



THE PARISH CHURCH OF ST. ANDREW
SERVING CHARVIL, SONNING AND SONNING EYE

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

Wednesday 22nd April 2015

at

The Parish Church of St. Andrew

Written Reports For 2014



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

To be held at St. Andrews Church, Sonning

On 22nd April 2015 at 7.30 pm

A G E N D A

1. Opening prayers
2. Appointment of Secretary
3. Apologies
4. Election of Churchwardens and Deputy Church Wardens
5. Minutes of Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on 9th April 2014 and previous year's minutes from APCM in 2013.
6. Matters arising from Minutes
7. Vicar's Report
8. Treasurer's Report and Financial Statement of Parochial Church Council
9. Presentation of Terrier
10. Election of representatives to the Sonning Deanery Synod for a five-year term
11. Election of members to the PCC for a three-year term
12. Election of Chalice Bearers
13. Election of Sides people
14. Written Reports
 - a) [Vicar's Report](#)
 - b) [Pioneer Minister's Report](#)
 - c) [Electoral Roll](#)
 - d) [PCC](#)
 - e) PCC Committee Reports
 - i. [Buildings and Maintenance](#)
 - ii. [Social Committee](#)
 - iii. [Worship Committee](#)
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f) Other Reports

- i. [Friends of St Andrew's Church](#)
- ii. [Churchwardens](#)
- iii. [Parish Magazine](#)
- iv. [Choir and Organ](#)
- v. [Sonning School](#)
- vi. [St Andrew's Church Sunday Club](#)
- vii. [St Andrew's Flower Arrangers](#)
- viii. [Wednesday House Group](#)
- ix. [Book Group](#)
- x. [MONDAY@8](#)
- xi. [Tuesday Afternoon Bible Study Group](#)
- xii. [A Time to Pray](#)
- xiii. [Bell Ringers](#)
- xiv. [Stewardship](#)

15. Appointment of independent examiner

16. Any other business

17. Closing prayers

Appendix 1 - [Giving outside the Parish](#)

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

For the year ended 31st December 2014

Incumbent:

The Revd. Jamie Taylor
The Vicarage
Thames Street
Sonning
RG4 6UR

Independent Examiner: Mr Allan Williams

THE VICAR'S REPORT 2015

It is a very good discipline to write this report every year, and I find it useful to look back over them to get an overview of where we presently are and where we have come from. The major preoccupation since our last APCM has been the new hall project. We were delighted to gain planning permission last spring and this last year has seen the launch of the appeal and an enormous amount of work for Perry Mills, our excellent project manager, in tackling the tendering process. This is coming to a resolution but it has taken longer than I was expecting. However, I freely admit that I have next to no experience in these matters! The fundraising group, under the chairmanship of Richard Moore, has been meeting regularly and the parish has enjoyed some great events along the way, but most of the grants that we are hoping for cannot be applied for until the formal tendering process is completed. The 'Gift Fortnight' saw us receive 96 anonymous donations from our congregation and, with gift aid, this brought in over £50 000. We obviously have some way to go and we shall be working hard to get to the finishing line as soon as we can. The need for this new building is so obvious and the benefits, for both our congregation and the wider community, will be huge.

In July we said thank you and farewell to our organist and choirmaster, David Duvall. David had served, in a voluntary capacity, for thirty seven years, and he and his wife, Ann, were very much valued members of our church family. The parish gave them a good send-off with a dinner in the Great House and a special farewell service and presentation, followed by a drinks reception in the Vicarage garden. When David informed me of his decision to retire, I set about seeking views on what was needed in a

successor. What was clear from conversations with local senior organists was that there was no prospect of replacing David with another volunteer. Things have changed somewhat since the 1970s. I spoke with senior members of the adult choir and some of the juniors and with members of the congregation and the PCC then decided to create a paid post of Director of Music, and we advertised it widely. I was encouraged by the number of applicants and the three we shortlisted were all strong candidates. However, Chris Cromar stood out a long way, and the choir representatives, Terry Hunt and I were all unanimous in our wish to offer the post to him. Chris, as a professional, highly-experienced and talented musician, has brought much to this post and I have enjoyed working with him and getting to know him and his wife Kate. There is huge potential for music in this parish and it is a delight to see the beginnings of something that I believe could be rather special. If Alice's reports are anything to go by, the Junior Choir greatly enjoy their time with him and their singing has quite simply been transformed now that they are rehearsing weekly. The greater commitment asked of the adults, although not agreeable to all the members when Chris arrived, has also achieved a significant and very positive improvement in the quality of singing. We are most grateful to all those who give of their time to work hard in learning the wider repertoire of music and then giving of their best for God's glory.

