

ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S CHURCH, DUCKKLINGTON.

ANNUAL REPORT for 2016 – 17



The Village Pond Ducklington

Agenda of the Annual Meetings in the Village Hall on Sunday 2 April 2017

Meeting of Parishioners at 11:00 a.m.

01/17	Chairman's Opening Remarks
02/17	Minutes from the 2016 meeting
03/17	Period of Office for Churchwardens
04/17	Election of Churchwardens

Annual Parochial Church Meeting, following immediately

05/17	Minutes from the 2016 meeting
06/17	Matters Arising
07/17	Reports
08/17	Ratification of Accounts
09/17	Election of lay representatives to deanery synod
10/17	Election of lay representatives to PCC
11/17	Appointment of Sides-people and Assistant Wardens
12/17	Appointment of independent examiner for next year
13/17	Discussion on options for flexible arrangements to Kitchen Area
14/17	Questions from the floor
15/17	Rector's Address

Proposal for review of Churchwarden's Period of Service

In 2001 the Church of England introduced guidance to explain the new legislation on the appointment and tenure of office of churchwardens. Amongst the details of the Measure is advice on the *maximum continuous period of service as churchwarden of the same parish*.

Section F of the **2001 Churchwardens Measure** is appended below.

Evidently, the guidance was initially informally accepted at St. Bartholomew's before being formally accepted in 2007 for implementation in 2008. However, at the Annual General Meeting in April 2014, a resolution was passed under #F36 to rescind the original decision so the "norm" would no longer apply in the parish.

The Proposal before the Annual Meeting of Parishioners is to revoke the resolution of 2014 and revert to the intent of the 2001 Churchwardens Measure, to limit the maximum continuous period of service as churchwarden to six terms of office.

Benefits of implementing the general rule will work their way through the body of the church as the work of churchwarden is shared across a wider portion of the congregation. Previously serving churchwardens will be created nominally every three years on a rolling sequence, which will ensure the understanding of the polity of running the church is more widespread among the congregation. The perceived limit on the overall period of service will encourage more members to offer to carry out the role of warden without a concern this is a "role for life".

The measure would apply from 2018.

Paul Boddam-Whetham
12 March 2017

F. NORMAL MAXIMUM CONTINUOUS PERIOD OF SERVICE

33. The general rule is that an individual's ***maximum continuous period of service as churchwarden of the same parish is six terms of office*** (which, ignoring cases where a person is originally chosen to fill a casual vacancy, in effect means six years), after which the churchwarden must take ***at least a two year break before re-appointment***. The reasons for this are the importance of encouraging as many of the laity as possible to serve in a leadership role in the parish and of giving them an opportunity to do so, and also the importance of the churchwardens remaining effective and enthusiastic; a long unbroken period of office in this demanding role may leave a churchwarden "stale" and prevent him or her from developing other interests and other means of service, both within and outside the Church.
34. The six-year period ***does not begin to run until the Measure comes into force***. Thus the first of the six years cannot commence until the churchwardens chosen at the annual meetings in 2002 take up their office (CM Schedule 1 para 2).
35. It is ***normally desirable to "stagger" the two churchwardens' periods of office*** so that the parish has an experienced churchwarden working with a new one while the latter gains experience. Where the parish has two long-serving churchwardens in office when the Measure comes into force, the fact that the six-year period only begins to run after that date will give the parish an opportunity to consider how best to implement the new principle and stagger retirements.
36. While ***the six-year period is the norm, a meeting of the parishioners may pass a resolution that it is not to apply in the parish***. A subsequent meeting of the parishioners may also revoke the resolution (CM s.3). The parishioners have an absolute discretion as to the reasons why they may wish to pass or revoke the resolution, but it is recommended that they should consider whether dispensing with the general rule, at any rate for the time being, is appropriate for the particular circumstances of the parish. For example, the parishioners may decide that the general rule should not apply to the parish concerned because there is a shortage of people able and willing to serve as churchwardens, or because it would be preferable to keep an experienced team of two churchwardens in office during a forthcoming interregnum.
37. It is desirable to ***consider well in advance whether a resolution under paragraph 36 above should be passed***, and to discuss it at the annual

meeting of parishioners at least a year before it is required, so that potential candidates for election in the following year will know the position before deciding whether to stand for office.

