

St James Church Colwall



Vestry & Annual Parochial Church Meeting

Sunday 7th March 2010
10.15am
St James the Great Church

A quick glance at the vast array of reports contained in this booklet reveals a clear picture of a church that is full of life and energy. Lots of people, doing a great many things and achieving a great deal of success. There is undoubtedly much to celebrate in the hard work and achievements of so many

As for any family this year has offered both highs and lows. It has been enormously saddening to bid farewell to some real pillars of our church community; Kevin Walton and John and Barbara Dutton will all be sadly missed. There have also been some tremendous highs, our Holy week and Easter worship, our Patronal festival with visitors from Cradley and our link parish in Aston and the farmyard nativity to name but a few. We are richly blessed in the number and variety of people who contribute to our prayer and worship and we would be much the poorer without all that they offer. My personal thanks go to all who volunteer their time and talents to support any aspect of our worshipping life. In the coming year I hope to develop worship further with the introduction of All Age services on the 5th Sundays in which the families will take a lead in all aspects of the service.

Throughout the summer I had the pleasure of entertaining a great many of you with afternoon tea or drinks and nibbles. It was enormously helpful for me to meet people in smaller groups, to discover what you all do and to hear what you think about the church (what you value and what frustrates you). I am always keen to hear opinions, positive and negative, so if you have any thoughts please chat to me and let me know!

We have continued to support the local schools, in particular the Village school. The church is used as part of the curriculum by years 1 and 5 and the juniors meet in church for major services at Harvest, Christmas and the end of the school year. We also continue to provide regular input to the weekly collective worship and I am further strengthening links by teaching the RS element of the curriculum to the year 6 class.

In the coming year we hope to begin an open the Book project - taking bible stories into all of the primary departments of local schools.

Following the reinstatement of a fundraising co-ordinator it was rewarding to see our fundraising efforts really begin to take off in the final quarter of last year. Two concerts, two wine tastings, a whisky tasting, a harvest lunch and a travelling supper later we have managed to make a considerable dent in our predicted deficit. This would not have been possible without the hard work and commitment of the organisers and the support of the entire congregation. Many more exciting events are planned for the remainder of the coming year

After another busy year I would like to thank the outgoing members of the PCC for their hard work and commitment. Some have agreed to continue to offer their talents and energy to the PCC and others have chosen to retire in favour of new blood but either way they deserve our heartfelt gratitude. Following the completion of his four-year term of office John Doswell steps down, as Churchwarden and I would like to offer my personal thanks for the support and encouragement he has offered me. I also offer on behalf of the whole Church thanks for the assiduity, care and thoughtfulness with which John has performed his role. His wisdom, hard work and energy have benefited us all. I must also extend thanks to John Hickman who has agreed to extend his term for one further year so as to help with the induction of a new churchwarden and ensure that there is continuity. John continues to offer an enormous amount of his time and energy and I know that we are all grateful.

It is easy to be so busy that we lose sight of what it is that we are about and so in the midst of all this activity it is vitally important that we maintain a strong heartbeat of prayer. In so doing we will ensure that it is God's business that we are about and that it is God's kingdom that we are building. We have many plans for the year ahead and so we pray for God's grace to guide and bless us that we may continue to be sign and conduit of his love.

At this time last year, we churchwardens were just recovering from the interregnum and getting used to working with a new Rector, who had been in place for just 6 months, a period made difficult for her by family circumstances. This year, Melanie has been able to devote all her energy, joy and enthusiasm to the job and has made it a busy but rewarding year for all of us.

There have been two particular areas for concern in 2009: the anticipated deficit in our budget and the lack of progress with our plans for the church building. Fortunately, the deficit has turned out to be much less than we anticipated but the delay in obtaining the necessary Faculties to allow us to proceed with the Chancel works and the West Door has been very frustrating.

The full story on our financial position is contained in Richard Beard's report and accounts on page 6/7. The smaller deficit was due to a number of factors detailed there but we would like to mention particularly the fundraising programme put together at short notice for the last quarter of the year. This made a significant contribution to our revenue. Thanks are due to all who organised and supported it so well.