We were delighted to learn that Jenny Sullivan was accepted to train for the Lay Ministry and the existing members of the Ministry Team have enjoyed welcoming her to our meetings and to share with us the tasks of preaching, leading worship and pastoral work. Indeed I believe we are really most fortunate to now have a Ministry team who have complementary gifts and who offer quite a varied preaching ministry. I enjoy working with each of them and value their contributions to parish life. Similarly we are most fortunate to have Jean Tinson's pastoral ministry, usually working away behind the scenes, and she ably coordinates the other pastoral visitors and she and I meet together regularly for discussion and prayer.

In terms of outreach to the parish, the magazine goes from strength to strength, and I have lost count of the times when total strangers have stopped me to tell me how much they value it and look forward to its arrival. I have been around long enough in the Church of England to know that this won't be something many of my clerical colleagues experience in their parishes! We owe so much to Bob Peters and Gordon Nutbrown for all they have done to revolutionise this historic publication. It dates back to 1868, and they have now secured it for many, many years to come and have

opened it up it from a circulation of 400 paid subscriptions to 2500 free copies, with between 1500-2000 hits a month on the website.

It is wonderful to see how our Pioneer Ministry post is continuing to evolve. Alison quickly established herself in the community and she is an important and valued presence in our three schools and the Charvil Pre School. The G.L.U.E. (Kids' Fellowship) is a significant development for the parish in that we have not really engaged with older children, thereby losing them completely once they are teenagers. The Junior Choir is a good way of engaging them on Sundays, but I can also see a very real need to provide age appropriate groups for them as part of Sunday Club, something presently impossible because of lack of space. The new building will be invaluable for this. We owe it to them and to the future of the church to provide all that is needed for them to flourish. The present situation is simply not good enough and this new facility is long overdue.

St. Andrew's is so dependent on its voluntary helpers, whether 'Church welcomers', sidespersons, servers, choristers, readers, flower arrangers, bell ringers, fundraisers, PCC members, Sunday Club leaders, Social Committee members, Lay Ministers, Deputy Wardens, brass cleaners, coffee makers, bankers, pastoral visitors, light bulb changers, Friends' Trustees, not to mention those who commit to pray for our congregation and outreach. However, the senior volunteers, if you like, are the Churchwardens and anyone who has fulfilled that role knows how complex it can be with some pretty serious responsibilities, including keeping the Vicar in line, if needed! I have greatly enjoyed welcoming Liz Nelson to the role over the last twelve months and have been really pleased to see how quickly she settled into it. I can't believe that it is now five years since I approached Terry Hunt to ask him to consider standing and now it is time to thank him and release him back to his retirement! It has been a rather action-packed five years, with much to occupy a Churchwarden. In addition to the bread and butter work, Terry oversaw the new roof project for the tower, investing huge amounts of time and energy in the process. He was also invaluable to me as we have dealt with some difficult but necessary issues, some of which had been put off for too long, and I know his wise counsel has been much appreciated by the PCC. Terry has given 150% in service of this parish, and I pay tribute to him and also to Wendy for all her support. We shall miss his input very much, but he does deserve a rest! I look forward to welcoming a new warden to the role and to all that the next year will have in store. This will include an 'away weekend' for the PCC to decide on priorities for the next five years and, God willing, to the building

of our new hall and office. There is much work to be done, but, under God, we can and will achieve so much, for His glory.

Jamie

Pioneer Minister's Report

2014 has seen our children's work grow and flourish in the parish. Our excellent Sunday Club leaders, Emma Leggett, Marie Simpkins, Rachel Argent, Alison Elms and Helen Harper, have been rolling out new resources for the sessions which have been written by Scripture Union. This has been a huge help with planning and allowed the children to follow themes throughout each term. We have also printed our own hymn book, with familiar children's songs and hymns from school. We are very much looking forward to being able to use the new hall to increase our work with older children and give us room for more imaginative fun, craft and creative worship.

The second Easter Holiday Club followed the life of Joseph from the Old Testament with many children attending and lots of fun and learning. We were cops and robbers, playing games, making wonderful crafts, including the frieze on display in the church, and learning about God's faithfulness to his promises.

Much of my work has been in schools this year – both with the children and behind the scenes as a Governor. Charvil Piggott Primary School and Sonning Primary School are very important to my ministry and I am privileged to be able to lead worship and help with RE in these settings. Charvil Piggott this year, and Sonning next, have the huge change of new headteachers and it is important that we keep these precious institutions in our prayers.

