



st swithun's

bathford

GROW CARE SERVE SHARE

## **REVIEW AND REPORTS 2013**

**You are invited to the Annual Parochial Church Meeting  
at 3.30pm on Sunday, 28 April.**

**This document will take the place of verbal reports at our APCM.  
Please read carefully and remember to bring the report to the meeting  
with any questions or comments you would like to raise.**

## Agenda

**Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> April 2013 3.30pm**

Worship and prayer

5mins

### Formal business

#### **Annual meeting of Parishioners**

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of last Annual meeting of Parishioners 29<sup>th</sup> April 2012
3. Election of our Church Wardens

Close of meeting

#### **Annual Parochial Church Meeting**

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of last Annual Parochial Church Meeting 29<sup>th</sup> April 2012
3. Electoral Roll report
4. Treasurer's Report and approval of Annual Accounts
5. Appointment of Independent Examiner of the Accounts
6. Election of PCC members for 3 years
7. Election of Sides people/Welcomers for 2013/14 20mins
8. Opportunity for questions for clarification of reports or items for consideration of the new PCC 10mins
9. Vicars address 10 mins
10. Youth Club presentation 5 mins
11. Meet our new Church Administrator-Barbara McLaughlin 5mins
12. Church Family weekend at Sidholme presentation 5 mins

Closing prayer

**Tea will be served following the meeting, please do stay.**

## Vicar's report

It has been another full year at St Swithun's, with the start of our new youth group, the wonderful Passion Play, our growing involvement with the school and the coffee shop, New Life groups starting, the full programme of the Ladies Friendship Group and a selection of concerts to name just some of the things that have been going on this year outside of a Sunday.

In the past year we have taken seriously the call of Bath deanery to focus on discipleship; both growing as disciples ourselves and making disciples. The PCC has therefore focussed on the first of our four keywords in our vision statement: 'Grow'. We are encouraged as we see new green shoots of growth emerge, including growth in activities, opportunities and numbers of people who have contact with our church.

A major activity this year was the Passion Play, which so many of our church family were involved in and rehearsed in all weathers. It was a blessing to all that the final production was performed on one of the better weekends of the summer and was a wonderful retelling of the life of Christ which will be remembered by many for a long time to come. Another 'green shoot' has been in the serving of refreshments in the coffee shop by both members of the pastoral team and mums seeking to serve and bless parents with young children by providing both a warm welcome and delicious food.

An exciting opportunity for our church was to provide a youth club for the village. Kara, Michelle and Val rose to this challenge, undergoing training and then training others so that we could open our church doors on a Monday night to provide a safe, welcoming and fun place for the young people to meet together. The generosity of our church family, in so willingly opening up the church building for it to be used in this way has been amazing, as has been the generosity of those who have so willingly given of their time in serving as volunteers at the club. Another big opportunity we have to be involved with young people, is through our local school. What a privilege it is to be able to share something of God's love with 185 children week by week and indeed to see the links with the school strengthened more generally through events such as the Christingle service held within the school hall and a School Easter service, attended by over 220 teachers, parents and children in our church .

It has also been very encouraging to welcome new people to our church family, some who may come regularly, others perhaps just to the family services and others just occasionally. What is equally encouraging is that so many people tell me that they have felt welcomed here. That is a strong value of our church and one that we both seek to hold tightly to and find ways to build upon.

We have made excellent progress on the reordering of the South aisle. Having moved the organ console and opened up the space we are almost ready to move forward with laying new carpet and providing new seating. The extra space has already been appreciated for social events and, in addition, the experience of worship has been enhanced for those sitting in the South aisle who now have a clearer view of the chancel area. The extra flexibility afforded has also enabled us to begin experimenting with new formats such as the well-attended Taize service 'in the round' and, looking ahead we would want to build upon this.

This year we were sad to say goodbye to Ian Phipps after 30 years service as organist here. We greatly miss Ian and the gap he leaves behind makes us only too aware how well he served us. We have been and are still looking for a music director who could lead and embrace the varied worship styles we enjoy.

Our PCC spent half a day looking at the growing administrative complexity of running a church comprising literally hundreds of tasks, some big and some small being undertaken by myself and many others in the church. We are therefore delighted to close the year with the appointment of Barbara McLaughlin as administrator to co-ordinate this effort.