With regard to the building plans for the Chancel and West Door, the progress has been less satisfactory. John Stock has worked tirelessly to overcome the Church of England's inefficient and bureaucratic procedures but just as we think his efforts have been rewarded, another obstacle is put in our way. The Church is much better at protecting its many cold, dark, uncomfortable buildings than considering the needs of its worshippers. Nobody wants to ruin our architectural heritage or our beautiful church buildings but there seems to be a sad lack of balancing influences to make them good places for people to worship. At the time of writing we still do not have permission to proceed with any of our plans and the Petition submitted 3 months ago has not been granted.

Due to the cold weather at the beginning of 2010, the oil consumption at the church has been exceptionally high; two

deliveries were needed within a month because of the frost setting of the heating system. For two Sundays the morning services were moved to the Village Hall, as the car park was under a great deal of snow and the roads dangerous.

Despite the occasional problems like these, the job of the Churchwardens in Colwall is an immensely enjoyable and rewarding one. It is made much easier by the many people who assist us, the Assistant Churchwardens (Mary Roberts, Dorothy Lockyear, Steve Hockett and our latest volunteer, Bill Tyndall, who joined our team in the latter part of the year), the sides people and coffee volunteers and many others too numerous to mention by name. We would however like to record our particular thanks to Mike Paulson who has just retired from doing the readers & intercessors rotas, John Amies who continues to look after the graveyard with great efficiency and Marion Percy who is always there when we need her!

Finally, our thanks go to Joy Conlon, our Administrator and much more. She has worked tirelessly throughout the year, often far beyond her remit and always with great cheerfulness.

Church Electoral Roll

Mary Roberts -Joy Conlon

The Church Electoral stands at 225; this is a decrease of 6 over the year. We have added 1 new member of the congregation to the roll, removed 7 members (5 of whom have passed away and 2 moved out of the parish).

Mary is responsible for 'recruiting' of new members onto the electoral Roll and Joy updates & keeps the records.

If you wish to have your name on the Roll, you may contact the Churchwardens, Mary or Joy at any time.

Health and Safety

Shirley Willcox

Following the April 2009 Church Inspection: -

- The Bell tower ladders have been extended to allow safe access to the flagpole.

- 'What to do in the event of fire' posters are displayed in the Bell Tower, Vestry, Church porch and Ale House, Mower Shed and Parish Office including the relevant post codes.
- Fire extinguishers are in situ in the Church, Ale House and Parish Office (Annually checked)
- The resurfacing of the Church path and levelling of the drainage channel near the Church door have improved disabled access.
- Water and field pipes have been buried to prevent trips and falls.
- Personal safety letters have been sent to all volunteers who help at the Church, Ale House, and Churchyard.
- Risk assessment is sought for all major services.

Finance & Fundraising

Treasurer's Report

Richard Beard

I am pleased to report on the summary accounts attached to this report as follows:

Our gift aid income has fallen each year from a peak of £49337 in 2005. Church fees have again increased this year and fund raising activities have been an important new source of income. For the first year all investment income has been shown in the Income and Expenditure Account and this has also helped reduce the deficit. Previously the majority of income was taken directly to the different funds but the Finance Committee decided a change in presentation was appropriate.

Our Diocesan Parish Share was increased by 5% in 2009. This expense represents 61% of the normal annual expenditure of the Church.

Our other expenditure increased overall, with a particular increase in Church maintenance as a result of an internal Health and Safety review. The loss on the operation of the Ale House continues. Your Finance Committee has met quarterly to review progress and approve any items of an exceptional nature.

The result of our Parish financial activities is a deficit of £3505 (2008 £47), after having proposed a contribution from our Parish fund to mission giving nominated by the committee of £3600 (2008 £3538).

Together with the special collections during 2009 we end up with a total contribution to charities of £11226 (2008 £10186).

Our Fabric Fund has been increased by donations towards the Chancel reordering, less a few related costs. We have a reduction in the value of our investments during the year of £369 (2008£3523) and this is shown in the Fabric Fund. The other designated funds have mainly retained their values. Overall our total funds now stand at £143235 (2008 £145354) divided between investments in CBF investment funds, current accounts and interest paying accounts with Caf Bank.

