, and a non-Eucharistic service.
- The 12 noon baptism slot for non-'churchy' families, with their attending mass for a month before the baptism as part of their preparation.
- Continued support for the parent-led prayer group at Northbourne School.
- Continued support for the Willowcroft multi-faith prayer group, led by pupils.

2.1.2 New activities.

- Introduce more family-friendly services including:
 - A Christingle service.
 - Possibly a shorter Family Mass, maintaining the musical tradition of St Peter's but with some use of 'school hymns' and a relaxed talk.
- Use 3rd Sunday evening worship to explore other expressions of worship and spirituality, including but not limited to Holy Hour and Benediction; Taize-style services; use of a simple labyrinth; and Compline.
- Establish a lay-run prayer group, meeting monthly for formal evening prayer, but willing to commit to pray daily for the parish.

2.2 Loving our neighbours.

St Peter's has a worship space that allows us to welcome many different user groups into the building. External connections, and regular use of other locations for St Peter's ministry, need further support and strengthening.

2.2.1 Continuing activities

- The strong connections with both Northbourne (VA), and Willowcroft Primary Schools, including through their major school services held at St Peter's.
- Little Fishes mother and toddler group with shared lunch.
- Youth group for year 6s onwards.
- Wednesday Fellowship, for the elderly and housebound.
- Wednesday Church, for those with learning disabilities.
- Care homes and nursing homes – visiting and communion-by-extension services in the 4 care/nursing homes.
- Didcot Community Hospital weekly service of Holy Communion, and regular visiting.
- Home communion and pastoral visiting to the housebound.
- Continued support for the Rutherford Appleton Laboratory Christian Fellowship.
- Chaplaincy to the Didcot Air Training Corps.
- As the historical Railwaymen's Church, continued chaplaincy to the Great Western Railway Society.
- Monthly Quiz 'n' Chips evenings to raise money for local charities.
- Continued support for Didcot TRAIN youth programme.
- Continued provision of Lent/Advent/teaching groups to the wider church community in Didcot through CTDD.
- Associated groups: Didcot Community Gospel Choir, Age UK Singing for the Brain, etc. Having started the Gospel Choir, St Peter's remains committed to this community project and will support and promote its activities where-ever possible. We value the connection we have to Age UK through their use of our facilities and wish to support them.

2.2.2 New activities.

- Employment of a Family and Children's Missioner, with a small grant provided by the Diocese for the next three years.
- More direct links between laity and the schools – help with reading, collective worship, etc.

The **public profile** of St Peter's in the community is not helped by unclear signage and the non-traditional architecture.

- Check possibility of a new fingerboard on Broadway mini-roundabout pointing to St Peter's.
- New notice-board in place of the rotted wooden cabinet beside the main door (funding for this has been offered).
- New v-shaped notice-board on Newlands Avenue in place of the single worn sign, so the church is visible when approaching from either end of Newlands Avenue (funding for this needs to be secured).

2.3 Loving ourselves.

At present there are no home groups at St Peter's. There are a number of congregants who have close friendships, as would be expected. The PCC needs to consider how the existing church family might appear to outsiders, how easy it is to become one of the family, and how to support each other in our faith journeys.

2.3.1. Continuing activities.

- Lent and Advent study groups. Having trialled several different time slots, Advent 2014 and Lent 2015 will have a range of activities offered.
- Prayer intentions. The monthly prayer intentions and prayer list provide a framework for prayer for the parish that should not be underestimated.

- Ministry team/pastoral care team. The re-vamped ministry team is centred on the pastoral care of the St Peter's family.
- The Social Committee.
- Healing and prayer offered during the Parish Mass.
- The PCC itself is central to the care of the St Peter's family – it will continue to work to ensure that the workload is shared evenly with new members being helped into positions of responsibility.

2.3.2 New activities

- The Pilgrim Course. Offered first as Lent Groups and then growing into Home Group(s). The first sessions will be on The Beatitudes.
- Following on from the '*Last Things*' film evenings in Advent: another selection of taught Film Study Evenings planned for Summer – theme '*Being Human*.' Films under consideration at present: Silent Running [1972]; Rise of the Planet of the Apes[2011]; Transcendence [2014]; and I, Robot [2004] or Blade Runner [1982/2007].
- The work of the new prayer group (mentioned at 2.1.2) will pick up the prayer cycle of the parish and flow through all the activities planned for St Peter's.