38. However, if the parishioners pass the resolution under s.3 of the Measure it has *immediate effect* (CM s.3). If necessary (for example, because of the unexpected death of a churchwarden or an unexpected interregnum) passing the resolution will make it possible for a person with six years' continuous service and without the necessary two year break to be re-appointed in the same year. There are two ways of achieving this in practice: -
- (a) for the person concerned to be nominated, seconded and give his or her consent to serve before the annual meeting of parishioners begins, in the normal way (see paragraphs 46 and 48 below). The resolution will then need to be passed at the beginning of the meeting, followed by the election of the churchwardens; if the resolution is not passed, the candidacy of a person who falls within the "six-year" rule will fall. Where the election is taking place in order to fill a casual vacancy (see paragraph 58 below) the same will apply, but in relation to a special rather than an annual meeting of the parishioners; or
 - (b) to hold a special meeting of the parishioners to consider passing the resolution before the annual meeting to elect the churchwardens is convened.

Rector's Report

The Annual Parochial Church Meeting is a time both to look back to what God has led us through during the last year and to see also where he may be leading us as we seek to be faithful to his calling to serve him and one another. God has called us to be his ambassadors, representing him to those we meet in the world, to grow in holiness in the image of Christ and to enjoy lives transformed by the Holy Spirit. I hope to make these our aims as we strive to grow individually as Christians and to grow collectively as a fellowship, both of which happen in community.

This report reflects my first year as your Rector and I am glad to share highlights as Nicci and I became part of the St. Bartholomew's fellowship. We brought our own experience of churchmanship which has been focused in the Open Evangelical tradition and consequently we have seen some tension between that and some of the customs and practice at St. Bartholomew's but I hope that my theological and scriptural reasons for introducing some early changes have now been understood and perhaps even appreciated!

I have been encouraged to see how the work of the church is carried out by so many people and I was humbled to realize that I wrote over 80 cards at Christmas to thank all those involved in some way with the ministry of the church, whether it is in public, with our welcome as people arrive at church, and ministry with our young children, or whether it is in the quiet private pastoral visit made to a housebound member of the fellowship.

I cannot name everyone or I would replicate most of the church directory, but my sincere thanks to all of you who seek to make Christ known through your ministry of service.

Our wardens, however, need especial mention for guiding me in this my first post as an incumbent and for helping to steer the fellowship through the changes which we have all had to address. To Peter Nichols for providing wisdom and counsel not just to me but in support of the elected wardens and the PCC; to Gill Long, especially in her fortitude in continuing with her responsibilities while undergoing medical treatment and to Edmund Strange as he shares his experience and long history of service. Rachael Levermore and David Duthie also put in many hours as PCC Secretary and PCC Treasurer to keep us ahead of our statutory reporting obligations, for which I'm extremely grateful, and to help me in encouraging our level of stewardship through "Our Generous Response."

Particular thanks too, to Meg Roberts for her work in leading the Pastoral Support team, to Angela Williams for inspiring our young children and her team of helpers, to Linda Paul and Mary Thorne in their work with me in the routine, but extensive administration needed to serve our fellowship and finally to Ian Paul, Dave Adams and Mary Carney with grateful thanks for our shared ministry in leading and preaching.

We have seen the beginnings of outreach in our community with the weekly Cafe, welcoming a number of young mothers as well as dog walkers who pop in for a chat

and a warming drink. It is good that several senior church members come to support this, which also helps to build bridges across the age spectrum of our congregation. I hope we can explore ways of making the building of which we are custodians a vital asset in the village and we are exploring ways to provide a welcoming space for the cafe and for small meetings. I want to encourage us also to think expansively and come up with outrageous ideas for intentionally developing the ministry of the church into the community!