I have also seen the work at Reading Blue Coat School expand and am delighted that a new Christian Union has begun meeting, with the support of a couple of teachers and myself, called Pro Deo. My work at Piggott Secondary School has also increased, supporting the new Head in matters spiritual and chairing the SMSC committee.

Kid's Fellowship continues to meet and we have changed our name to Glue, standing for God Loves Us Eternally and representing us sticking together in our shared faith. We have built a garden at the Jubilee Hall and

led an imaginative Mothering Sunday service in the church, based around a dramatic retelling of the story of the Lost Sheep. I am delighted that Pat Grove has joined me in leading Glue.

Safeguarding the children remains our priority and, in this regard, Rachel Argent, our new Safeguarding Officer, is helping us work through new procedures. I continue to be very grateful to all the volunteers from our church community who help with our youth and children's work and make it possible. I hope that you continue to find it as rewarding as I do.

Alison

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Sonning

Aim and Purpose

To provide:

- Regular public worship that is open to all.
- Sacred space for personal prayer and Contemplation.
- Pastoral work which includes visiting the sick and the bereaved.
- The teaching of Christianity through sermons, courses and small groups.
- The leadership of religious assemblies in schools.
- The promotion of Christianity through the staging of events and meetings, and in the distribution of literature.
- Promotion of the whole mission of the Church through provision of activities for parents and toddlers.
- Support of other charities in the UK and overseas.

Objectives and Activities

The PCC is committed to enabling as many people as possible to worship in our parish and to become part of our parish community within Sonning, Sonning Eye and Charvil. The PCC vision is to:

- Serve better those who choose to worship with us and share a journey in faith
- Reach out and draw others to the knowledge and love of God
- Attend to the pastoral needs of those around us (As individuals and as an organisation)
- Preserve our Anglican heritage
- Engage with our local community and find new ways to serve them

When planning our activities for the year, the incumbent and the PCC have considered the Commission's guidance on public benefit and in particular the specific guidance on charities for the advancement of religion. In particular, we try to enable ordinary people to live out their faith as part of our parish community through:

- Worship – Learning about the Gospel and developing their knowledge and trust in Jesus.
- Mission and pastoral care – Giving to others and the provision of pastoral care for people living in the parish.
- Buildings and Maintenance - To facilitate this work it is important that we maintain the fabric of our church.
- Social – Arranging social events throughout the year.

Administrative Information

The Parish of Sonning encompasses the thriving communities of Sonning, Sonning Eye and Charvil, located between Reading and Henley-on-Thames in a beautiful section of the Thames valley. We have a growing congregation and are welcoming and uplifting, embracing the broad Anglican tradition. The correspondence address is St Andrew's Sonning, The Vicarage, Thames St, Sonning, READING, Berkshire, RG4 6UR.

The PCC is a body corporate (PCC Powers Measure 1956, Church Representation Rules 2006) and a charity registered with the Charity Commission.

During the year, the following served the Parish:

Incumbent (and Chairman) Pioneer Minister (From July 2012) Licensed Lay Minister	Revd Jamie Taylor Revd Alison Waters Bob Peters
Churchwardens (Normally 5y term):	Terry Hunt Liz Nelson
Deputy Churchwardens	Molly Woodley Perry Mills Mark Sullivan
Treasurer	John Scoble
Secretary	Shirley Chard
Representatives on the Sonning Deanery Synod (Normally 5y term): (Total elected: 5)	David Duvall (Until July 2014) Rory Symes (From Sept 2014) Heather Hine Barbara McGregor (Until APCM 2014) Molly Woodley Terry Hunt Richard Moore
Elected members of the PCC (For 3y term) (Total elected: 7)	Leslie Stephen (Until APCM 2014) Steve Wilkinson (Until APCM 2014) Keith Nichols (Until APCM 2014) Alison Elms (From APCM 2014) Rachel Argent (From APCM 2014) Stuart Bowman (From APCM 2014) Tom Farncombe Peregrine Chard Emma Leggett Mark Sullivan
Total:	19 current members

Review of the year

The PCC met on 6 occasions during the year and the meetings were always well attended with an approximate average attendance of 72.8%.

PCC Secretary - Shirley Chard

The Parish Magazine

Issued monthly, free to all homes in the parish.

Editor: Bob Peters

Advertising and Distribution: Gordon Nutbrown

Committees

The PCC operates through a number of committees, which meet between the full meetings of the PCC.