List of PCC Memebers

The following served on the PCC as ex-officio members for the 2013-2014 year: Revd Hannah Reynolds, Revd Joy Carter, Mrs Fran Childs LLM, Mrs Jenny Loder LLM, Mr Hugh Collins-Rice (Churchwarden), Mrs Julie Mintern (Churchwarden), Mrs Shona Allen (Deanery Representative), Mrs Margaret Mearden (Deanery Synod Representative), Mr Andrew Stangeways (Deanery Representative) and Mr David Dancy (Diocesan Synod Representative).

The following served the PCC as elected members for the 2013-2014 year: Mrs Sheila Brown, Mr Craig Bull, Mr Alan Wilson (Deputy Churchwarden), Mrs Judith Harris, Mr Joe Jones-Jennings, Mr Keith Mintern, Mr Mark Stanley, Mr Tim Coutts and Mrs Alison Driscoll.

Mr Jim Perry was also co-opted onto the PCC for the duration of the current year as a non-voting member.

Mrs Frances Hall served as PCC secretary.

Frances Hall

List of PCC Committees

Standing Committee: This is the only committee required by law. It has power to transact the business of the PCC between meetings subject to any directions given by the Council. This committee has consisted of Rev Hannah Reynolds, Mr Hugh Collins-Rice, Mrs Julie Mintern, Mr Alan Wilson, Mr Craig Bull, Mrs Margaret Meardon and Mr Andrew Strangeways.

Stewardship and Finance: A budget for the forthcoming year is presented to the September PCC; this is to include the figures for the parish share. Provisional figures for the year past are to be presented to the January PCC. Completed accounts for the year past are to be presented for formal adoption to the March PCC ready for the APCM. An interim report is to be presented to the July PCC with figures to either May or June as feasible. Thanks this year for the Financial Management of the church go to Mr Craig Bull, Mr Keith Mintern (especially for his Gift Aid work) and to Mr Maurice Meardon for his meticulous recording of weekly giving. It should be noted that the PCC analysed the monetary procedures in place and can confirm they are compliant with the Diocesan recommended procedures.

Music and Choir: To generally assist and advise the incumbent and musical leader in developing music in the church as a means to support the chosen liturgy. Thanks go to Mr Mark Stanley for the endless hours he puts into ensuring that the music is appropriate to the occasion and for his excellent choir leadership.

Social Team: To provide and promote welcome and friendship within the parish, to encourage members of the congregation to be involved with any activities and to raise funds to maintain the fabric of the Church. This has been a diminished committee this year and has been supported by several members of the congregation; Mrs Debbie Wilson (Summer Fete), Mr Henry & Mrs Jackie Leighton (Quiz Nights), Mrs Sheila

Brown (Quiz night Charities), Mr Maurice Meardon (Quiz Night bar and Plant Sale), Mrs Margaret Meardon (co-ordination of endless events from Deanery Synod refreshments to the Summer Fete Raffle), Mrs Clare Megson (Sunday coffee rota) and many other members of the congregation who have supported the above.

Frances Hall

PCC Secretary's Report

This year the PCC has met 6 times. Reports are received for each meeting to cover the following aspects of Church life: Mission and Pastoral care, Youth work, Northbourne school links and Social and Charity events. We receive regular updates regarding Churches Together in Didcot and District (CTDD) and the Deanery Synod. Our Finance Team keep us up to date on the financial situation. Our Churchwardens keep us informed regarding the maintenance of the church and grounds. A sincere thank-you goes to all the PCC members for taking time out to serve the church in this way.

There has been a lot of discussion this year regarding the provision of clergy across the Deanery and the way ministry will be expanded across the newly expanding residential areas such as Great Western Park. The PCC received a visit from Andrew Gear, Parish Development Advisor, and discussed and subsequently agreed to support Fran Childs in her OLM training. This includes members of the parish being actively involved with the training process and thus the parish learning and growing through the process. In September the PCC met for a morning to develop the parish Mission Action Plan. This looked at the parish's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Current plans in action stemming directly from this are the process of installing a new notice board to increase the visibility of the church and the appointment of a Children and Families Missioner to further St Peter's ministry in this area.

Frances Hall

Ministry Team Report

The Ministry Team has changed in its membership several times over the past year as its role within the parish has been refined.