Other traditional outreach happens through our pastoral services of weddings, baptism and funerals. We have had three weddings here (with a further seven booked over the next couple of years) and I also presided over one at the Cokethorpe School Chapel. It was a great encouragement to conduct the baptism and preparation for confirmation by Bishop Colin of one of the brides. Similarly, an adult baptism and confirmation followed the preparation of parents for an infant baptism and a third adult was confirmed following the reawakening of his faith through the support received after his wife's funeral and his being welcomed into our fellowship. The fourth Confirmation Candidate was one of our young teenagers and it was a joy to prepare her to take her place within our Christian fellowship. As well as the two adult baptisms, we held four infant baptisms which are now taking place within the first Sunday Family praise service, so that candidates can be properly welcomed by the church family. Of the 11 funerals conducted, (6 burials and 5 interment of ashes) at one we had to install a Public-Address system to relay the service to approximately 500 mourners who were unable to join the other 250 packed into the church.

These pastoral services are a deeply important part of our ministry as Christians within our community and my role as priest is only a small part of what we do to support and encourage people through both the highlights and the low spots of what it means to be human and to be a child of God. Thank you for your practical and prayerful support on these occasions.

As I have come to know the character of our church and village, I am excited by the opportunity for us to take a more conspicuous and prominent place in the village, where our work and witness among our neighbours and colleagues makes us noticed as a source of influence and vitality as we allow God to use us and to make us more in his image day by day. I look forward to developing a vision for the church, through discussion with the PCC and with the congregation, which will excite us in response to the stimulating work of the Holy Spirit as we seek to become the people which he wants us to be and to share the good news of Jesus Christ.

Paul Boddam-Whetham,

11 March 2017

Wardens' Report

It has been an interesting year adjusting and adapting to new exciting developments and challenges.

The fabric of the church is one of the warden's responsibilities and at St Bartholomew's we are very lucky to have an active fabric committee effectively led by its chairman, Roger Barnes. We thank him for all the time and effort both in keeping on top of maintenance and repairs and also researching new ideas.

We would like to say a big thank you to all who help with the one hundred and one tasks you do for the church. There are too many to name you all and we would not want to miss any of you off a list. We do appreciate all that you do so thank you again.

Gill Long and Edmund Strainge

Wardens Report - Fabric Committee

The Fabric Committee met six times during 2016 and much of the discussion centred on the proposed new internal North door. A faculty has been obtained, the contract awarded, and we hope to complete by Easter 2017. We have been promised a grant of £1,000 from the Oxfordshire Historic Churches Trust towards this work.

Tasks completed by the Fabric Committee during the year included:

- External gates and rails repainted.
- Windows and Chancel roof cleaned – with many thanks to Mark Toovey.
- Disabled parking area at North gate.
- Who's Who board.
- Christmas cards

Tasks currently on-going include:

- Developing proposals to refurbish the kitchen facilities and to create an area for meetings and socialising.
- Proposals to utilise "the crypt" as a storage area. Initially this means drying it out.
- A re-examination of how we heat the church.
- A parking facility for mobility scooters at the South door and provision of additional lighting along the South path.

We are thankful to volunteers who give their time to carry out minor repairs and inspections, thus saving the church money and helping to keep the fabric in good condition. We are also very grateful to the rota of volunteers who unlock and relock the church daily. Special thanks must go to Denis Welch for his work in the 1990s of "Saving St. Bartholomew's" (read the book). The fact that we have a church in such good condition today is in no small part due to his skill and perseverance.

Roger Barnes

PCC Secretary's Report

This has been Paul and Nicci's first year leading us in our faith and a very busy time for them and the PCC so thank you both for everything you have done.