Our APCM is a time to say thank you and goodbye to those who have held office in the past year. Firstly I would like to say thank you to our PCC members who are standing down for their commitment and service to PCC. We have had an excellent PCC representing all parts of the church, who have worked well together and achieved much. I want to especially thank Jim Jack for so ably leading the Fabric Team. We are so grateful for all Jim and the team have achieved.

Thanks must be recorded to our Church Wardens. Alison stood in the gap last year in the absence of anybody else and has worked hard to get to grips with the role of Church Warden with the support of Gill Gigg and Denis Cowood. I have greatly appreciated Alison's support and encouragement and like others I am sad that the change in her family circumstance means she will have to stand down.

No new incumbent could have wanted a better church Warden than Joy has been to me. Nothing has been too much trouble and she has assisted me every step of the way as I have settled in the role here. We have known that we are in safe hands with Joy; we have perhaps relied on her too much but we have trusted her. Her smile, upbeat attitude and energy has encouraged us all and got us through many a sticky moment. Joy has become a trusted friend and both I and the church owe her a debt of gratitude for her outstanding service as a Church Warden.

Finally thank you all for serving in a myriad of ways in the life and ministry of the church and community and for making our Church Family so special. We look forward to the year ahead, aware of many challenges and the need for more people to continue to support the ministry here but confident that God is faithful.

## **Churchwardens Report**

As Alison and I reflect back over the last year, we are conscious of the privileged position to have acted as Church Wardens to a vibrant, busy and active Church community. So our first thanks are for God's blessing and for your encouragement and support.

Alison Millar kindly stepped in to the role of Warden to replace Derek Brown and it has been great to work with her over the last year. As family commitments have changed in that time, Alison rightly steps down at the APCM with our thanks and my own personal gratitude for her good humoured company and support.

This year has seen us increasing in confidence with new technology, with a happy and growing band routinely using our sound and projector system in our services. Many members of the congregation have agreed to take on additional responsibilities as sidemen and women and these tasks have been greeted with good grace and patience by the vast majority of those involved. Extending responsibility and increasing involvement are not only beneficial for our identification with the church, they are also essential in a time when so many of us are 'time poor'. Sharing the tasks of running a church is essential to avoid individual 'burn out' and to ensure that the exciting mission of this church continues. The work undertaken has been both spiritual and practical. YOU are prayed for by name by those who meet every day of the week in church to pray for us all. Please do join them! So much of what happens within the life of the church goes unseen and we are continually grateful for all who count money, unblock drains, visit the sick, give a word of encouragement, oversee fabric projects and pray. Do join them too!

Activities in the last year have involved the regular (film club, men's group, youth club, Scubed and children's groups, ladies fellowship, music and choir, Alpha course, coffee shop initiatives, school assemblies etc) and the occasional (quiz, concerts and barn dance) and the Passion Play. Each of these has allowed us to share fellowship and laughter together. We have been blessed by the arrival of new people into the church, both families and individuals, who bless us by the presence and involvement more than they can know. It has been exciting to see people grow in faith and in offering to serve.

Like any church, we face challenges that Jane and the new wardens will continue to ponder and discuss. During this year a great deal of time and energy has been spent in discussions about a future arrangement with Batheaston Parish. This has been an enlightening, challenging and at times frustrating process. The PCC, under Jane's excellent leadership, has acted with good grace and unity in embracing change to the evening service and regarding a possible future with Batheaston. Please continue to support and pray for the PCC as it continues to focus its decisions around our mission to 'grow, care, serve and share' in challenging times.

After four years as Warden it is now time for me to stand down and hand over the bunch of keys, files, reports, deadlines and meetings to others. You have been patient with me when I have been hair brained, and encouraging when despondent. I will continue to serve as Administration Team leader and I am excited about the future as Barbara takes up the role in April. Thank you to Jane for being such a great vicar to work alongside, to Charles and the Readers, the PCC, Team leaders and all of you for making the role of Church Warden at St. Swithuns so thoroughly worthwhile. Finally, thank you to Michael, Tim, Jonty, Ben and Matthew who have made it possible for me to serve as Church Warden.