Standing and Finance

This is the only committee required by law and has power to transact the business of the PCC between meetings, subject to any directions given by the Council. Members are the Incumbent, the Churchwardens, the Treasurer and the Secretary.

Jubilee Hall

This committee manages the Jubilee Hall oversight and ensures maintenance is covered adequately.

Worship

This committee attends to matters relating to ministry in the local Church, such as aspects of worship, welcoming new people to the parish and work with young people. **Chairman:** Rev Jamie Taylor.

Buildings and Maintenance

This committee attends to matters relating to stewardship of the church buildings and fabric. **Chairman:** Mr Terry Hunt.

Social

This committee is responsible for arranging social events.

Chairman: Mrs Sue Peters.

ELECTORAL ROLL AND ATTENDANCE

At the APCM in April 2014 there were 298 people on the Electoral Roll.

The total number on the April 2015 Electoral Roll is 295.

The average parish attendance on a Sunday is 153 adults and 20 children. The average attendance for midweek worship is 18 adults and 6 young people.

Sonia Boyles - **Parish Administrator**

TREASURER'S REPORT

Financial Review

Total receipts on unrestricted funds were £246,000 of which £92,500 was received as rent from The Bull, and £1,400 as dividends and interest. There were two main categories of restricted donations - £81,900 (including tax rebate) for the New Hall, and £25,000 (including tax rebate) for the grand piano. The cost of the grand piano (and associated works) is expected to be in the region of £21,500, and the balance of approx £3,500 can be transferred to the New Hall fund. Restricted Investment Income of £5,500 was also received, mostly for the Churchyard and St Andrew's building maintenance.

Excluding amounts received for the New Hall and the grand piano, total donations, collections and tax receipts from Gift Aid are down by around £4,500, although most of this is accounted for by the fact that we received a legacy in 2013 of £4,000.

Excluding amounts spent on the New Hall (both years) and on the grand piano, expenditure was down by around £15,000 compared with 2013. Small increases and decreases happened in many categories, as is normal; One contributing factor is that the PCC decided to further reduce

our Parish Share contribution from £100,000 in 2013 to £90,000 in 2014, as against the requested amount of £112,647.

It is pleasing to see that the cost of producing the Parish Magazine continues to be covered by the revenue from advertising. As was originally decided by the PCC, the cost of distribution is considered to be part of our mission to the parish.

As at 31 December 2014, the New Hall fund total stands at £141,200, with £106,000 transferred from other PCC funds, and £89,500 received in donations and sales of promotional items, less £54,300 spent so far.

The last Quinquennial inspection was undertaken in August 2013. Certain items will require attention in due course, but no items were identified requiring major expenditure.

Reserves policy

It is PCC policy to maintain a balance on unrestricted and undesignated funds (if possible), which equates to at least three months unrestricted payments to cover emergency situations that may arise from time to time, and £55,000 is held in a Designated General Reserve Fund for this. No change in the amount held in the General Reserve Fund was made in 2014.

All balances held with CAF Bank earn interest on a daily basis at the prevailing market rates. It is our policy to invest other monies with the CBF Church of England Deposit Fund.

John Scoble - **Honorary Treasurer**

STEWARDSHIP

I am pleased to report that the level of planned giving has continued to be satisfactory through the year, with some new donors joining the scheme.

During the year letters were sent out thanking individuals for their giving. If details of specific amounts donated are required by individual givers

these can be requested from the Stewardship Co-ordinator (details below).

We continue to encourage people to change their method of giving to standing order as this provides the treasurer with a better level of certainty when forecasting our income and involves less work for the volunteers who do the weekly bankings.

If anyone would like a standing order form or a gift aid form to complete please e-mail me at rmmoore@talktalk.net or call me on 0118 9692588.

Thank you for your support throughout the year.

Richard Moore - **Stewardship Co-ordinator**

BUILDINGS & MAINTENANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

Routine maintenance

The usual range of minor repairs and maintenance has been undertaken. Very unusually, there has been no infestation of wasps, bees, beetles, worms, pigeons, or squirrels for the second year running!

The boiler has been regularly maintained, the electrical appliances tested and fire extinguishers, checked and replaced as necessary. The alarm and CCTV has been maintained and kept in good order by the installation company.

Special projects

The North Porch has been refurbished and the cost met by the Friends of St Andrew's. This has resulted in a striking improvement to the initial impressions on entering our Church.

The carpet has been removed from the chancel and from the sanctuary on a trial basis. This has exposed the monumental brasses and the elaborate Victorian tiling. As part of the experiment, the original altar has been put back in use. We will evaluate these trials in due course. The PCC has decided not to pursue the restoration of the brasses for the time being. A close watch will be kept to check for wear or damage.