Since our last AGM we have held a total of 7 PCC meetings and 6 Standing Committee meetings; concentrating on building on what we started last year. There has been a particular focus on how we continue to develop the vision for the church and we have had a number of discussions about the Mission Action Plan. We are always looking for ideas on how to grow our Church so please let any PCC member know if you have any feedback for us – after all, it is your Church. We would also love to encourage new members to join the PCC and help shape our Church.

This will be my last year as secretary and we will be looking for someone to take over this role. If you are interested, please come and speak to me. There is much to learn but it is such a privilege to serve the Church and it brings a lot of satisfaction.

I have also taken on responsibility for the Electoral Roll and am pleased to say we currently have a total of 110 members on the roll.

Finally, I would like to thank all my fellow PCC members for their continued love and support.

Rachael Levermore

Children's Work Report

It is good that the children enjoy Sunday School. We have 16 children on the roll at the current time. Numbers are variable, and there may be four to eleven children attending at any one Sunday School session.

We follow a similar structure in the Sunday School namely: the children sit in a circle for the register, for action games, prayers and then this is the time when the theme of the lesson is introduced. A story is often read, told or acted out. The children then carry out various activities at the tables e.g. art and craft tasks which are usually linked to the theme. At the end of the session the children come together to show what they have done, to listen to a CD, and to have a short, thoughtful, quiet and prayerful time. I would like to say a very big thank you to all the Leaders and Helpers. Each person is unique and very much appreciated, and without whom the Sunday School would not be able to carry on.

Angela Williams

The Pastoral Team Report

The Pastoral Team offer support to church members with transport to church and medical appointments, visits to elderly, lonely and bereaved people if requested, send cards to those who are unwell, in hospital or undergoing long-term treatment, to the newly bereaved in the village and congregation, and on the first anniversary of a bereavement. We can only do this if we are informed of needs, and remind members to let the Rector or a member of the team know of any of which they become aware.

Meg Roberts

Witney Deanery Synod Report

There have been 3 meetings this year: May 2016 at St. Mary, Cogges, Witney; Oct 2016 St. Mary the Virgin, Bampton; and Feb 2017 at St. John the Evangelist, Carterton.

Each meeting opened with a welcome prayers and introduction.

The first item was always Inspiration- celebration of what is happening within the deanery around:

At the May meeting this briefing and update from the Diocese was given by Archdeacon Judy which included a Q & A session where the Archdeacon answered questions of her path to becoming an Archdeacon and what she sees an Archdeacon is.

Sharing good news:

WWW – What Went Well – stories were shared among parishes about something that is going well to celebrate with everybody.

In the October meeting there was a General Synod Report – The Reverend Dr. Andrew Atherstone (Eynsham and Cassington in Woodstock Deanery), the Archbishop's 3 priorities were recapped: Development of Christian prayer, Christian evangelism and reconciliation.

Finance

May - a Finance report – Mrs. Sue Campbell. Last year's accounts were accepted after a vote. A long debate followed on what to do with a diocesan rebate.

Oct - an update was given confirming that 50% of the deanery share had been made so a rebate had been obtained.

Feb - it was confirmed that the full share had been made.

Bible Study and reflection on a passage

They use Dwelling in the Word – concentrate on 1 passage of scripture, read 3 times, silence after 1st to think what struck you, after 2nd reading talk to neighbour and 3rd to discuss in a group what strikes you.

May - The Reverend Toby Wright John 15: I am the true vine

Oct - Philippians 1.27 – 2.11 was led by Ron Curtis.

Feb - Rev'd Bill Blakey Bible Passage Matthew 5:1-16

After the discussions held in groups there was feedback where a lot of the same organisations were mentioned - Besom, Base 33, Street pastors, late night cafe.

After this Area Dean's Notices followed by Lay Chair's Notices were given.

The full minutes are available on the information table should anyone wish to read them.