Our budget for 2010 shows a projected deficit of £1460 before any mission giving.

We must continue to look at different ways of increasing our income during difficult economic times if we are not going to slip into a larger deficit position.

We have in our Parish and Fabric funds the sum of £120000, with a budgeted annual expenditure of £80000. The PCC has already approved expenditure related to the Chancel re-ordering and work on the West Door of some £35000 and the PCC hopes to raise a proportion of this by special fund raising rather than depleting the reserve funds. Maintenance of our funds is sensible to cover the possible costs of future projects, and the likely ongoing impact from the recent recession on our income levels.

Anyone who would like to see a copy of the full detailed accounts or have any questions to ask on these accounts please do not hesitate to contact me (540539)

On behalf of Colwall Church Fund, thank you to all covenanters for their contributions over the past year.

If you do not yet belong to the Gift Aid Scheme (and are a tax payer) and would like to find out more, please contact Beryl on 540589.

Fundraising Report

Following last year's report we have put into action a number of fundraising events - all of which have been very successful.

In October we held our Inaugural meeting of the Colwall Wine Club, when we learnt all about 'Bordeaux Wines'- our second meeting in November, found us sampling delicious wines from the 'Marlborough' region in New Zealand. Thank you to John Doswell who masterminded the setting up and organisation of the two meetings.

An enormously successful progressive supper, organised with military precision by Mary Roberts and Diana Flower, was much enjoyed by all who attended and another is be planned for later in 2010.

A number of musical offerings entertained us and swelled our coffers as well. The first of these was the 'On the Lighter Side' a musical miscellany of local talent organised by Sue Doswell. A Jazz Concert, organised by Phil Probert, was held in November, and much enjoyed by those who attended. A second jazz concert is planned for 8th May 2010.

On a snowy evening in January Carol & Jonty Pearce held a Whisky & Chocolate tasting in the Ale House- much enjoyed by those who braved the elements and negotiated their way down Mill Lane. A safe return for all was ensured by the 'Pearce' taxi service

A number of events are already planned for the coming months- including: a Dog Show on 17 July, two Wine Club evenings, a Scottish Dancing evening, and a Posy Competition over the weekend of April 24/25. There are also a number of concerts planned. Watch for notices of these events in the Pewsheets and issues of 'The Clock'.

Fabric & Building Development

John Stock

Chancel Re-ordering

Following considerable discussion with DAC and the submission of drawings of the proposed furniture the chancel re-ordering was re-submitted to the DAC who recommended the petition on 10 September 2009.

The required documents were sent to the Registrar and the Public Notice displayed for 28 days and then forwarded to the Registrar. Considerable correspondence then ensued with the Chief Clerk at the Registry. Despite requests for progress nothing of note has been heard since before Christmas.

Audio Visual System

Work to finalise this Petition will recommence after the Chancel has been determined.

West Door

The DAC approved the proposals for the West Door replacement, but unfortunately the DAC Secretary combined it with the Chancel Re-ordering. Progress is therefore governed by the chancel petition.

Other matters

The Perspex in the church porch has been replaced.

The path between the church and Alehouse has been resurfaced, restoring it to its original width and the open channel by the church tower, removed.

An inspection by Shirley Wilcox, our H&S Officer, accompanied by J Hickman and J Stock identified a number of fabric items needing attention, which have been addressed.

A new, larger, mower store is required and a planning application was submitted in January 2010.

Churchyard

Mike Paulson

The churchyard continues to be well maintained despite the best efforts of the weather, moles and aging machinery. The congregation should be very grateful for the hard work put in by our 14 volunteers, not only for their efforts with mower and strimmer but also for their loan of equipment and skill in repairs.

During the year a new mower was purchased to replace a very tired older machine and planning application made to replace the present all - to - holey equipment store with a larger one so allowing for the possible purchase of a sit on mower.

Last spring a tree blew down in the car park. As the canopy was being reduced to clear the parking space, the trunk slowly rose of itself back to a vertical. The tree is still alive and making new growth.