At the beginning of the year, the Ministry Team was, in effect, the "leadership" team consisting of the Church Wardens, Priest-in-charge, Licensed Lay Ministers and Pastoral Care Leader. During the first half of 2014, the group met to discuss pastoral care issues, plan special services and arrangements for the staged retirement of Mrs Jenny Loder LLM.

We sadly had to say "goodbye" to The Revd Joy Carter in October. Having had a nasty fall in Church in 2012 during the inter-regnum, Revd Joy had a succession of health problems but was looking forward to a return to ministry and so it came as a bad shock to hear that she had died in hospital in October. As a parish we are deeply indebted to Revd Joy for all she did both before and after her ordination and to her dedication to duty during the inter-regnum. May she rest in peace, and rise in glory.

With the retirement of Jenny Loder from daily ministry, after many years of dedicated service to the parish of St Peter's, we decided to review the committee structure of the parish as a whole.

The PCC remains the primary management body of St Peter's, and so the elected members are the most important to the continued health of the parish as a whole. The Standing Committee is now the "leadership" group of the parish, making recommendations to the PCC on a number of subjects. This is made up of the Church Wardens, Treasurer, Priest and Lay Minister and three members of the PCC.

The Ministry Team now consists of those who are responsible for the day-to-day pastoral care within the parish and is made up of Ms Judith Harris (Pastoral Care Leader), Mrs Fran Childs, Mr Keith Mintern and The Revd Hannah Reynolds. This meets monthly to discuss matters of concern and to ensure that no-one is overlooked.

Ministry within the church has also been reviewed and the Sunday prayer corner ministry has been broadened from the LLMs to a team of lay ministers made up of, Mrs Sylvia Adley, Mrs Fran Childs LLM, Mrs Sheila Good and Mr Joe Jones-Jennings. There are plans to extend the ministry of the church in 2015 through the establishment of a Pastoral Prayer Group.

With one ordinand, Mrs Julie Mintern, already in training it was exciting for us to have our LLM, Fran Childs, accepted for training as a minister with a local focus. Fran begins her training in January 2015 and all things being equal will be ordained Deacon at Petertide 2016.

A summary of the work that the Ministry Team has done on behalf of St Peter's over the past year is set out as follows:

- Presiding ministers and preachers provided for the regular pattern of worship, including:
 - the Sunday 8am BCP Holy Communion;
 - Parish Mass;
 - Choral Evensong;
 - Holy Week and Easter services;
 - Little Fishes;
 - Thursday morning said Mass;
 - St John's Guild monthly service;
 - the Wednesday Lunchtime Fellowship;
 - Parade services for the 2410 (Didcot) Squadron Air Cadet Force;
 - Advent and Christmas Carol Services;
 - Christmas Services;
 - Crib Service.
- Comprehensive rotas drawn up for services, including readers and intercessors
- 18 Baptisms and baptism preparation
- **TBA Funerals**
- Preparing 7 candidates for Confirmation and holding one Confirmation Service
- Interments of Ashes
- Occasional services, including the re-dedication of a memorial stone
- Pastoral visiting and Home Communions
- Communion services at Marlborough Court
- Providing 2 ethics and religious teaching sessions for Didcot Girls' School
- Providing pastoral support in the community in the aftermath of the murder of Jayden Parkinson
- Hospital chaplaincy, including regular Wednesday Communion Service
- Welcoming and supporting the monthly Wednesday Church worship for adults with learning difficulties
- Weekly collective worship at Northbourne School
- Regular collective worship at Willowcroft School
- Occasional church services for Northbourne School and Willowcroft School
- School visits to the church
- Supporting the Youth Group, the Sunday School and their leaders
- All Souls' Tide Service of Remembrance on 2nd November
- Compiling the Prayer Diary for the website and Magazine
- Leading Lent Groups
- Leading Study Groups
- Providing Spiritual Direction for individuals
- Writing regular articles for the magazine

The Revd Hannah Reynolds

Churchwardens Building and Fabric Report

We have been fortunate this year that there has been no need for major maintenance or refurbishment. As always we are very grateful to the small band of dedicated people who work so hard to keep the church and grounds looking good. If anyone had the time to offer some help we would be very pleased to hear from them. The successful appeal for a replacement lawn mower has been a great help and thanks to all those who generously contributed.

