

**PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF  
ST. MARY THE VIRGIN CHURCH, GREAT BRICKHILL**

**Annual Report and Accounts  
for the year ended 31st. December, 2015**

**St. Mary The Virgin Church,  
Lower Way  
Great Brickhill  
Bucks.  
MK17 9AB**

**Bankers:**

**Barclays Bank PLC  
Leighton Buzzard Branch  
The Aylesbury Group  
34 Market Square  
Aylesbury  
Bucks.  
HP20 1TT**

**Independent Examiner:**

**Mr. D. Beatty  
Roxburgh House  
Pound Hill  
Great Brickhill  
Milton Keynes  
MK17 9AS**

**Church Architect:  
[ Until May 2015 – retired ]  
Mr. B. Deacon Dip Arch R.I.B.A.  
Bruce Deacon Ltd  
8 East End Lane  
Wilden  
Bedfordshire  
MK44 2QN**

## **Report Of The Parochial Church Council (PCC) Year ended 31st. December, 2015**

### **MEMBERS OF THE PCC**

The following persons continued to serve as members of the PCC during 2015:-

The Reverend John Waller (Chairman)  
Christine Agambar (Church Warden)  
Valerie Beardmore-Baldwin (Church Warden)

Deanery Synod Representative:-

Jeremy Hopkinson (Licensed Lay Minister; PCC Vice-Chairman)

Clare Amies  
Simon Bennett  
Phillipa Cook (Secretary)  
David Duncombe  
Angela Northen  
Margretta Smith  
Julia Turner  
Joy Wilson

Neil Cook continued in the role of Treasurer, co-opted to the P.C.C., 20/5/15

N.B. The maximum number of lay representatives on the P.C.C. is 9, as per the prescribed formula for Electoral Rolls of 51 to 100.

### **OBJECTS AND CONSTITUTION OF THE PCC**

The object of the P.C.C. of St. Mary the Virgin Church, Great Brickhill, is to further the work of the Church of England in the parish of Great Brickhill. The Council is constituted under the Parochial Church Councils (Powers) Measure 1956 and as amended by the 1969 Measure, and is required to co-operate with the minister in promoting in the parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.

At the Annual Parochial Church Meeting in 2004 provision was made for the annual appointment of representatives on the P.C.C. All members of the church electoral roll are entitled to vote and stand for election. There is also provision for the co-option of members of the P.C.C., and the incumbent is ex-officio a member and the Chairman. The Wardens and Deanery Synod Representatives are also ex-officio members of the P.C.C.

### **ELECTORAL ROLL AND CHURCH ATTENDANCE**

Membership of the electoral roll is open to any lay person who is baptised, over sixteen years of age and has signed a declaration that he or she is a member of the Church of England and is either (a). resident in the parish, or (b). has habitually attended worship in the parish during a period of six months prior to enrolment.

At the start of the year there were 50 people on the Electoral Roll. Four joined the Electoral Roll during the year; there were no deaths and no-one moved away. Hence the number of Electors at the end of the year decreased to 54, ten of whom are not resident within the parish.

The “usual Sunday attendance for Normal Services” during the year to 31/12/15 was 24 (in 2014 the attendance was 25). There were several special services held throughout the year and these normally attract a larger congregation than for a normal Sunday, e.g. Songs of Praise, Family Service with Baptism, Nativity Service – these figures are not included in the calculation for the “usual Sunday attendance for Normal Services”.

## **REVIEW OF THE YEAR**

The Reverend John Waller continues as Rector and takes the majority of the Services throughout the Benefice. Every other month visiting clergy take the Prayer Book Holy Communion service on the first Sunday. One service per month is generally lay led.

A new Sunday service pattern came into effect in March 2014. The Rector takes two Sunday services a week across the Benefice - a Holy Communion Service at either 9.00 or 9.30am and a Family Service at 11am. Following a review of the service pattern minor adjustments were made – from June the Holy Communion Service at Great Brickhill on the second Sunday is at 9.30am and not 9.00am.

The third Sunday of the month in Great Brickhill is used as an opportunity to hold a variety of different services. These include Mattins, Morning Worship, Songs of Praise and Evensong. On the third Sunday of December the Family Service & Nativity was particularly successful.

There was a choice of Lent Groups held on different days of the week across the Benefice. The Bible Group continue to meet on a Wednesday evening on a monthly basis. Monthly Prayer for Healing meetings are held at The Rectory. The Thursday Group meets on a fortnightly basis and the Drop-In takes place in the Parish Hall on a Monday afternoon. All are welcome to attend these sessions.

A new initiative at the start of the year was the introduction of the Happy Cup Coffee Club, a child-friendly weekly drop-in coffee morning, especially welcoming parents and carers of young children – held in the Lady Chapel on Mondays from 9.15am to 11.15am during term time. All are welcome to attend.

A programme of fund-raising activities was held throughout the year, including the February Snowdrop Walks, the Plant Fayre in April, a Summer Walk and Breakfast, a Summer Concert & Garden Party, a Safari Supper, the Sponsored Bike Ride and Christmas Fair. These events were both successful in raising funds but were also good social events.

## **Work on the Fabric of the Church:**

At the start of the year there was a concerted effort by the PCC and particularly the Wardens, to instigate the work that was highlighted within the Quinquennial Report carried out last year. All necessary items were completed, at a cost of around £7000:

- Repairs to the roof to address the problem caused by insufficient lead dressing.
- Drainage and soak away. Repairs to the downpipe on the west end of the south porch, plus a new soak away, dug half way down the path.
- The trees on the north side of the church were pruned back to improve visibility, access and air circulation around the church.
- Conservation masonry repair work to eroded stone dressings round windows and doors and repointing of water damaged stone buttresses.