Ale House

Ray Yardley

The newest addition to the Ale House in the last 12 months was the conversion of one of the toilets for disabled use- with a new higher toilet and grab bars.

The 100 club started its 19th season with 57 members, the highest for 18 years and has increased membership to 59 for the 20th season.

The annual carols and readings night with mince pies and mulled wine was a great success- thanks to members of the Church orchestra for the music and to all who gave readings.

The Ale House needs to be used more for social functions -an advert and flyer in the Colwall clock has generated a few extra bookings, but we need to continue publicising the venue and facilities available.

Thank to the committee for their work over the last 12 months and to our cleaners who keep the Ale House immaculate.

The Colwall Clock

Rev Melanie Horton

The Clock continues to be a monthly village magazine produced by the church and going into virtually every household in the village. This last year has however been a year of change for The Clock. After stepping into Pat Neve's shoes to help out in an emergency Chris Sennett had found himself editing the clock for nearly three years and quite reasonably wanted to step down. Chris was finally able to pass on the baton in May of last year. Much gratitude goes to him for his thoughtful editorial style, careful guidance and punctilious attention to detail.

The transition was made much easier by the fact that there is a dedicated and skilful team of assistant editors, proof readers and collators who continue to offer freely of their time, skill and resources to ensure that each edition reaches you on time, full of interesting and accurate information and in the uniform and cohesive style that you have come to expect. The clock truly is a team effort and thanks must go on behalf of us all to every member of that team - Caroline, Joy, Isobel, and John and Jean Aimes and their team.

We are still in the lucky position of having a good variety of articles and enough advertisers to ensure that the clock almost breaks even. Please do your bit by continuing to submit high quality and entertaining articles that can be included.

Looking to the future we are looking at the way in which the Clock is produced - which is fairly labour intensive at the moment - in order to shape a more streamlined and economic production system. Also on the agenda is the search for a new permanent editor. On both the level of practicality and principle I do not think that it is appropriate for the Rector to be the editor of the magazine. If you have a reasonable level of competence with a computer and an interest in how we communicate with the wider community then please give some thought and prayer as to whether God might be calling you to this particular ministry.

The Roadwardens have continued their sterling work distributing Welcome Packs to newcomers moving into their Patch area within the Village. The packs are very much appreciated and it gives an opportunity for the Wardens to meet and personally introduce themselves to those new to Colwall.

There are still one or two areas without a Roadwarden, the original one having moved or retired. Replacements are presently being found. The updating of the Patch lists is constant as houses change hands and I am grateful to all Wardens who notify me as soon as they are aware of a change.

We are gradually adding email addresses to our records, which are held by me on hard copy and on a computer system by Nicholas Neve (nickneve@clara.co.uk)

Thank you to Joy Conlon in the Parish Office for assembling and distributing the Packs, to Christians Together in Colwall for compiling and annually updating them and to the Wardens themselves for delivering them and for keeping a constant and helping 'watch' on their own patch.

CTiC

Marian Paulson

Lent groups, Holy Week and the Walk of Witness took place as usual last year and will be happening again this year. There is also to be a prayer vigil on Ash Wednesday using the Free Church in the morning and St. Crispin's in the afternoon. One or two people will be there during each hour with others welcome to join them at any time. We have agreed to change the time of the Good Friday walk this year to 10.30am. to fit in with other possible changes to the day's services. There will also be a change from the usual dramatic readings on the Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday evenings. More details shortly.

The Farmyard Nativity last month went well and was extremely popular. We hope a tradition has now been established! Carols around the village were again arranged. The annual service for the

Week of prayer for Christian Unity was held on January 24th in the Village hall.

The Lent lunches are arranged-Chevenham on February 23rd. The Ale House on Wednesday March 10th and the Wyche Free Church on Wednesday March 24th. Lent groups are being organised and will again be ecumenical.

It will be noted that I am still serving on CTiC despite an appeal last year for someone to replace me! It would be great if some one else would be prepared to join us.