Mrs Daphne Glyn has generously donated a grand piano to the Church in memory of her daughter and following receipt of a Faculty from the Diocese; two pews have been removed to enable the piano to be located close to the lectern.

New Building

The new building planning is progressing well under the leadership of Deputy Warden Perry Mills. Fund raising is well under way for this important addition to our facilities.

Terry Hunt - **Chairman**

SOCIAL COMMITTEE

The social committee have hosted several events during the year 2014 including the catering for the very successful Hog Roast at Reading Blue Coat School in September. We held two Traditional Pub Games Nights at Jubilee Hall (which attracted several local residents), refreshments in the vicarage garden after the Duvall's leaving service, the Harvest Supper at Pearson Hall, the Lent Suppers and we supported Alison with the Easter Barbecue. We also served drinks after the All Souls service.

We would like to thank the many willing helpers who are not on the committee but help to cook and serve food and drinks, as well as lugging boxes and shifting furniture at the various events that we are involved with. If you haven't yet joined us for any of the social events we look forward to seeing you at one of them soon!

Sue Peters - **Chairman**

WORSHIP COMMITTEE

The update on this has been covered in the Vicar's report above.

Rev Jamie Taylor - **Chairman**

DEANERY SYNOD

There were four meetings of the Deanery Synod in 2014, starting at Wargrave last March, proceeding to Crowthorne in June, Finchampstead in September, and finally Woosehill in November.

The Parish Share was again under the spotlight. It was reported that the Deanery fell short by some £92,000 in payment of its share allocation for 2013, with fewer than half of parishes paying their share in full (including Sonning).

The Synod continued to monitor progress against the Deanery Mission Action Plan throughout the year. Martin Hughes stepped down as Lay Chair and was replaced by John Smith from All Saints, Wokingham, whilst Reg Morton retired from his position as Treasurer of the Deanery and Sharon White from Finchampstead was elected as his replacement.

Synod also heard presentations during the year from Christian Aid and Parents and Children Together (PACT) and also on 'Experiences of the West Bank'.

Richard Moore - **Deanery Synod Representative**

THE FRIENDS OF ST ANDREW'S CHURCH

As planned I took over Chairmanship from Peter Goodacre in May, and Peter kindly agreed to stay on as a Trustee. The Trustees met on five occasions during the year.

There have been fewer activities taking place this year. In May the Vicar asked that the "Friends" step back from their fund raising activities as the church was to fund raise for a New Hall. The "Friends" were asked to assist by selling merchandise on behalf of the Hall Fund Raising Committee, which they duly did. They also provided refreshments, in the St Sarik Room, during the Scarecrow weekend raising nearly £1,300 for the New Hall Fund.

The produce stall in the St Sarik Room continues to be a great success and is much appreciated by the congregation. It raised over £1,500,

(including Sonning Show income) a fantastic result, and we are most grateful to Wendy Williams and her small team for achieving this.

The Chairman wishes to record his thanks to all who have supported the "Friends".

Expenditure during the year included the refurbishment of the North Porch involving repair to masonry, new lighting, notice boards and redecoration, a total of £3,526. The Christmas tree was also donated.

The surplus for the year was £4,508 mainly due to less fundraising. Experience has shown that the cost of maintaining St Andrew's fluctuates considerably from year to year, and in many cases without warning. The Trustees are therefore comfortable with retaining a reserve of £79,000 against these eventualities.

Keith Nichols - **Chairman**

CHURCHWARDENS' REPORT

2014 saw the retirement of Mark Jordan as Warden after five years, not to mention his earlier valuable service as PCC Secretary. Mark has continued to help in many ways for which we are very grateful.

In his stead, Liz Nelson has become a Church Warden and has slipped easily into the manifold duties.

2014 was the year for change in our Church music.

Our long term friend, David Duval and his wife Ann, left us for pastures new in Dorset. We all miss them and continue to be grateful for the many, many years of service that they gave to St Andrews.

We welcomed Chris Cromar to St Andrew's in September. He has made a great impact on our music, one commented on by so many parishioners. A significant number come early for the 10.30 Service, just to hear the Choir practicing under Chris's firm direction. We have lost a few old friends from the Choir as a consequence of the new, very professional regime. The PCC was seeking a step change in the standard of music and sadly this is a price we had to pay.

We all look forward with excitement to hear the new order become fully established.

We said farewell to Malcolm Stansfield in May after a very long period of service to St Andrews, in the last few years of which, he was Warden Emeritus. We miss easy access to his sound advice and wise council.