Joy Craine

## **Welcomer's Report**

### **8.15am Welcomers rota organised by Monica Stockwell**

Beryl Anderson

Brenda Field

Philip and Ann Harris

Richard Hathaway

Mo Rice

John Smart

Monica Stockwell  
Robert Wolsey

**10am Welcomers rota organised by Dennis Pearson**

John & Diane Daw  
Richard & Jill Wallis  
Peter & Theresa James  
Christine Ducat  
David & Val Trentham  
Colin & Pam Priston  
Peter & Isabel Staples  
Ian & Jenny Matthews  
Anne Smart  
Alison Millar  
Liz Townsend  
Cas & Heather Gillard  
Richard Robb  
Trevor & Yvonne Francis  
David Lenderyou  
Audrey Pearson  
Derek Brown

**6.30pm Welcomers Rota organised by Beryl Anderson**

Martin Wright  
Richard Hathaway  
Ted & Doreen Johnson  
Beryl Anderson  
Liz Townsend  
Jill Heeley

" Welcomers have an important role as they are the first point of contact when visitors come to the church on Sunday. They also have a few simple tasks which help in the preparations for the services. During the year several long standing Welcomers have stood down, and we thank them for their many years of faithful service. They clearly need replacing, so please consider whether you could help in this way (say once every 3 months), and speak to a Church Warden about what is involved.

These Welcomers/Sidespersons lists will be formally approved at the APCM on 28 April, so it would be good to have some new names by then."

Over the last year Welcomers at the 8.15am and 6.30pm services have taken on additional duties especially those relating to organising communion and locking up at the end of services. These additional responsibilities have been taken on cheerfully, with care and dedication. Thank you.

Joy Craine

## Financial Report

A summary of the income and expenditure for 2012 is shown here.

### Income

Regular Income (Bank standing orders, envelopes, Gift Aid tax reclaimed)	£78,582
Other income (Donations, proceeds from Concerts, fees from weddings and funerals)	£ 8,759

**Total Income** **£87,341**

### Expenditure

Local Mission & Outreach	£ 3,030
Donations to other Charities	£ 7,335
Parish Share	£51,150
General running costs (maintenance, heating, licenses, etc.)	£16,793

**Total Expenditure** **£78,308**

Income during 2012 was broadly similar to what we had expected, while expenditure was significantly less. Although the PCC had planned to recruit a youth worker and to carry out work in the church and churchyard, for a number of reasons only a few of these actions took place. Because of this, we ended the year being able to put money back into our savings. However, we still want to recruit a youth worker, complete the South Aisle improvements and other things, so the money will be spent in 2013 instead. This will be additional to maintenance work already planned for 2013, so we will need to draw heavily on our savings.

Some of our income in 2012 was classed as "Restricted", which means that it can only be used for certain things – this was made up from £228 received as interest from Endowment Funds, £29 from visiting bell ringers and £300 from the Parish Council towards churchyard upkeep, for which we are very grateful. All the other income was Unrestricted. More detail can be found in the Annual Report, which will be available at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting or from the Treasurer.

As usual, I am very grateful to the people who have worked quietly behind the scenes during the year – Christine and John Colegate, Peter Staples, Richard Wallis, Peter James, Trevor Francis and to the external examiner, Richard Robb.

Ian Matthews, PCC Treasurer

## **The Parochial Church Council**

The PCC met 8 times during the year 2012/13 and in that time has focussed on many issues.

The formation of the Youth Club has been a major success with a regular weekly attendance now of 30/35 young people. Well done to Kara and her team. July saw the retirement of Diane Grebby as Headteacher of Bathford School. The new Head, Matt Stone, continues to forge ever stronger links with St. Swithuns in allowing the use of the School Hall for Church functions and supporting and involving the young people in the many activities of the Church.

The plans for the re ordering of the South Aisle are nearing completion with new carpet and chairs. This will provide a large area that can be more flexible in its many different uses.

Following consultation with the congregation it was agreed that, with ever diminishing resources and the changing model of the Church, the Evening Services would need to be altered. There will now be two evening services at St Swithuns on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays and that the other two services would be shared with Bathampton and Batheaston Churches. There is an expectation that all three Churches will be looking to grow stronger links with each other in the future.

Judith Hedley, PCC Secretary

## **Readers Report**

Titles in the Church of England can be very confusing, especially for anyone new to the Church, but 'Reader' is probably the most misleading of them all. In many dioceses this traditional title has been replaced by 'Licensed Lay Minister' which much better describes our role. We are licensed by our Bishop to Jane, our Vicar, to serve as members of the Ministry Team at St Swithun's following three years' initial part-time training. The four of us feel very privileged to serve in this Ministry.