We are aware that the boiler, which is as old as the church, will not go on for ever and we need to be making financial plans for its replacement whenever that might be.

The Quinquennial Inspection of the church which takes place in 2015 will determine priorities for future work on the church building.

Hugh Collins-Rice

Sidesman's Report

Report to follow – Alan Wilson

Electoral Role Report

This year we have 97 people on the Electoral Roll as against 88 last year.

Margaret Meardon (Electoral Roll Officer)

Communications Report

We continue to publish 100 copies of the Parish Magazine per issue. This consists of 10 issues, but with double issues for July/August and December/January. My continued thanks go to all those who distribute the magazines and collect the subscriptions when they become due at the start of each year. There are 40 named copies which are collected personally from the Church. My thanks go out to all those who contribute articles each month,

I remain extremely thankful to Keith Mintern who continues to keep the Church Website up to date. This is a great asset for visitors and for people wishing to find out what's going on at St Peter's.

Margaret Meardon (Magazine Editor)

Website Report 2013

During the year the website has continued to grow, and now contains 68 pages and 35 downloadable documents (comprising yet another 351 pages).

During the year it received nearly seven thousand unique visits, with over fifteen thousand individual pages being viewed. Whilst most visitors came from the UK we also received 'hits' from 43 other countries (10 more than last year) - the most popular this year being (in descending order) USA, India, France, China, Australia and Germany; over 50% of visitors spending over five minutes reading about us.

The most visited pages are the Calendar, list of recent Events and Notices followed by Information, Contacts and Music; the most common downloads being the Parish Profile and archived Church magazines.

There is a website search facility on the Home page which is regularly used to look for items, not only on the current, but also the archived section of the website and Church Magazines back to 2011

The importance of having an active web presence is obvious when it is noted that the highest number ever of first time visitors in any one week (285 - even more than when we advertised for a new priest!) looked at the website over the Christmas period, most using search engines such as Google to locate Christmas services.

Thanks to all those who supply information and photographs; without their input there would be no website!

Keith Mintern - February 2015

Social Team Report

At the moment there isn't really a Social Team as such. Having said that; there is still a small team who continue to raise funds for the church. The plant sale at the beginning May continues to bring a substantial amount of much needed money for our funds as does the Summer Fete, for which we have to thank the sterling efforts of Debbie Wilson (probably ably assisted by husband Alan!)

Thanks go also for the continuing support given to fundraising to Jackie and Henry Leighton for the organising and running the ever-popular Quiz Nights. They involve a lot of organisation for the ordering of food, sorting out teams, the gathering of wine and chocolates for the prizes (including the wooden spoon), setting up and helping to clear away afterwards, and organising a quiz master for each occasion.

If anyone has any ideas for Fundraising, please talk to either Rev Hannah or one of the Church Wardens.

Margaret Meardon

Music and Choir Report

St. Peter's continues to be blessed with a choir full of dedicated and able singers who provide musical leadership for our sung worship. I am continually thankful for the support and encouragement that they give me in my role as Director of Music.

Being able to concentrate much more on the technical approach to our singing and performance has paid huge dividends over the past year. The choir are sounding and feeling much more confident in their tonal quality and musical approach to the many styles of repertoire that we sing. This in turn has led to us purchasing and performing many more new pieces and expanding and widening our repertoire. We have enjoyed learning complete settings of The Mass by Palestrina and Byrd and various new anthems both by ancient and modern composers. There have been many highlights over the past year and our Christmas services and celebrations were particularly special.

One of the joys of directing a choir is being able to watch the progress of the younger singers as they develop both vocally and as musicians. Clement Collins-Rice has been a member of our choir from a very young age and now as a young man will soon be heading off to University. He has been focussing on his singing and has taken various examinations (all passed with distinction) and also applied for a choral scholarship at Oxford University. He has now had a firm offer of a scholarship at Merton College, which has the finest mixed voice choir in the university. This is a marvellous achievement, so please keep him in your prayers as he takes his A levels over the next few months.

As I mentioned earlier, we have a loyal membership and I am always greatly impressed and humbled by their commitment, both to the choir and St. Peters. We enjoy our working time together and have also enjoyed various social gatherings and activities as a group. We always have room for more singers and I would especially encourage any children and adults that may be interested in joining to have a chat with me or to come along to our Friday evening practice which starts at 6.45pm.