As in every previous year, St Andrews delivers its high standard of worship and praise at the direction of Jamie and the Ministry Team. We are indeed extraordinarily blessed.

St Andrews can only deliver its special style with the help of innumerable volunteers. Again we are blessed with a wonderful group each contributing in their own special way. The Wardens, on behalf of the Congregation thank them all for what they have done.

Terry Hunt and Liz Nelson – **Churchwardens**

PARISH MAGAZINE

During 2014 The Parish Magazine 'came of age'. The targets that were set have now all been met and I think we can confidently look forward to reaping the dividends in the future. Much of the credit for this must go to Gordon and Rosemary Nutbown who work tirelessly behind the scenes handling all the business side of publishing the magazine. This allows me to concentrate on the editorial and layout. Gordon manages the advertising and liaises with the printer and distributors. As a result in 2014 we achieved the financial objectives, namely to generate sufficient advertising income to cover all the printing costs, while the PCC pays for the distribution to every home in the parish as part of its mission and development work in the parish. We ended the year with a surplus of £144.99! This is no mean feat as we need about 75 advertisers to achieve this. During the year, as would be expected, a small number of advertisers said goodbye but the space they vacated was soon filled by new ones. Rosemary, as well as supporting Gordon and making delicious tea for us, manages the low cost 'classified' advertising page designed to help small businesses and traders sell their services, and she is one of a small team of proof readers that I have come to rely on - for that alone I am extremely grateful.

I also thank Gordon for the many ideas he suggests for the magazine and for taking on one of these himself, namely, to publish and sell a calendar to raise funds for the new hall. As a result of its success we are now planning to publish the calendar each year so, when the time comes, please support us in this new venture.

My thanks also go to all the magazine's regular contributors, both writers and photographers. Some may only provide a paragraph or two each month, others full length features. However large or small their contribution is, it is very much appreciated, as is their patience with me when I edit their work! During 2014 we lost one valued contributor, Carole Arrowsmith, who moved away just at a time when I was planning to ask her if she could expand her 'Open Doors' piece about the persecution of Christians. The only option I thought was to take on the job myself but within a few days Colin Bailey, a member of our congregation I had not met before, contacted me out of the blue offering to do exactly what I had in mind. Colin is a music journalist who cares deeply for those being persecuted for their faith and I thank him for his commitment to keep us all informed about one of the most serious issues in the world today. God works in wonderful ways!

With the magazine on a firm financial and editorial footing a decision was taken at the end of 2014 to increase the number of colour pages and so complete our original plans for it. It would need some additional finance but before the year ended this had been generated within the advertising revenues and it has since been implemented.

Bob Peters - **Editor**

CHOIR AND ORGAN

Choir

After seven months in post, I am heartened that the St. Andrew's Junior Choir is showing signs of flourishing musically and numerically. The progress that this choir has made spoke for itself on Easter Sunday, and I was grateful to receive many supportive comments about the re-invigorated programme and quality of music at services.

The Junior Choir is now beginning to fulfil its mission, offering *weekly* choral training and experience to girls *and boys* from a number of different schools whilst enriching the worshipping life of the parish on first and third Sundays. Previously the choir rehearsed once a month and only sang on the first Sunday.

The St. Andrew's Adult Choir is now a more streamlined group, but made up entirely of singers who take their role within the music ministry of this church seriously. You may well have noticed that we now have the same people in the choir stalls each week, and this dedication to rehearsals and services is the crucial starting point for the growth and development of any choir. I am very grateful to those who have remained in the choir, or increased their commitment to it, serving the parish with dedication and distinction through their singing.

Recruitment for both choirs is now something I would like to address. I would like to see the junior choir double in size and would like to recruit four to six committed, competent adult singers (altos, tenors and basses). With the emergence of a core of really committed singers, I think we now have something on which we can start to build.

Organ

The Vicar and I are of one mind that the organ at St. Andrew's is not fit for purpose. This view was shared by all the short-listed candidates for the post, and has been expressed by many visitors who play the organ, including the Director of Music of Dorchester Abbey.

The sound the organ produces simply isn't sufficient for the scale of the building, and is woefully inadequate as a liturgical instrument. The choir often has to strain to hear it in the stalls, and parishioners frequently remark how reticent and unsupportive it sound is in the pews. It lacks sufficient power for hymn accompaniment unless one is installed in the Side Chapel. Many in the congregation at the Easter Vigil (who *were* situated in the side chapel) commented on the revelatory experience of hearing the organ at close quarters. Some said that they hadn't realised the organ was capable of being so supportive and immediate; sadly, it isn't once you move a few feet away.