Traditionally, over its long history of some one hundred and fifty years, Reader Ministry has focussed on preaching and leading public worship, but more recently our role has widened significantly and will continue to do so as the number of clergy reduces further. During the past year one or more of our team has undertaken pastoral care and visiting (including taking Holy Communion to the sick and housebound), funeral and bereavement ministry, street pastoring, leadership of youth work and membership of the Diocesan Readers' Council. We also take services from time to time at other Churches. And, of course, as also lay members of St Swithun's, we are eligible to serve on the PCC and its groups.

We are very conscious of the need to look to the future, especially as you will have noticed that some of us are looking a little older. We are therefore particularly delighted that Heather (Gillard) is now undertaking Reader Training. Jane and Charles and all of us would give every encouragement and support to anyone else considering training. We are also very pleased that others are taking part increasingly in preaching and leading worship.

Finally, thank you so much for your support and prayers during the past year.

Gerry Miller

## **Missionary Support Team**

We aim to promote active interest in and prayer for, Christian mission beyond the parish (at home and abroad). We had 3 team meetings during the last year, and organised 2 'Prayer & Praise' services with a missionary theme. In June we focused on 2 projects we support; Freda in Pakistan and Bath 'Youth for Christ'. This February we focused on the Jane's recent visit to Ethiopia / TEAR Fund, and Bath's Genesis projects. There were also displays and info on several other projects we support.

An important part of Missionary Support is to encourage prayer. We usually include a time of prayer for Projects in our meetings, and there is a monthly Prayer Meeting on Friday Mornings at Chris Ducat's. News from our projects is made available on the information stand (N Aisle), and often by summaries in the church notices, or by occasional "Mission Spots" at services.

This team also formulates proposals for the PCC on the allocation of our Outward Giving from church funds. This was £8,000 in 2012. (In addition well over £4,800

was donated at various appeals, fundraising events, or retiring collections during 2012 - see the list in the porch).

Taking an interest and helping support the work of the church outside our parish can deepen and encourage our faith, as well as being supportive of the work and mission of others (who are often in difficult circumstances). During this year we have lost a few long serving members of this team, and others will be having to leave shortly. We therefore need new members to support the aims of this team.

## **Pastoral Team**

The pastoral team has continued it's programme of activities throughout the year. We meet together on a regular basis to keep up to date with any concerns within the church family , visiting the sick, the bereaved and trying to be there for those who are struggling or finding life difficult, but we do rely on the help of the church family to keep us informed if you are concerned about anyone. We are delighted that Derek Brown has recently joined our team.

The card ministry continues to flourish, thanks to David for the lovely cards, and to Joyce Helps for the wonderful gift she has of knowing the right words to say. We know from feedback that they are very much appreciated.

The film club continues to be popular, with regular attendances of between 15 & 20 people, and provides a real source of fellowship, particularly in the long winter months. A big thank you to Ian for giving of his time in setting it up for us each month. Please encourage anyone you know who may perhaps welcome some company, as this is a real source of outreach into the community.

Welcoming newcomers to our village with a welcome pack on behalf of our church is a real witness of our faith. There have been a number of newcomers to the village, so we have been busy distributing our packs. We have been very quiet of late but I see that there are a few sold notices around so please keep us informed. The prayer board is now being used more & more which is very encouraging. Requests are prayed for every Monday morning .We would like to follow up, so we are now asking if people would like to, to leave a contact number. We were very pleased to again be invited to the school to hear the children's Christmas concert and we provided a festive tea. The children performed beautifully. We were disappointed that so few people came, but those that did had a lovely afternoon. Now that the cafe in the shop is up and running very successfully, we have discontinued our afternoon teas.

We are only a small team, if anyone feels they would like to join us that would be great. We would especially like to welcome some younger members on the team, some new input would be very much appreciated.

Pam Priston

## **Children and Youth Team**

We have had a very exciting year in the Children and Youth Team. This began with the launch of the Monday night Youth Club in the Church. We set this up as an outreach activity to provide the Youth of the village with a safe and relaxed environment to meet. Thanks to all of the church community for their support in this great venture. We have between 25 and 30 youth every week. We have had been able to take them on a number of trips among them being rounders, bowling and a disco at the legion. Thank you to all our volunteers who give up their Monday evenings to come and help us and more are always welcome – do chat to me!