Trade Justice Group

Marian Paulson

Our main event last year was an evening involving the musically talented young people of our area .We raised funds to assist Anna Bienkowska to travel with a school party to Uganda to see for themselves the way in which trade issues affected the poor - directly and indirectly. We also used the event to educate ourselves and other people attending the event, about the country and its problems. It was an inspiring evening although sadly not well attended.

We are conscious that trade matters have taken a back seat since the worries about climate change have become more prominent. Our autumn task was to read a book “Dead Aid” by Dambisa Moyo with a view to discussion among ourselves. We are a small group and we welcome anyone who would like to join us in our efforts to educate ourselves about these complex issues and keep before everyone the connection between trade and poverty.

St James Aston Link Activities

Richard and Shirley Willcox (Link Co-ordinators)

Over 40 members of St James Aston joined us for the Patronal Festival Service on Sunday 26th July at which their benefice curate, Rev. Beverley Watson, preached. This was followed by a ploughman’s lunch in the Ale House, much enjoyed by all, especially our visitors.

Following Melanie's meeting with their Team Vicar, Rev Jenny Arnold, in August, plans were made for the continuation and development of joint activities. An Aston Caribbean Evening on Sat October 3rd was the first such occasion for us to share.

39 folk left Colwall Village Hall by coach early on a very frosty Sunday 31st January 2010 to join morning Eucharistic worship in Aston, followed by lunch and a walk in Aston Hall Park. After more refreshments and a late afternoon service of praise and prayers in Ss Peter and Paul Church, Aston, our party rejoined the coach and arrived back in Colwall early in the evening, tired but refreshed by the warmth of the fellowship and generous hospitality we shared with everyone at St James, Aston.

Ministry

Ministry Team

Lesley Hutton

The Ministry team meets once a month and begins with a spiritual focus and prayer. The people who attend are the Rector, Anne Lanyon-Hogg, Ken Withington, the Lay Readers and representatives of the various committees that organise the activities of our church and church website.

Past services are reviewed and future ones discussed and planned - this includes planning the mid-week services, Home communions for the sick and elderly and confirmations.

Reports are then received from the representatives of the committees. The Pastoral Committee covers the Care Scheme, Ale House lunch, the Thursday Prayer group and the needs of individuals. The Worship team considers possible changes to our services and all the music and singing.

The Youth & Seekers committee relate what has been happening with the young people in our church and what they hope to do in the future as they hope to link the community - schools with major events in the church year.

Lastly we continually look at long term planning, priorities and how they are to be carried out.

I have continued to coordinate the Care Scheme during the past year and have a steady number of self-referrals or requests from relatives or Colwall Surgery.

We are getting about twelve requests a month for transport to hospitals, surgery, opticians, dentists and chiropodists and have continued charging 40p per mile. That fee can be a little expensive if the hospital is Cheltenham, Hereford, Worcester or Kidderminster. For local visits 40p is satisfactory. I am in the process of enquiring as to what other voluntary organisations charge for longer journeys, and will review our charges accordingly. We have two new volunteer members on the Care Scheme -both of whom have completed the necessary CRB checks.

Finally, I would like to say "Thank You" to all the volunteers with their various skills, without them the scheme would not function

Prayer Group

Heather and Tony Philpott

The prayer meeting takes place every Thursday morning from 8.30 till 9.15 at St Crispin's Chapel. We follow the format for Morning Prayer in 'Celebrating Common Prayer'. The prayers and responses change according to the season of the year and are intended to help the church to pray together in a structured and reflective way. To this end there are also two scripture readings and a psalm, appointed by the lectionary to be read on each day.

Space is provided within this format for participants to pray out loud or to offer prayer silently. However, there is no expectation for people to pray out loud. At this point in the meeting we focus our prayers on our church, its life and our community thanking God for his blessings and bringing the hopes and plans of the church before Him; especially praying for our leaders and all who give their time in His service. We frequently use the weekly prayer points from the Pew Sheet and always include those individuals who may be in need of prayer at that time. We have also prayed for community issues, the wider church and often the troubles that beset our world. We don't of course include all of the above in

each meeting, there wouldn't be time, but we pray as the need prompts us.