The Vicar and I are in complete agreement that there are serious issues with the present instrument and these will need to be addressed in the not too distant future.

Chris Cromar - **Director of Music**

SONNING SCHOOL

The past year has been a very busy one. After several years of a very stable staff team 2014 saw several comings and goings. Following Miss Page's departure in Autumn 2013 to a school in Reading, Miss Farndon, a newly qualified teacher, was appointed to teach the Year 1 class until the end of the academic year. Mrs Keenlyside, who had taught both Year 2 and more recently our Foundation class, left at the end of 2014 to take up a promoted post in another Wokingham Church School.

Pupil numbers continue to remain high although, as anticipated, some Charvil families are now opting for the new primary school which is closer to home and this also hopefully helps to address some of our traffic and parking issues.

A priority for school in 2014 has been planning for, and the implementation of the new primary curriculum. One of our key focuses has been to ensure that we use the autonomy that this gives us to retain and build on what we already do well in addition to introducing some new aspects especially for History and Geography.

One of the school's highlights for 2014 was our Remembrance Service which took place in church on November 11th. It was a privilege to be able to place a wreath made by all the children by the war memorial and to enable our children to learn more about the sacrifice that the young men of the local community had made.

We continue to value the contribution that the clergy team, Rev Jamie, Rev Alison and Bob Peters, make to our school for collective worship. We do not have a music specialist in school and there is always a really uplifting atmosphere to our worship when Rev Jamie plays the piano for us. We are looking forward to hopefully working with the new Choir director. At the end of 2014 the Governors and whole school community

were informed of my retirement after 16 years as Headteacher of the school and the recruitment process is now underway.

On behalf of all of our school I would like to thank St Andrew's PCC, our Foundation Governors and the Ranmore Trust for their continued support of our school.

Lesley Green – **Head Teacher**

ST ANDREW'S CHURCH SUNDAY CLUB

The Sunday Club has been included with the Pioneer Minister's report.

Alison Waters - **Sunday Club**

ST ANDREW'S FLOWER ARRANGERS

My thanks to all the loyal members on the flower rota who continue to give their time and talents in order to maintain such a high standard of floral arrangement at St Andrew's Church. I am well aware that I am fortunate to have a rota of twenty three ladies to organise - but also conscious that our average age is over seventy (with three ladies over eighty)! Time for you younger members of the congregation to learn new skills if you want the tradition of flowers in church to survive!

2014 was another year when, apart from our weekly arrangements in church and more special wedding arrangements, we excelled ourselves by decorating the church with spectacular displays for Easter, the Scarecrow Trail, Harvest Festival, Remembrance Day and Christmas. Well done ladies!

Barbara McGregor

WEDNESDAY HOUSE GROUP

The Wednesday House Group meets every other week at 7:45 p m. Generally we read passages from the bible and have a lively discussion. Anyone is welcome to join us, so please contact us if you are interested.

Mark Jordan

BOOK GROUP

We are a very small group, who meet informally in the St Sarik Room, to discuss a book which we hope will enable us to grow in our Christian Lives. Normally we meet on the 3rd Wednesday of the month, at 11:00, for about an hour, although sometimes we do miss a month.

The books we have looked at in the past include:

- Looking Through The Cross by Graham Tomlin
- The Lost Message of Jesus by Steve Chalke and Alan Mann
- The Oxford Book of Christmas Poems
- The Left Behind: a Novel of Earth's Last Days (Book 1) by Tim Lahaye and Jerry Jenkins

If you are interested in finding out more, do please ask me.

John Scoble

MONDAY@8

This is a new group open to younger parents. We meet in the St Sarik room usually on the first Monday of each month at 8pm exploring faith and how it applies to daily living through bible study, (passages from the Gospels have been chosen at present), prayer and discussion. This is followed by further discussion in a more relaxed environment in The Bull later in the evening. A Christmas meal together was held to celebrate and bond new friendships.

Jenny Sullivan

TUESDAY AFTERNOON BIBLE STUDY GROUP

The Tuesday afternoon bible study has continued to meet weekly throughout the year in the St Sarik room for coffee, cake, worship, study and prayer. This is a very special group which is valued by each individual. The Bible study allows us not only to learn more about God and His relationship with His people but also to apply whatever we are reading to our own lives, challenging, inspiring and encouraging our faith

and deepening our love for one another. After concluding the book of Esther, where we were able to see God's sovereignty and how He answers prayer, we returned to study New Testament passages, looking at the many different aspects of Jesus from the Gospels: discovering His authority, His desire to pray, His power and how to overcome fear. Special events held during the year were: 'Streams in the Desert', a prayer time especially thinking of Christians in Egypt and an Advent / Christmas Celebration to which we invited other church members. If you have never been part of such a group and would like to attend or wish to come and 'taste', or would appreciate the opportunity to re-join a group, then please do feel welcome to come along on a Tuesday afternoon at 1.45pm. We should love to see you!

