

St. James' Church, Milton Abbas – Annual Report for 2015

Background

St. James' Church is situated in Parish of Milton Abbas in the Winterborne Valley and Milton Abbas Benefice and is part of the Diocese of Salisbury within the Church of England.

Membership

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is a charity excepted from registration with the Charity Commission. Members of the PCC are either ex officio or elected by the annual parochial church meeting in accordance with Church Representation Rules.

During the year the following served as members of the PCC.

<i>Incumbent:</i>	The Revd Alan Ryan	Chairman
<i>Churchwardens Wardens:</i>	*Jennifer Harrisson *Paula Kelsall	Vice chairman

*To stay in their position until the Visitation.

<i>Representatives on the Deanery Synod:</i>	**Jennifer Harrisson **Tom Roberts (retiring – leaving the parish)
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**Members of the Deanery Synod elected at the APCM (2014) hold office for three years and are members of the PCC for the same period.

Elected Members holding office until the Annual Parochial Church Meeting in 2017 are:

Anthea Battrick
Frances Oliver
Jeremy Thompson
John Fifield
Mary Battrick
Murray Kayll
Su Roberts (retiring – leaving the parish)

Treasurer: Jeremy Thompson

The Secretary: Ellie Payne

Structure, Governance and Management

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. All Church attendees are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and stand for election to the PCC.

Objectives and Activities

St. James' PCC has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent, the Revd Alan Ryan in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the Church.

Church Attendance

There are 47 parishioners on the Church Electoral Roll 2015 two of whom are not registered in the parish, one name was added during the year and none were removed. The usual Sunday attendance, counted during May 2014, was 19 but this number increased at festivals.

Review of the Year

The full PCC met five times during the year with an average level of attendance of 80%. Committees met between meetings and minutes of their deliberations were received by the full PCC and discussed where necessary. The PCC has also focused its attention on the questions posed to parishes in the deanery.

The Events Committee is to be congratulated on their fund-raising effort, this year, the fundraising has increased considerably and it is good that these efforts on behalf of others can be combined with opportunities for fellowship.

Su and Tom Roberts are to be thanked for all their support and help during their time in office as they will be resigning from their positions as *Elected Member of the PCC* and *Representative on the Deanery Synod* respectively; they will leave the parish at the end of April 2015. Martin Foers and Trevor Payne are also to be thanked for the work they do.

Report from Church Wardens (*Jennifer Harrisson & Paula Kelsall*)

PCC activities and activities of Parish

- Barn Dance
- Dog Show
- *WW1 Exhibition
- *Christmas Tree Festival
- Mad Club
- Blaze – lively discussion group for teenagers on religious issues
- Sunday afternoon teas
- Coffee stop on a Tuesday morning
- Candle lit service in the Abbey
- Entertaining coach parties visiting the church
- Knitting for Christmas boxes
- Day of packing the Christmas boxes
- Outreach activities i.e. gardening
- Food bank representation
- Children's corner refurbished

*Many of these activities resulted in donations to a variety of charities.

The PCC has taken on board comments made at the Benefice meeting where 6 areas were discussed

1. Energised by faith
2. Outward – looking focus
3. Seeks to find out what God wants
4. Faces the cost of change and growth
5. Operates as a community
6. Makes room for all
7. Does a few things and does them well

This highlighted that as a church we need to focus on 'Knowing what God wants' so an action plan is being developed.

Fabric, Goods and Ornaments of the Church

No repairs have been undertaken to the church this last year as a bid was put into the 'listed places of worship repair fund' for major repairs to the church roof. This bid was unfortunately unsuccessful, however we are able to bid for another sum of money that will be made available by the Government. Recently due to high winds some more slates have slipped off the roof so an application might be made to our insurers. Some rain damage has been done internally as well as damage from bats.

The Church Wardens have been instructed to prepare for a quinquennial inspection in June. The result of which will be discussed by the PCC and will appear in next year's report.
Church Wardens

MILTON & BLANDFORD DEANERY SYNOD

Synopsis for APCMs

- The July Synod was held at Milton Abbey, when Bishop Graham presided at a Eucharist to mark the start of the Triennium. The meeting consisted of voting in the various officers and outlining the forthcoming visit to Lee Abbey in November 2014.
- The November Synod was in three parts:
 1. A presentation by Mandy Christopher on the strategy of the Board of Education for school leaders, focusing on Empowering, Enabling and Encouraging children.
 2. An update from Chloe Mutton on the development work and initiatives started to date.
 3. An update from the Sudan Steering group and appeal to parishes for support and donations.
- The February Synod was a follow up to the visit to the deanery on 29th January 2015 by Bishop Nicholas which was entitled 'Renewing Hope'. The key points, Pray, Serve, and Grow were adopted as a framework for the meeting which started with members sharing stories of Hope and discussing prayer. Reports followed from various bodies (Serve) and Grow is to be focus of the July 2015 meeting at Blandford Parish Centre.