The Craines have as ever done a great job with the older Youth in the church providing fun and adventure throughout the year. Their programme is always worth a read and will make you wish you were the right age to participate! Thank you to Joy and Michael for this and please would you pray for another couple to join them in leading this group.

Children's church has once again been organised, sorted, juggled and led by Sally Mcleod. Many, many thanks go to her and her team of leaders and helpers for their tireless efforts year after year. Sadly this year we have had to say goodbye to the wonderful Rosie as she moved house and we are also losing the adventurous Jo as she heads off on VSO – best wishes to you and Richard – we will miss you! In addition Sarah will have to step down as she has her third little one in a months time.

So please pray that we get more volunteers to join us in this ever expanding area of our church community. We are so blessed to have such a wonderful group of children – there are not many rural church communities who can say they have over 40 children as part of their community. Since September we have been praying for more young families and better connections with the village providers for pre-schoolers. Praise God it is happening – we now have 3 regular attendees of the crèche (thanks to Pam for setting this up and to the helpers) with many more beginning to come, realising that young families are very welcome in our beautiful church.

Currently we have a fascinating project running. We have commissioned a local Composer – Brian Madigan to come in and work with the youth and children to write a song based on our strap line of ‘Grow, Care, Serve and Share’. We have had the first two sessions and it is really interesting to see the whole process taking shape. Brian is also working with the Headmaster of Bathford School to involve them in the project. We hope to share the results with you all by the end of the summer term!

Please let me know if any of you would like to come and join our team – am always happy to provide more information or answer any questions.

## **Discipleship Team**

### **The Discipleship Team consists of:**

Gill Gilbert, Alison Millar, Jason Stone, David and Val Trentham

Looking back over 2012 it is encouraging to see how the aims of that year have been partially fulfilled and we will strive to build on that foundation in 2013.

### **Small Groups**

Small groups are the ideal place to find fellowship and support while studying God’s word and praying together. Jim and Barbara Jack have run a group in their home for many years and we are grateful for their commitment to this area of ministry. During the past year two new Life Groups have started under the leadership of David and Helen Hyde and David and Val Trentham. These groups each have about 8 regulars who are encouraged to prepare various parts of the group’s meeting: Welcome, Worship, Word, Witness.

We hope that more people will join these groups in the coming year and see at least one more Life Group established.

### **Prayer Ministry**

Throughout the year prayer ministry has been available after the evening Holy Communion Service on the first Sunday of the month and after the Morning Worship service on the third Sunday of the month. Training is regularly provided for those on the team and a number of the church family have found this ministry helpful. However, we do encourage prayer for each other to take place in the pews as a natural outcome of our love and concern for one another.

### **Growing Leaders**

This course led by Charles and Michael has been running for almost a year with very positive results for those who have participated. It is evident that they have

benefitted by gaining confidence and growing spiritually. Mentoring is an important part of this course and we hope this will be the beginning of a mentoring culture for all the church family.

### **For the future**

This year the emphasis is on the first part of our purpose statement “ to **GROW** deeper in our Christian faith” and this has to be our desire if we are serious about our walk with the Lord.

### **Growing Leaders Course**

The CPA S growing leaders course has been underway since last summer, meeting roughly once per month, with nine members of our church. The course was developed out of extensive research which showed that growing churches tend to have healthy leadership skills exercised at all levels within the church.

In the course we have explored the underpinning principles of Christian leadership, the practical application and sustaining oneself over the long term to avoid running dry. We have explored many different leadership-related issues including those attributes that are distinctive about Christian leadership, recognising one’s calling, developing a vision, working well with others, building teams and identifying, nurturing and developing the gifts in the whole body of Christ. The course has been highly interactive throughout and there has been lots of opportunity to discuss and wrestle with the ideas.

Interestingly, many of the participants have commented that the course has been as valuable for them in its applicability to their secular roles as within the church. Throughout, there has been times of laughter and reflection and, hopefully, we will be able to run the course again at some point in the near future.

Charles Burgess

### **Worship Team**

The worship team is made of the Reader’s and myself. We regularly review our services and service pattern and are challenged about how we can enable more people to join in worship at St Swithun’s. We have been pleased to welcome more people to our Family Service which is a service that is more accessible to those who are less used to Church. The Family Service has also been a service which has given opportunity for more people to be involved in leading worship. We are delighted that two people from our Church Family are currently exploring Reader Ministry.