Jenny Sullivan

A TIME TO PRAY

It has continued to be a privilege to meet together in the St Sarik room on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays each month at 11am for an hour. A small group pray simply together (although there is no pressure on anyone to pray out loud). We pray for God to pour out His Holy Spirit upon His people here, to lead our ministry team and their families, the PCC, the building project and all the decisions concerning this, the schools in this area and we pray for any individuals who have asked this group for prayer. As world needs have appeared greater throughout this year, we have used the time to pray significantly and practically for world situations, aid agencies and specific individuals working in these war-torn, persecuted areas. We are called to pray and praying with others is encouraging! So, do consider coming to a 'Time to Pray' and joining us in prayer. This is your church prayer group, so come and go as you please throughout the year! We look forward to welcoming you soon. God is a faithful God who transforms situations and people. Prayer is exciting!

Jenny Sullivan

BELL RINGERS

We now have 18 members of the Oxford Diocesan Guild of Church Bell Ringers but as some do not ring regularly or attend other churches on Sundays we sometimes struggle to keep the bells ringing.

We continue to ring for the 10.30 service on Sundays but can only ring for evening services with the help of ringers from other towers. Three articles in the parish magazine resulted in four new learners, but one of these has moved north and another has given up. A branch officer who received an enquiry about ringing from a lady in our area directed her towards us and we are now teaching her. We are always happy to teach new recruits.

Combined evening practices with Wargrave ringers continue at Wargrave on Wednesday and Sonning on Thursday each week, with benefits to both bands. Also we continue to teach our learners, with special practices on tied bells supplementing normal practices on open bells. Recently we repaired our ringing simulator, enabling silent practice on one bell with all the other bells perfectly struck by the computer. We are investigating the purchase of a new wireless simulator which would enable us to have group practices with the computer providing the sound of the bells inside the tower. The bells would not be heard outside.

We continue with routine maintenance and have tightened up some of the clappers as well as adjusting the swing of some of them to minimise odd-struckness. We have also fitted new supports and straightened the slider of the internal door to the belfry.

We came third in the branch 6-bell striking competition and surprisingly won the first combined Reading and Sonning Deanery branch 8-bell striking competition held at All Saints Wokingham.

In October we organised the branch ringing outing to four towers in the Aldermaston area.

The handbell group continues to practice throughout the year and rang several care homes before Christmas, plus the crib service at St Andrew's.

Pam Elliston - Tower Captain

THE PARISH OF SONNING
Giving outside the Parish for 2014

(Approved by the PCC on 5th November 2014)

	£ 2013	£ 2014
A. Local and Diocesan Projects		
Salvation Army, Reading	270	250
Age Concern Twyford & District	270	250
Berkshire Clergy Charity	270	250
Yeldall Christian Centre	315	275
Reading Lifeline	315	275
Daisy's Dream	315	275
Chernobyl Children's Lifeline	315	275
Pact	315	275
Duchess of Kent Hospice	450	400
Helen & Douglas House Hospice	630	550
Street Pastors	135	120
Baby Unit, Royal Berks Hospital	200	300
Ranmore Trust	1150	1150
Charvil PreSchool	230	1000
<i>Subtotal - A</i>	<i>5180</i>	<i>5645</i>
B. National charities and organisations		
Sue Ryder Homes	135	120
The Children's Society	270	250
Church Army	135	120
Church Housing Trust	135	120
Society of St. Francis	360	0
College of St Barnabas	360	300
<i>Subtotal - B</i>	<i>1395</i>	<i>910</i>
C. International missions and projects		
Mission to Seafarers	270	250
Christian Aid – Gaza Appeal	0	500
Alex Emmet - Boys Brigade S Africa Aid Trip	0	250
U.S.P.G.	2520	2250
C.M.S	720	650
Karuneipuri Orphanage in India	900	800
<i>Subtotal - C</i>	<i>4410</i>	<i>4700</i>
D. Special Extra Payments		
Christian Community Action	600	0
<i>Subtotal - D</i>	<i>600</i>	<i>0</i>
GRAND TOTAL (A + B + C+ D)	11585	11255