Ian Paul, Angela Williams, Steve Bold

The Mothers' Union Report

The Branch presently has 14 members and is open to all in the church, regardless of gender or marital status, as long as they support its stated aims of supporting marriage and family life. Everyone is welcome to attend our meetings held each month. A brief act of worship is followed by a talk or discussion on a subject related to family life. In October we had a speaker on Dementia Friends and were joined by members of the Pastoral Team. In January we had a visit from a Diocesan M.U. trustee who is the Diocesan President. A few of us attend meetings with members from other branches for services or meetings around the county. In August we marked the retirement of Brenda Cook, our leader for 15 years, with a presentation at a lunch attended by all members and partners. M.U. supports local projects such as the Food Bank, knit blankets for elderly people in care homes and for new babies, donate toiletries for parents of sick children staying at Ronald MacDonald House, and the Thursday morning 5Cs café.

Meg Roberts, Branch Leader

Tower Ringing Report

In January the ringers held their annual dinner at The Lord Kitchener which was well attended by 22 ringers and their partners. On the first Sunday of each month we usually attempt a Quarter Peal, which is about 45 minutes of continuous ringing, before the evening Communion Service. Out of 7 attempts, 3 were successful, and we congratulate Hannah and Peter for ringing their first quarter peals. Hannah and Peter spend 8 months of the year in Australia and 4 (the summer) in Ducklington! We also welcomed Marysia as a new ringer, and she now rings regularly on Sundays. We use the Learning the Ropes teaching plan which systematically introduces and progresses new recruits into the art of bell ringing. As we have two registered ringing teachers, we also train ringers from other towers, notably from Witney and South Leigh.

In June we entered two teams in the Witney & Woodstock Branch striking competition at Standlake. No prizes this time as we came 2nd in one section and 3rd in the other. A good performance though. In July we held our annual outing, this year ringing at Swerford, Hook Norton, Cherrington and Long Compton, with an enjoyable lunch at Hook Norton.

It was a very successful year for improving the ringing of our 2014/15 recruits, and they are now hardened quarter-pealers, so we have discontinued the Tuesday afternoon practices for the time being, and are tending to concentrate more on Sunday afternoon quarter peals.

Maintenance-wise we decided it was time for a new set of ropes (£1000) as the old ones were getting very worn, but fortunately Bampton had recently had a brand new set of ropes delivered as part of a total overhaul, and they gave us their old ones which were almost new! We also received quotes from White's of Appleton to add 2 extra bells (£30,000 plus VAT) and another to replace the wooden pulleys with nylon sealed ball bearing pulleys (£2,400 plus VAT). In the end we found a man in Poland and sorted the pulleys for £400 including VAT. At our AGM we decided against any attempt to add two extra bells –there is a perfectly good ring of 8 in Witney that is short of ringers. As always, anyone wishing to “learn the ropes” will be more than welcome.

Roger Barnes

Church website and Facebook page and You Tube Channel Report

It's been a busy year updating the website's "theme" and moving our hosting account to try and speed up access to the site. There have been some positive responses to the new look of the site which is now fresher and less cluttered.

The electronic newsletter continues to be sent out weekly with reminders of upcoming events, services, prayer diaries and the chance to listen to sermons again, or for the first time.

Due to changes in hosting we don't have a full Google Analytics review this year but looking at just the December figures, there were 110 views of the Christmas services page, 47 views of the Crib service, 62 for the general services. During December, most visits to the website were on Christmas Eve – 188 visits. This shows what a valuable resource the website can be especially for those who may be occasional, rather than regular, visitors to St Bartholomew's.

Facebook "likes" remains steady at 141. During the year, updates are posted regarding forthcoming baptisms or weddings (which always get a good response!), photos are changed, special services announced. Many hundreds of people have seen posts during the year as our "followers" like a post which, in turn, their "followers" get to see.

In December a You Tube channel was also set up as the best repository for any videos. At present there are only 3 short clips from the Brize Christmas concert. Just go to You Tube and search for St Bartholomew's Ducklington.

Jane Dines

Treasurer's Report

This report will be issued as an addendum prior to the Annual Meeting