The group is a small one but others join us from time to time. Please feel free to come along when you are able. We are conscious that many will not be available at that particular time and we know that many will be praying for the church in their own way and at a time of their own choosing. However, if you have any thoughts on prayer in the church (structure, timing etc) please feed these back to us; and if there are any items for prayer do let us know.

Contact point: e-mail: aphilpott@aol.com, Telephone: 541681

Seekers

Rosie Joules, Seekers' Co-ordinator

We have about 20 regular Seekers children [though not necessarily at the same time], which are mainly the children of Seekers Leaders.

The recruitment [for want of a better word] of young families and their children still presents a problem - for Seekers and St James' in general. As an example, we had to cancel our summer trip due to lack of interest from the village [& Primary School].

On the plus side, we do attract more children & families when we put on something 'extra'. We have had great support for:

- The Easter Egg Hunt
- The Seekers Birthday Hog roast
- Pancake Races with various Guides & Scouts [on Founder's Day]
- Family Lunches
- Confirmation of some of our Seekers children
- Remembrance Service Seekers Session with Cubs & Brownies when we had 30+ children re-thinking Remembrance
- Christmas Parish Praise 'The Lonely Bat' production featuring camel AND donkey!

We now meet only during term time, as we found it hard to find Leaders to take the sessions and children to lead during the school holidays. We said a sad farewell to Phil Hitchin and Susan

Bienkowska and thanked them for their years of inspiration and great leadership at Seekers. Saying that, we welcome Ben & Feya Recordon and Helen & Martin Barber on our team and hope they will stay with us for a long time.

In the year(s) to come, our aim will be to develop the 5th Sunday as a Family Service with plenty of young input, 'recycle' our older Seekers and turn them into Young Leaders and possibly set our sights on a holiday club of sorts, to provide 'Godly Play' when Seekers is off.

We continue to need your support and prayers for Seekers!

Choir

Mary Baron

We have another busy and exciting year- highlights including:
Epiphany began with a joyful carol "Rejoice and be merry"

We had an enjoyable Choir party at the Humphrey home in January, and the junior choir went to see 'Joseph and his amazing Technicolor Dream coat'.

Choir practice on 5th February was cancelled because of snow -in preparation for this year!

We were invited to sing at a wedding on Mothering Sunday, and in May were invited to Cradley Church to sing 'Angel Hymns', as part of their Angel Festival. Also in May, Peter Pedlingham died, and received a memorable funeral for a very special person.

The choir concert in July, "On the lighter side" - it was a great pleasure to welcome Mrs Sue Doswell as our Conductor and Choir Trainer.

2009 was an amazing year in many ways, keeping the choir busy with dozens of weddings and many funerals.

In July we were sad to lose one of the best musicians, when Barbara Dutton finally lost her battle against cancer.

And so to 2010 and may we use and enjoy all of our musical opportunities in our beautiful church led by our Rector

Orchestra

Susan Humphrey

Firstly, I must record with sadness the death of Barbara Dutton, who faithfully played the violin in the orchestra after moving to Colwall some years ago. She helped me run the orchestra, in that she would lead if I were away, would give useful suggestions and sometimes write out new hymns, aided by John. We also made use of her music. We shall all miss her expertise and cheerfulness. We have had a quieter year, not being required so often, but we featured again in the Colwall Festival. Playing various pieces including TV themes arranged by Yours Truly. From regular kind comments, it appears we are appreciated and our standard is rising! I have again advertised for new members and we have acquired one so far, Renee Chester's talented granddaughter, Tilly. The orchestra is thankful for Melanie's delicious tea party in the summer. Lastly I should like to thank all our loyal members, who contribute so much to the services.

Flowers

Pinkie Elliston

We had our usual Coffee Morning in the Ale House on 4th April when our group gets together to organise the dates for the weekly flower arranging. There was a nice turn out and many of the dates were filled in.

We have arranged the flowers for 7 out of 9 weddings this year, which as always is a great treat and a thrill also the weekly flowers, festivals and a few funerals. None so sad as that of Barbara Dutton who has contributed so generously over the past years, with some beautiful arrangements - and also guidance to me. We miss her very much. I regret that I was gadding about for the Flower Festival and Harvest again but the girls really pulled out the stops and the church looked stunning on both occasions, thank you everyone.