The team after much thought and prayer proposed to the PCC that the evening service pattern be changed to two services at Bathford a month and two at our neighbouring village churches. This new pattern began in January.

Festival services are always well attended and a lot of thought and attention goes into these services to reflect this. We are always very grateful for the many people who help in so many ways at these special times.

Jane Burgess

## **Outreach Team**

Looking back on the year, most of the outreach opportunities will have come not from organised events and services but from one to one conversations with friends and neighbours, work colleagues, perhaps those we have got to know at a community event and others on the edge of faith attending services. For most of us this is how our own journey of faith starts and this must always be the primary means of outreach – ordinary Christians being willing to share something, however small, of the reason for the hope we have.

Nevertheless, organised events do provide a focus for outreach and during the last year we have welcomed many visitors, and those on the fringe, into our services particularly at the major festivals. It is often said, that for many in our society today, 'belonging' precedes 'believing' and so the opportunity to warmly and actively welcome newcomers to our church continues to be important as ever. We have also as a church continued to build on our existing links with our community. In this respect, the Passion Play, in which of course both churchgoers and non church goers took part was a powerful re-enactment of the gospel story and attended by many in the village. The harvest festival barn dance, held in the school hall, attracted much positive feedback and it was proposed that we consider holding this again this year. Similarly the Christingle service, also held in the School hall was well attended by many village families and helped build links with the village school and wider community. There were various regular events held in the village shop café throughout the year in which, underpinned by the principles 'care' and 'serve', members of our church and others served – and continue to serve - many in our village. Together with Bathampton church we also ran a successful Alpha course which 10 people attended. The quiz night organised on behalf of the church was very well attended and all agreed this was a really successful event

Looking ahead to this coming year we have been discussing various options including:

**Running a short course** on sharing one's faith.

**Other events in the village shop** which could be on a one-off or ongoing basis. Various ideas were discussed including holding a craft workshop or a 'knit and natter' event.

**Men's Trip** The men's group have been thinking about some sort of activity and/or evening out, inviting others from the village.

**"Hot potato"** holding a discussion in The Crown on an issue that people may be interested in, led by a speaker with some sort of background and expertise in the specific area.

**Other events in our community** Underpinned by the principles of 'Serve' and 'Care' offering lunch to existing village groups and facilitating opportunity for people to explore spirituality and faith.

**St Swithuns day service** plan this year is to hold this in the school hall where there will be less risk of problems from the weather, although spilling outside for a picnic outside if the weather was good.

The Outreach team would welcome any thoughts and ideas from church members.

Charles Burgess

## **Fabric Team**

### **South Aisle**

The remaining pews in the South Aisle were removed and stored under an Archdeacon's temporary license., so that some experience could be gained in the use of the enlarged area prior to submitting proposals for a comprehensive scheme to the Diocesan Advisory Committee for this area of the church.

A faculty was obtained for relocating the organ to the North side of the Nave at the back of the church, and the work carried out in July.

In depth consultation within the Church family was undertaken with regard to both the type of floor finish to be installed and the type of seating to be purchased before the P.C.C. approved proposals for completing the project. A faculty has now been applied for, for the permanent removal of the pews removed temporarily, the installation of new carpet, and the purchase of sixty chairs.

## **Churchyard**

Following a survey, trees and bushes in the churchyard which had not been touched for many years were cut back/pruned professionally as necessary. Members of the Church family continued to faithfully keep the churchyard trim by regularly mowing the grass and cutting back weed and ivy where needed, this is no easy task in the summer and, our thanks to them for their effort which is much appreciated. Additional volunteers to join the team led by Martin Wright would be more than welcome.

## **Maintenance of the church**

Maintenance work on the church building was carried out in accordance with the five year rolling plan agreed following last years Quinquennial inspection.

Annual maintenance checks were carried out on the central heating boiler, fire extinguishers, lightning conductor and organ.

The lightning conductor installation although in satisfactory working order no longer conforms to the current requirements of B.S.6651 the standard required by our Insurers, and a second down tape and earthing system is needed to upgrade the installation . Proposals for this work are in hand.

I would like to thank all members of the Fabric Team for their hard work during the Year.

**New members to join us** for what is a interesting and vital activity in support of St. Swithun's ministry would be very welcome.