In the middle of June a substantial amount of lead was stripped from the north side of the church roof. Following a large amount of rainfall water poured into the church, running down the north wall. The water collected in the ceiling and there is a chance that parts of the ceiling may collapse. The insurance company arranged for contractors to make a temporary repair to

make the roof water tight. The roofing contractor Leo Knight then did a semi-permanent repair to the roof giving three years to decide on the permanent repair work. An alarm system is being investigated

It was therefore decided last night that for safety reasons the church will remain locked for the time being. The permanent repair is likely to take some time to arrange and it will inevitably be a costly exercise. The insurance will cover some of the cost but there is likely to be a large shortfall.

### **Deanery Synod:**

The Deanery Synod met on three occasions through the year. At the April meeting there were talks about Police Chaplaincy and areas of legality within the church, with a stream lining of the faculty procedure. The other two Synod meetings focused on a national process set out by the Archbishop of Canterbury's Council, "Reform & Renewal".

All the clergy vacancies in the deanery have been filled. Revd. Val Plumb took up the new post of Joint Area Dean for the Claydon, Buckingham and Mursley Deaneries – a position to relieve the burden of the Area Deans, to have an overview of Mursley and the rural parishes of the Aylesbury Deanery. She will be taking occasional services in Great Brickhill - her particular remit is to look at the challenges of a rural parish on the edge of a city.

Jeremy Hopkinson serves as the Deanery Synod representative for Great Brickhill.

### **Music and Choir:**

The organ continues to be played by various organists on a weekly basis.

Jerry Breslin holds weekly Benefice Choir practices on Monday evenings at Great Brickhill and the choir's repertoire goes from strength to strength. Jerry plays regularly at the Sunday services and generally at any special services. Susan Noon plays the organ on the second Sunday of the month and Andrew and Margretta Smith provide most of the music for the Family Services.

Bell ringing practice takes place on a Wednesday evening and the bells are rung before most services. David Middleton continues in the role of Tower Captain and organizes a team of ringers for weddings and funerals as required.

### **High Ash School:**

High Ash is a Church of England school and the Christian ethos is central. There are two Foundation Governors at the school, appointed by the Oxford Diocese:- Reverend John Waller and Mrs Juliet Bennett.

The School gathers four times throughout the year for worship in the church. At each of these services the church is full to capacity.

### **Charitable Giving:**

Support continues for the "Link for Hope" Shoe Box appeal and the annual Macmillan Coffee Morning in September. A donation was made to the Youth Café at the start of the year as part of our mission giving. The charities supported by our year end Outside Giving are:- National Churches Trust and Bucks. Historic Churches Trust. Support for other charities include the Christian Aid House-to-House Collection, the Poppy Appeal from the Remembrance Sunday collection in Church. Funds were raised through the Christmas Charity for L & D – NICU, the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) of Luton & Dunstable Hospital.

The total of disbursements to charitable causes during the year was in excess of £4,911. This represents approximately 13% of the Income Received (excluding Assignables) for the year.

### **Church Rota and Communications:**

Information is increasingly sent out by e-mail and the website is continually updated to provide all the up to date information regarding services and activities. E-Newsletters giving a summary of recent events and details of upcoming events are distributed to around 100 people on an occasional basis whenever the need arises.

A weekly Pew Sheet is produced for all services and the schedule of Services and other items of news are sent each month for inclusion in the Parish Newsletter. There are over 80 people who take a turn on the various rotas and a coffee morning is held at the beginning of the year to say thank you to them all.

### **Children and Youth:**

The Family Services are very well attended. The Lady Chapel is used very successfully to hold activities for the children during the service.

Marco Loxley, the Youth Leader, continues to organise the Youth Café on Friday evenings. Around 40 children regularly attend these sessions, which are held at the Parish Hall.

### **REVIEW OF THE ACCOUNTS**

The Accounts have been prepared on a Receipts and Payments basis, falling in line with most other churches and thus avoiding the onerous regulations that apply to accruals accounts.

The Church had a surplus of £2,034 for the year giving a balance in Unrestricted Funds of £11,161. The figure for Covenants and Gift Aid Donations is well up compared to last year thanks to some generous donations. The total Expenditure for the year has decreased by £1,852 from 2014. The amount of Outside Giving was £500, the same as the last two years.

### **Payment of the Parish Share:**

This year the P.C.C. paid its Parish Share of £22,267 in full – this is an increase of 4.7% from last year. The Parish Share for 2016 will be £22,955, a further increase of 3.0%.

### **Restricted Items:**

As well as general income the P.C.C. has received donations which are restricted as to their use, the money having been given for specific purposes. Under the Charities Act accounting regulations, the restricted funds have to be identified separately in the main accounts. The P.C.C. is able to confirm that it holds sufficient and appropriate assets to meet the conditions of expenditure of all restricted funds. Details of the balances of funds and the assets which are held to represent those funds are contained in the Balance Sheet.

The total for Restricted Funds at the end of the year was £79,544.

### **PLANNING OF ADDITIONAL FACILITIES IN THE CHURCH**

The architect, Bruce Deacon, was asked to produce detailed plans to provide toilet facilities in a porch style extension through the west door. In May he announced that he was retiring and would not be able to do any further work on the project. The process for appointing a new architect is in progress.