Donations for the Easter Lilies this year were £179.00, which was about £40.00 up on last year. I think in part this was due to Melanie announcing this collection at the previous Sunday service and it jogged people's memory. I must try and remember to do this again this year.

I know many of the girls and other people have also mentioned to me, that there is a worry that we only charge cost price for the

flowers for weddings, we collect the greenery, order, collect and condition the flowers, then a group will arrange them, water and dispose of them. So, after some discussion with Melanie, it has been decided to continue this practice but also ask for a donation to the PCC fund, which I will add to the invoice. 30% of the bill was thought to be a fair amount, and this would be discussed with the bride at my initial meeting with her.

Please do urge your neighbours and friends to join us; we have a lot of fun and the more people, the less arduous the task.

Finally a huge thank you to all the girls for their hard work over the past year, it is very much appreciated.

Church Bells

Robin Riches

Another fairly 'average' year for Colwall Bellringers. Our Sunday service has continued as previous, i.e. for the 10.15am Communion and occasional evensong service at St James.

The total weddings for which Bells were requested last year was seven. No local quarter peals were rung.

Our practices in Monday evenings have been varied - depending on the number of ringers present. Our numbers have been rather depleted this last 6 months or so, due to some member being unable to attend -none of us are getting any younger! This does, however give us the opportunity to practice ringing more advanced methods on 5 or 6 bells. We are also very grateful to the occasional visitors to our practices.

In June we had our annual Saturday afternoon outing - this time to towers in the Hereford area. Although we encountered some challenging bells, the weather was excellent and this was followed by a superb BBQ and games at Judy Roberson's home in the evening.

We were invited to a garden party at the Rectory in June- this was a very enjoyable afternoon, our thanks to Melanie for a wonderful spread.

Four of our members went on the Ledbury District outing in October to towers in Radnorshire and West Herefordshire.

The Annual visit by Taylor's Bell-Founders for maintenance revealed no major problems.

May I again take this opportunity to thank all ringing members for their loyal support?

Handbell Ringers

Judy Robertson

Here is the report of the handbells ringers for 2009. We've had sadness and happiness -sadness at the loss of Barbara Dutton.

Our activities have been a social evening/workshop with the McClare Hanley Swan ringers in June, Colwall Festival and St James Festival in July.

After a summer break we played carols in the Library, at the Tree of Life for the rotary, Ledbury nursing home, Burnham Grange at Eastnor and St James Worcester.

We started off 2010 with playing for the Epiphany service at St James Colwall.

Mothers Union

Jill Withington

As well as increasing our sense of fellowship and giving us a time of worship, our monthly meetings have covered a wide range of topics, including bees, singing and the Galapagos Islands. There were some specifically religious subjects too! Marion Percy gave us an interesting update on the founder of the MU, Mary Sumner, and due to our special link with her we continued to welcome visits from other branches. From the teas (delicious), which we provide, and also from our annual marmalade sale, we have again been able to send a very worthwhile sum to MU charities. Sadly some of our members have died, but happily some new ones have joined, and our membership still stands at fifty. Non-members are always welcome at our meetings; so if you see in the Pewsheet or the Clock something in our programme that interests you, please do come along.

Sacristans

Ruth Leadbeater

Throughout the year, each week the Vessels, Linen and Candles are put out ready for the services. On Sunday two of the team are on duty at each Communion Service to lay up and clear away.

We are also responsible for changing the Liturgical Colours in season.

If you feel that you would like to become part of the team please contact a Churchwarden or me.

Servers 'Who lead the way'

Barbara Hatton

A big thank you to all who willingly provide the trio who lead the celebrants at every 10.15am service.

All our Servers also do other duties, which enable the services to flow freely, so there are many rota's to be negotiated to enable this to happen.

We are always hoping more will join us, Christmas was difficult time - many were away causing the need to 'double up'.

If you like to be 'last in and first out' being a Server gives you that opportunity. Remember that the service doesn't start without us.