The striving for high musical standards at all sung services continues, as does my thanks to those who regularly express their gratitude and appreciation of what we do. Thanks go also to the Reverend Hannah and the ministry team for all their practical and spiritual leadership.

Please do keep us all in your prayers as we continue our work for St. Peter's over the coming year.

Mark Stanley. (Director of music)

Servers' Report 2014

To follow – Alan Wilson

Sunday school Report

Sunday school continues to meet fortnightly with about 8 children attending regularly. In the summer term the children learned about the life, journeys and ministry of Paul. In the autumn, the topic was worship and the children explored different ways to worship, including reflections on war and conflict around the time of Remembrance. Since January, the topic has been one of journeys and crucially, what is special about journeying with Christ. For example, the last session included reflections based around Pilgrim's Progress and the kind of friends we need on our Christian journey. Since November, Helen has been unavailable to run sessions with Sunday school. Jenny Loader has offered to help when she is available. Looking ahead, from September, half the children who currently attend Sunday school will be at secondary school. This suggests that new families with primary school age children are needed as part of the church family to ensure that Sunday school continues.

Alison Driscoll

Youth Group Report

We began the spring/summer of 2014 with a relatively small youth group consisting of 2 regulars and a small number of older members on the books who were balancing social activities with the busy exam period. We spent a lot of evenings in St Edmunds Park making the most of the weather (rain and shine!).

There was no weekend away during the 2014 summer holidays. Instead we elected to run a day trip to London, with the plan of visiting Westminster Abbey and the Natural History Museum, with lunch in Hyde Park in between (this decision was made before the letter from the churchwardens explaining that we would not be allowed to run such a weekend). The day trip was open to families and members of the congregation, but despite this was not very well attended. Nevertheless, it was an enjoyable day out for the four of us that did go (all leaders I should add), although we didn't stay long in the Natural History Museum on account of the heat.

From September 2014 there has not been a Youth Group due to lack of interest, but we are looking to re-launch this September, and will be coming up with a publicity strategy over the coming months.

Tim Coutts

Little Fishes Report

Little Fishes continued to meet regularly in 2014, led until Easter by Jenny Loder LLM and then by The Revd Hannah Reynolds and the Little Fishes team. Jenny also organised and joined the Little Fishes group at their summer outing to the Wildlife Park and their stall at the Summer Fair.

Each term-time week, carers and toddlers get together at 12noon for a bring and share lunch and a chance to play with St Peter's range of toys. Older children currently attending pre-school groups come at 1pm just in time to join the worship service and story-time, before returning to play until 2pm. Mums have taken turns to lead the act of worship and tell the Bible story – usually based on the previous Sunday's Gospel.

From Easter onwards, we introduced a new inclusive form of service, shorter than the previous Eucharist, with a Godly-play story and lighting of prayer candles, all of which takes place in the prayer corner. We use the musical instruments each week and the simple format means the small children know when it is time to play and when to sit quietly and listen to the story.

The Revd Hannah Reynolds

Wednesday Lunchtime Fellowship

The Wednesday Fellowship met ten times during the year (its members being collected and returned by bus if required). Each time they enjoyed coffee and chat; a communion service with short homily and a two course homemade lunch followed by coffee, mints and a raffle.

Those attending (usually between 10 and 15), not only enjoyed their meals and fellowship, but also raised over £180 for Church funds.

Whilst augmented on occasions, we are indebted to the core team of volunteers Sheila, Ann, Ena, Marni, Sheila and Jackie; to Helen for playing the organ, and of course Revd Hannah for taking our services.

Keith Mintern - February 2015

Wednesday Church Report

Astonishingly, we will be celebrating the fourth birthday of Wednesday Church in March with a number 4 birthday cake and small presents for the members. We are still going strong and growing in understanding and appreciation of the many adults with learning difficulties who join us each month. Numbers have reduced a little since the members' benefits have been cut and some are no longer able to come every month but we always hope to see them again sooner or later. We appreciate the opportunity of meeting at St Peter's: people are comfortable here because of the ease of access for wheelchairs and the disabled-friendly building. We are very grateful for the welcome we receive. The Wednesday Church Team includes representatives of seven different churches and we are grateful for all the churches' encouragement, and their financial backing from time to time, upon which we are totally dependant. In our worship we follow the events of the Church's year, and we have been much moved by the continuing enthusiasm and growing involvement of the members. We have watched members who would seem to have no communication skills, gradually begin to smile, to accept a percussion instrument and even to extend a hand to share the Peace. There is also a growing concern for each other and friendship between members from different care homes. We are extending the provision of our craft sessions to include a simple story for the most disabled, with tactile props, alongside the familiar handwork enjoyed by more able members. We are planning another outing to the Cotswold Wildlife Park in July which is the highlight of our summer programme.