FINANCIAL REPORT

DRAFT 2014 ACCOUNTS	ST JAMES CHURCH ACCOUNTS FOR YEAR ENDING 31ST DEC 2013	ST JAMES CHURCH ACCOUNTS FOR YEAR ENDING 31ST DEC 2014	Movement
<u>INCOME</u>			
Gift Aid		5026	5026
Standing Orders	5549	6650	1101
Collections	4912	4505	-407.5
Coffee Stop	1976	1464	-512
Church Teas	1989	1970	-19
Donations	2935	2756	-179.25
Marquee Hire	500	700	200
Weddings & Funerals	765	1234	469
Moveable Feast	215	160	-54.67
Dog Show	261	126	-135
South Aisle Hire	300	48	-252.5

180 Club	500	500	0
Street Fair	1500		-1500
Church Tent hire	200		-200
Garden Party			0
Race Night	855		-855
Barn Dance		1291	1291.31
Christmas Tree Festival	203	80	-123
Coach Visits	444	482	38.27
Sale of note lets etc	321	113	-208.5
Whist Drive	60		-60
Harvest Praise	268	98	-169.63
Transfer from CCLA account	3483		-3483
Other	14		-14
	27250	27203	-47
EXPENSES			
Share Payments	-15999	-12222	3777
Loan Repayments		-7500	-7500
Repairs	-1251	-183	1068.3
Valley Churches	-1610	-1610	-0.01
Insurance	-2002	-1739	262.98
Oil	-1311	-1133	178.05
Water rates	-107	-130	-23
Professional fees	-180	-362	-182.4
Organist Fees	-810	-360	450
Cemetery Mtce	-531	95	626
Notelets	-882		882
Furniture	-237		237

Electricity	-491	-498	-7
Donations	-777	-1141	-364.25
Organ tuning	-90		90
Refreshments	-180	-453	-272.82
Stationery	-86	-30	56.24
Fire extinguisher service	-120	-88	32.14
Share of Funeral/wedding fee to Diocese	-211		211
Room Hire	-160	-136	24
Sundry	-151	-60	
	-27186	-27550	-455
SURPLUS/DEFICIT	64	-347	
NOTES			
1	Please note that we have repaid £7500 of loans during the year		
2	Gift aid of in excess of £2000 has been claimed in Jan 2015 relating to 2014		
3	The share payment in 2013 included £5023 relating to 2012		
BANK BALANCES			
Lloyds TSB - Current Account	5946	7061	1114.94
Lloyds TSB Fabric Fund	2085	663	-1421.59
Wildlife Fund	1124	1169	45.13
	9155	8893	-261.52
CCLA Deposit	8640	8672	32
CCLA Fabric Fund	2312	2364	52

	10952	11036		84
Total Cash and Deposits	20107	19929.48		
LIABILITIES				
Dorset Historic Churches Trust Loan	2500	0		-2500
Salisbury DBF Loan - repayable in 2015	20000	15000		-5000
Parishioners Loans	8750	8750		0
	31250	23750		-7500

RECTOR'S APM REPORT - 2015

As I reflect on the past year, I am aware of the blessings God has poured out on us.

Regarding the Sunday service rota, there have been changes to timings and forms. We are now settling into a pattern of 8:30am BCP services, 10:00am Holy Communion and Morning Worship services. Evensong in Houghton and Turnworth has been replaced by evening Holy Communion services. This change was offered so that the Benefice can manage month by month if needs be, with one priest presiding at the communion table. With the loss of two evensongs, a trial of choral evensong has been ventured in Houghton. A lot of work goes into this service and it is very much on an experimental basis. Prayer and Praise on the first Sunday of the month has ceased, it has been replaced by a developing "Cafe" style Church. This is supported by an emerging band. This evening service also takes a lot of work and commitment from those involved with its development. I am very grateful to the people who are moving these experimental services forward.

I am very grateful to the churchwardens, past and present, for all that they do to serve our churches and for the time that they give. Churchwardens are often the first point of contact in the parishes and this role is as much about mission as it is about the building. This year we have had churches engaging with shoe box Christmas parcels going to people in very poor circumstances. One PCC now has an events committee and has organised some fantastic functions.

Some of our churches have struggled through this year. Despite a dip in attendance at some, all have managed to pay their share and carry out maintenance/improvement work. It is a tall order for small congregations to have the burden of old and expensive buildings to heat, insure and maintain, and yet, you have managed this. We have run two courses this year, firstly, a worship leaders' course. We now have a group of people in the benefice testing their calling to lead worship and practicing their skills. The second course was a three part Lent course. There have been some significant changes in staff. With all the change we have experienced, we have to let things settle. Movement has to happen slowly. God doesn't work to a timescale that we would recognise. He is still working amongst us and, perhaps in periods of quietness and stillness, is able to do more with us. Sometimes we have to pause and wait, let things settle down, check out that we have made the right decisions before moving. Under all of that, God is taking us on a journey and we are moving, even when it might not feel like it!

It is important for us as a benefice to meet together. Whilst we have a small population, we have a vast amount of talent. If we think back to the Christmas Carol Service in the Abbey, we will remember something very special indeed. We have had good attendance at the occasional benefice services and this is again, an opportunity to come together and celebrate our gifts and talents to the glory of God. We have met for a benefice day where we engaged with Robert Warren's process of developing a healthy church. This process identified that as a benefice the strength that we should concentrate on is: "knowing what God wants". Robert Warren breaks this into four components:

- *vocation*: seeks to explore what God wants it to be and do
- *vision*: develops and communicates a shared sense of where we are going
- *mission priorities*: consciously sets both immediate and short term goals
- able to call for, and make, *sacrifices*, personal and corporate, in bringing about the above and living out the faith.

We will be engaging with these components this year, in various ways to bring this strength into focus.

St. James' Church,
Milton Abbas.
26th April, 2015