Social Activities

Joy Conlon

Our first event of the year was the Patronal Festival in July- for this event a Ploughman's lunch & dessert was provided, followed by a programme of various Musical items keeping everyone entertained during the afternoon. We served a welcome cup of tea before Evensong- and saying good-bye to our visitors from Aston as they departed on their journey home.

We followed on from last year's success of holding our Harvest Lunch following the Harvest Festival Service - this year included a Barn Dance led by Marion and her musicians. All who attended had a very jolly afternoon, and a very big thank you to all who helped with the washing up and general clearing away.

The village quiz- again a great evening. A big thank you to the team who so skilfully provided the questions & answers, challenging even to most stalwart of quiz enthusiasts! Thank you to Steve for being MC for the evening and Pauline for running the Raffle, along with the Guides who helped during the evening. Over £160 was raised and donated to St James, Aston

After the Epiphany service we again served Mulled wine & Epiphany cake, thank you to all who baked cakes- not a crumb was left (that is, after the Youth group had devoured the remains at their Sunday evening gathering!) Another success....

May I take this opportunity to say a VERY big thank you to all who have helped with the above events? We look forward to another year of social events at St James.

The church website

Chris Sennett

A major event for me this year has been the transfer of the website from one provider to another saving the church some £80 a year. Although a major event for me I hope it was unnoticed by anyone else, in spite of my inadvertently initiating the process on The Clock copy date - not a very good idea! The website has 12 to 15 visitors a day, an increase on last year. The website is updated at least once a month and often once a week, depending on what is going on. It acts as a brochure for the church, which we hope, will give the message that we are welcoming and inclusive - and lively too.

The website also acts as a notice board for the congregation as well as a source of reference material, for example this annual report, the year planner, the Sunday themes and our policies for child and vulnerable persons protection. We would like to make more of the Memorial pages section of the website. These can be used to commemorate the departed in a much more flexible fashion than is allowed by Memorial Stones in the churchyard. One can put almost any kind of information on a memorial page and they are useful for explaining the lives of grandparents to the younger generation.

Last year I was promising a long overdue makeover of the church website and I'm afraid this has not happened. I suppose this is mainly because I am finding it very difficult to use the computer these days. However it will happen and I hope that the website will then be much easier to navigate but any assistance people feel able to give, particularly in the field of graphic design, would be very welcome.

COLWALL PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2009

INCOME	<u>2009</u>	<u>2008</u>
	£	£
Collections	7,398	7,384
Gift aid	42,226	45,054
Income tax recoverable	11,900	13,054
General donations	802	459
Investment and bank interest	3,462	938
Church fees	13,272	9,876
Magazine (net of expenditure)	470	1,554
Ale House income less costs	-915	-1,200
Fund raising	1,784	0
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	80,399	77,119
EXPENDITURE		
Clergy allowances and training	2,667	1,797
Sanctuary expenses	774	397
Organ and organists expenses	2,446	2,382
Church maintenance (including heat and light, insurance, cleaning, repairs and maintenance)	12,272	9,293
Administration (including books, stationery, postage, secretarial and stewardship)	11,753	11,305
Miscellaneous	982	1,452
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	30,894	26,626
Diocesan Parish Share (Quota)	49,410	47,004
Contributions to Missions and charities	3,600	3,538
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	83,904	77,168

(DEFICIT) FOR THE YEAR	<u>-3,505</u>	<u>-49</u>
BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31ST DECEMBER 2009	<u>2009</u>	<u>2008</u>
	£	£
FUND BALANCES		
Designated	13,923	13,923
Parish General	2,019	5,524
Organ	5,331	5,331
Fabric	117,546	115,543
Flower	3,100	3,574
Bells	1,316	1,458
	<u>143,235</u>	<u>145,353</u>
INVESTED IN: -		
CBF shares and deposits	61,485	61,734
Lloyds Bank Plc	472	633
Alliance Giro	4,155	658
Cafcash Deposits	80,257	81,850
Debtors less creditors	-3,132	478
	<u>143,237</u>	<u>145,353</u>