Although, in the end, we were not the winners, we were surprised and delighted to be nominated for the Didcot Town Council John Eldridge Award for Voluntary Service. We attended the Council Awards Evening in November where we were presented with a certificate recording our nomination which is now in the church hall at St Peter's.

Jenny Loder, LLM

Northbourne CE Aided Primary School Report

As our Church of England (VA) school, we maintain close links to Northbourne; the PCC being the body which appoints the Foundation Governors. St Peter's is well represented on the Governing Body with Jon Driscoll as Chair of Governors, and regulars Anita Smith, Elizabeth Cooper, Shona Allen and The Revd Hannah Reynolds as members. Each of these are also on sub-committees of the Governing Body and attend meetings and events at the school on a regular basis.

Weekly collective worship at Northbourne was supported first by Julie Mintern and currently by Shona Allen. We host Christmas, Easter, Pentecost and Leavers' services for Northbourne at St Peter's. The Armistice Day service, introduced in 2013, has now become a regular event at the school, with teaching and prayer centred on peace and reconciliation.

The Revd Hannah Reynolds

Willowcroft School Report

'Tell us what you have been doing at Willowcroft' was the brief I was given when I was asked to make this report, because, of course, I stood down from this ministry at the end of the summer term after seven great years of warm friendship shared with the staff and children at the school.

The pattern was set from the beginning. I went into school every Monday for the full school assembly and I was responsible for leading the assembly once in every three or four weeks. School assemblies these days are all about 'values' but are not Christian as such. My assemblies involved teaching and worship based on a Bible story, singing a Christian song, and prayer, including the modern version of the Lord's Prayer. The children were always eager to 'help' with the story; we had some interesting discussions, and I had to be quite inventive with props. The school also comes to St Peter's for four services a year: Harvest, with a collection for the Food Bank; Christmas, with a donkey (followed by the younger ones who have been taking part in nativity plays, all dressed up); Easter, with palm crosses and the end of the summer term with the SU booklet *It's Your Move* for the leavers, full of helpful information on how to cope at your secondary school. Again we include songs and prayers, a Bible story and a talk in our worship and the children are interested and responsive.

Sometimes I have been asked to contribute to the RE programme, usually by having classes come to the church to explore and learn about our beliefs and worship. This is a treat, for them and for me!

Several ladies from St Peter's have supported our ministry at Willowcroft by coming to set up a St Peter's presence at the summer fete. At various times Ros Steptoe and I have run a cake stall; Lynn Werrell and Margaret Meardon have helped to run sideshows; Mary Boyle and I sold balloons, all of which have been much appreciated. Can we develop and extend this sort of partnership?

Willowcroft is a good school with committed teachers and friendly, well-behaved children. They are a state school, part of an academy, and we are involved at their invitation. Their weekly news-letter is posted on our noticeboard. Please keep track of what they are doing, remember them in your prayers and support them in any way you can. They appreciate the links between us, and, for many, it is their only chance of contact with people they know are Christians, with the Bible or hearing the stories of Jesus. As St Paul says: *How are they to call on one in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in one of whom they have never heard? Romans 10:14* It's no wonder that so many young people today profess not to be Christians when they have no knowledge or experience of the promise and joy of the Christian faith.

Jenny Loder, LLM

CTDD Forum Report

Report to follow

Communities and Charities Report

There were six charity quiz raffles since the last APCM raising a total of £1,003 as detailed below:

- 17th May 2014: HELEN & DOUGLAS HOUSE £200
- 21st June 2014: FOOTSTEPS FOUNDATION £155
- 20th September 2014: HOME START £180
- 18th October 2014: RESTORE £165
- 15th November 2104: TALKING NEWSPAPERS £133
- 17th January 2015: PAWS DOGS FOR the DISABLED £170

The food box is put out about four times a year and is always full to overflowing every time. They are very grateful for everything we give them.