Jim Jack

## **Coffee Plus**

Coffee Plus are a group of Christian women who have been meeting, studying the bible and sharing together in fellowship over the past 10 years. In April 2012 we felt called to start a new initiative in the village cafe to reflect our vision to serve people in the Bathford community and beyond, building relationships with them in a loving and caring environment, to the Glory of God.

We started offering a low price lunch to parents, carers and their young children once a fortnight on a Monday. The Coffee Plus Café has served as a contact point, particularly for new people in the village, where people can connect with other Bathford residents. We have also recently extended our vision to include those working at home and other individuals in the community, who may enjoy meeting people in a relaxed environment.

God has continued to bless our initiative and we have had much encouraging feedback from our customers about how welcomed and cared for they feel. As individuals we have also been greatly blessed by God working in our own lives as we fellowship and also regularly pray together. This comment from one of our team reflects the joy it is to serve: "I have to say I really love our times in the cafe, serving together. I come away feeling that I've had a great time with people, that a lot has happened, I've been on the go and what a privilege it has been. And all for God's glory".

We continue to pray for more opportunities to share God's love in ways that feel relevant and appropriate for our neighbours and strangers in the Bathford community and further afield.

## **Men's Group**

The aim of the group is to be able to meet in a relaxed atmosphere to hear and debate a Christian message. It also allows for other types of discussions that spring to mind.

The group has a good core number of around twelve and a membership of eighteen, we try to vary where we meet in places around the Village. It has a true bond of friendship to all who come across all generations.

We have been looking at some of the new Rob Bell's Nooma DVD's with a Bible verse played out in a modern setting.

The evening starts from 7.45pm and allows people to arrive from then on, this gives an opportunity to relax and catch up with everyone.

Food and soft drinks are always available and normally after watching the DVD we finish with coffee or tea.

We are looking this year to ways to expand on our meetings and out reach into the wider community.

## **Drama**

**The Passion Play 2012** made for months of work ... hundreds of people (of all ages) to seek out and persuade to act or to help, meeting after meeting, rehearsal after rehearsal (mostly in the rain), fetching and making and hiring costumes, assembling a million props, building, painting, searching out dancers, preparing

and recording music, assembling marshals, designing posters and programmes, organising safety measures ... endless asking, reminding, discussing, pleading, planning, publicising, fundraising, praying for day after day ... Was it worth it? Of course it was! The Bathford Passion Play raised more than £1620 shared between St Swithun's and Asha (to help Delhi slum dwellers); but far more than this, it showed the life and teachings of Jesus in an extraordinarily inspirational way. As in 2004 (when the first Bathford Passion Play was performed) enthusiasm grew and grew until it was like a golden blaze of sunshine warming the whole heart of our village.

**The Holy Week Dramas 2013** made for very little work in comparison. Few rehearsals, little publicity, minimal costumes and props, no words, no music, only one location (the church) and a mere dozen performers in total. Five minute performances in mime (showing episodes of Jesus' last week on earth) mostly performed by candlelight within five quiet, contemplative services in Holy Week. The contrast couldn't be stronger; but the overall message had, again, an extraordinary impact. Light, light spreading onwards and outwards: whether from a tiny candle or from the sun, it doesn't matter – the light still shows! We will all praise God for it.

**'Star' the new Junior Church Drama Group:** The children performed a 'Nativity' within the Christmas Eve service, and a highly successful 'Noah's Ark' in a Family Service during February. A short dancing sequence was held on Easter Sunday, and our next production will be an epic ten-minute 'Creation' on 2<sup>nd</sup> June!! I'd like to thank everyone who has taken part or helped, and extend a hearty welcome to any child who would like to join!

Cathy Adeane

## **Choir Report**

This has been a difficult year for the choir. Although we knew it had to come, losing Ian to retirement at the end of September was a sad blow to us all. His unflinching good humour and support for so many years has left us somewhat "rudderless," and although we are doing our best to carry on, trying to adjust to so many different organists and with no practices at all, it isn't easy. However we continue to sing at weddings and funerals as required and we just hope that it won't be too long before a new music director is appointed.

C D Colegate

## **The Ladies Fellowship Group**

The Ladies friendship group is just as it's title suggests - a group where women can meet, chat, and enjoy each other's company.

Our varied programme has included talks such as the training of guide dogs, life as a soldier in Afghanistan, Art and architecture, and a short history of cooking through Grandma's recipes.

We had a craft afternoon with tea and cakes and also a Christmas party with entertainment by the local church magician!!!

In the Autumn we went to Tetbury and Westonbirt to see the glorious colours and in May there will be a trip to Bristol Hippodrome to see the Mousetrap. A trip to Weymouth in June is also planned - let's pray for sunshine!

During the Winter months we plan to meet in the afternoons to avoid turning out on cold dark nights.

The group is open to all , not just churchgoers so we plan to advertise it in the Bathford Bulletin and also to bring friends along so they can see that being a Christian is fun and friendly!

Liz Whitfield

## **Monday Morning House Group**

We meet at 10.00 am on most Mondays with breaks at Easter, Christmas, and during the summer months between June and September. During the summer we have occasional keep in touch meetings and an evening social gathering.

Normally we begin our meetings with coffee and catch up followed by a pastoral review and prayer. Our discussions are bible based but we endeavour to achieve variety with various approaches such as themed or subject based studies in addition to focusing on particular books in the bible.

This year our main subject for study together was Hebrews. We found this letter (or sermon) from an unknown but inspired author to an unknown apparently weary congregation, tired of being different, falling back on its Jewish roots to the point of losing sight of what Jesus had done for them, and us, so absorbing that

apart from the Lent course, a session reading from psalms, and festive readings prior to Christmas, it took our House Group year to complete.

We found the various points of view as to the purpose of the Church and how it should implement its ministry put forward by the four speakers that made up the panel of the Lent course stimulated considerable discussion with varying points of view among our eleven members. Perhaps the theme that came out most clearly was that a Mission Church can only grow out of a genuine pastoral love for the Community from which its service to that Community is the natural fruit that grows, and that in offering their service members show a sense of humility and an awareness that their need of God is as much as anybody Elsie's.

We take our studies seriously but with a light touch, and as one of our members put it "Its a good way to start the week".

Jim Jack

## **Bathford School**

This last year saw the retirement of Head teacher Mrs Grebby and we were pleased to express our thanks to her at a Family service before she left. Mr Matt Stone started as Head Teacher in September and has been keen to strengthen the relationship between the School and St Swithun's. The school has adopted our strapline 'Grow, Care, Serve and Share' as their motto and it has been inspiring to see how the children have made these words meaningful in their school setting. We have welcomed the school into Church for Harvest and Christmas services and for the first time this year for an Easter service. Bex Briggs leads a great team who take Collective Worship in school on alternate weeks to Jane. The music and creativity of the group enables the gospel to be shared in a fun and dynamic way. In this past year we have focused on sharing the stories of Jesus and teaching the Lord's prayer in Collective Worship.

Our thanks to Judy Hedley who served as a governor during the very busy year when the school was transitioning between head teachers. We are very grateful to Jenny Mathews for being our new school governor. Jenny is a retired teacher and a volunteer at the school so she will bring valuable experience to the role.

Jane Burgess

## Deanery Synod

Each church elects lay representatives to their Deanery Synod, who are also PCC members. Rosemary Harrott, Christine Colegate, and Dennis Pearson are your reps (along with the vicar) on Bath Deanery Synod. We meet 3 times a year. In June we heard about the Abbey's plans for a major development of their facilities, mostly underground on South side. We then had a choice of 6 short workshops relating to discipleship. Each to attended 2. These included: presentation on Holy Trinity Combe Down Discipleship Course; All Saints Weston "Lighthouse" course (a course to develop leaders for Alpha & Home Groups); Contemplative worship; and 2 different DVD presentations on Discipleship training.

Our October meeting was at St Swithin's Walcot. Most time was a detailed presentation by the vicar of Twerton, on 'Discipleship Vision & Strategy'. Some of this was fairly familiar, but I was struck by the point that - since we are all shaped by our environment, - the importance of creating a discipleship environment (not just church services) which helps those who choose to be disciples, live their daily lives. We also heard about a new initiative at St Barnabas' with a Tea and cakes café style 'service' at 5pm.

In March 13, we met at St Mark's school, with the focus on education. We had an inspiring talk from Raymond Friel, (Executive Head Teacher of St Gregory's & St Marks), telling us about the objectives and progress on the joint Christian Sixth Form.

We then had Rob Popejoy tell of his introductory work as Chaplain to City of Bath College. For those interested, there will be the opportunity to become Deanery Synod members next year.