The Advent Appeal for the Children's Society raised ??

Sheila Brown

Deanery Synod Report

Digest of the Proceedings of the Wallingford Deanery Synod from May 2014 to February 2015

The main proceedings of the Deanery Synod in the May, October and November meetings were to encourage all parishes to consider initiatives to grow their Church, without these being eclipsed by our collective responsibility to contribute together to the Deanery allocation of the parish share. This sum, £451,083 in 2014, funds the costs of our ministers (approx 68%), the training of future ministers (14%) and the support costs of our Church (18%).

The terms of reference of the Deanery Mission and Pastoral Committee, a sub committee of the Synod, were agreed by the Synod 'to consider all aspects of mission planning as well as to look at issues around clergy deployment.' At its meeting on the 3rd November, the Area Dean made the following points: "Our challenge is 'How do we grow the parishes across the Deanery.' This means growth in discipleship as well a growth in numbers. There are already lots of initiatives for growth in the Deanery but we may not be doing enough! The financial reality is that, as a Deanery, we are not paying our way. But we should keep our resourcing problems in the background and focus on Church growth. This is a collaborative exercise; together we can move forward."

The Mission and Pastoral Committee considered the [opportunities and challenges now facing the parishes in the Deanery](#) and encouraged parishes to [communicate parish plans to each other](#). These are now on the web; click on the item to see more. A suggested Mission statement was passed to the Synod for approval. 'The Deanery Mission is to make and execute a plan, in co-operation with all parishes across the Deanery to prioritise growth, to nurture disciples and to assist parishes to choose the appropriate style of worship for our 21st Century parishioners.' A workshop was held on 21st February for parishes to exchange information about their initiatives and to assist those present to define a vision for where that parish might be in three to five years time.

The Wallingford Deanery has now moved into the Dorchester Archdeaconry. Archdeacon Judy has been asked to support the Deanery plan to grow into a fully sustainable unit over the next 3 to 5 years.

A review of the Local Ecumenical Partnership joint initiative with the Baptist Church in Ladygrove has received the approval of Bishop Colin and of the Baptist authorities. There has been steady growth in church membership which has recently embraced people from the Black and Minority Ethnic community, and also younger families.

The Revd Mark Bodeker, appointed in June as a curate, part time in Great Western Park and part time in All Saints, reported that he is receiving very positive acceptance in the new development; 700 houses are already built and a total of 3500 planned. Many of the new residents have a desire to become part of a community and the Church is seen as a possible facilitator for this.

The Synod addressed the just, fair and practical allocation to benefices of the parish share. With the loss of the Deanery Treasurer, it did not become fully apparent until the September meeting that the previously agreed scheme would never meet our Deanery obligation to the Diocese. The old scheme was to allocate all costs in proportion to the number of stipendiary and house for duty ministers. We expected those who had in the past contributed less than this to stand a 6% annual increase while those paying more would continue to do so but have no increase. The deficiency of this procedure would have been £22,000 in 2014. In addition to this the Diocese subsidises the Deanery by £30,000 to prevent too steep an increase towards the full costs of the Deanery.

The November Synod agreed that this £22,000 deficiency should be met by a series of ex gratia gifts and loans to be repaid from our 2015 income. The decision was taken to pay the share as a whole in this way because it is right to use every available source to meet our obligation to our Church; and to prevent the Deanery being seen to be a chronic under-payer and hence the number of posts unsustainable. To fulfil the Deanery Mission of growth, we need the services of a full complement of clerics.

The only practical way for the Deanery to meet its 2015 allocation would be for every benefice to make a 10% increase over their 2014 contribution. The Synod agreed that this was too great an increase to expect; but passed a motion allocating every benefice a 7.5% increase over its 2014 contribution. This will result in

an underpayment to the Diocese of about £10,000, unless we are able to raise this sum by some other means.

The general 7.5% increase for all benefices was seen as an emergency arrangement for 2015. The Standing Committee agreed to present options and to make a recommendation to the Synod in 2015 as to the process to allocate the share in 2016 and beyond. Discussions are continuing with the Diocese and the Synod will deliberate in 2015 as to how the Wallingford Deanery will indeed grow to become a self sustaining community.

George Curtis, Deanery Synod Secretary