

Vicar's Report to the APCM

2010 was a very active year on the 'fun' front! The Country Fair was, once again, a great success; we had a wonderful Flower Festival together with a profitable tearoom; the Winter Fair combined a simple Bring & Buy with a Grand Draw, again very profitably. We launched our new website (stmaryschurchfairford.org.uk), many concerts were held in the church, Experience Easter was a great success with local schoolchildren. And lots more – you were probably there.

It was also an historic year in the life of St Mary's. In June we celebrated the completion of over two decades of work repairing, restoring and protecting the beautiful and world famous windows of our church. This would not have been possible without the vision, diligence and perseverance of the Friends of Fairford Church. We are indebted to them and to all who contributed to this work. As Stewards of St Mary's we hand on a fine legacy to future generations.

In October we saw the completion of the re-ordering of the interior of the church, a subject first discussed in the time of Canon Keble! Looking back over the six years I have been involved with the project I am aware that it could not have been brought to fruition without the patience and goodwill of so many people, not just those who favoured the idea but also those who were initially opposed. I think there is a general agreement that the end result of this work enhances, in many different ways, an already beautiful building.

But what of 2011? As the People of God in this place we need to move on, to focus on those that the building serves – that is where our next challenges lies.

We all know, just by looking around at the Sunday service, the average age of the congregation. I am one of those... let us say 'not so young as they were' members, so I'm not knocking that! The important thing to remember is that most of us were brought up as churchgoers and have continued as such all our lives or returned in later years.

What I am saying is that, to bring the average age down, we need to increase the number of younger people – including children – who come to church. If we don't, where will our congregations of the future come from? I'm sure you will recall the old Jesuit maxim 'Give me the child until he is seven and I will give you the man'. If our future congregations are to be based on the children who currently attend, the services could be held in the Lady Chapel!

The reasons for this are manifold, not least the completely changed nature of Sundays in our society. It is a fact that the Family Service is the only regular occasion when we see significant number of families with children in church and, with some notable exceptions, it has effectively become a separate congregation. Do we accept that? Should some people feel excluded on three Sundays of the month? Should others feel excluded on the fourth?

Ours is not the only church facing this problem, of course. But there are churches with a healthy and vigorous contingent of young families at all services and I think, I know, that we must be looking at how this has been achieved and to some degree emulate it.

Even more importantly, we need the same commitment and energy as were used in those events and projects I mentioned earlier. We have, as you well know, a faithful and hardworking band of people who have worked for many years to encourage new, young, membership. They would welcome fresh blood! However, whoever is doing this work needs, and deserves, the active support of the *whole* congregation. I would ask you all to give them this.

So, challenges for us all. Given the skills, talents and past performance of this particular Family of God I have great hopes for the church of tomorrow. Thank you all for your efforts and support over the past year, the current year and those to come.

Brian Atkinson

Churchwardens' Report 2010

April 2011 sees the end of my first year as a Churchwarden at St Mary's. I would like to express my thanks to the Rev. Brian Atkinson, Nicholas Ford and Alan Baker for their patience and support.

It's been another year of landmark occasions to celebrate. The first of these was the completion of the conservation and restoration work to the beautiful stained-glass windows, which has been over 23 years of meticulous work. Our thanks go to The Friends of Fairford Church for all their dedication and hard work. The celebrations included a magnificent Flower Festival, a service of Dedication led by not only one, but two, Bishops and a grand finale in the form of a concert held in the church, a very befitting way to end. Many thanks to those involved in making it all so successful.

Secondly, the re-ordering of the Nave space was brought to a close with the arrival and installation of the remaining new furniture, which is our generation's gift in the 21st century to the legacy of the church space. In addition, the new lighting system has been installed, creating an ambience and transforming the appearance of the interior.

The Quinquennial Inspection of St Mary's has taken place; the report has been received but not yet discussed by the Standing Committee.

We have also been very fortunate this year as NADFAS (National Association of Decorative and Fine Arts Societies) have agreed to carry out a recording of St Mary's Church which they will be starting in early April. We look forward with anticipation to their findings in the form of a book which will be presented to the Church.

Sally Salter.
Nicholas Ford.

Report from the PCC Secretary

This last year has been fairly busy, as we completed the church re-ordering. The completion of this mammoth task happened shortly after last year's APCM. Since then the rewiring and relighting has taken place, involving the use of a 'cherry-picker' for the highest lights and wiring. A few changes were made after completion. Later in the year the new furniture for the Nave Altar area was commissioned, to match but not mimic the new Nave Altar. The latest suggested item of re-ordering is the creation of a children's space, which is awaiting a feasibility study on 3 proposed sites within the Church.

A St. Mary's website was set up, and is now in use. This has become our main organ of information.

In June there came the Windows celebration and Flower Festival, marking the completion of the 25-year task of conserving and restoring the windows. The Flower Festival made a net profit of £2,009.93 and the adjacent café, run by Barbara and Becky, made £1,243.58. Over £3,000 was made at the Country Fair, also run by Barbara and Becky, which was thought very good in a period of recession. A further £1,500 was made from the Coffee Morning and Raffle before Christmas, thanks to Jo Williams and her team.

The Community Centre remains a regular item on our agenda. A Management Committee has been set up, comprising members from the PCC and Town Council, to run the building. As landlords we must contribute to the expense of running the building and maintaining it as a desirable venue for renting. Our investment in this venture is part of our mission, although it has made for financial difficulties for us. Without the building the Church would have no toilets.

The Local Ministry Team have been reminding us that we are all part of the ministry of the Church, because everyone contributes in their own way – helping with the young, visiting the old or sick, stewarding or working in the office (and a multitude of other tasks).

All our efforts go towards trying to ensure that the Church is not just a handsome building, but also a warm, friendly, caring group of people, who worship together and welcome all comers.

Jane Hawkes

Parish Office report 2010

This has been a quieter year in the office, partly because the Parish News is no longer put together here. There are many benefits to sharing a building with other offices and users (Town Council et al), with all facilities laid on; one major advantage is that someone will take delivery of 50 reams of paper for us when we are not there!

Kath Price, Robert Dean, Heather Gorton and Alison Denham-Davis assist in the office, and Jo Williams does the rota and fills the gaps occasionally. In addition to our regular work (pew sheets, hymn sheets, rotas, submissions to What's On and Ripples) we field inquiries from people wanting to know when they can visit the church (opening times), how to go about arranging a wedding or baptism or wanting to book a guided tour, by e-mail, by post or personally. If we cannot answer a question, we can point the inquirer in the right direction. We hold the church diary, and take bookings for the church meeting room. We also point people in the right direction when they get lost in the Community Centre.

We are responsible for opening the church on weekday mornings, and can monitor comings and goings from our lofty position on the first floor of the Centre. If you feel you could help with this work, please contact us. We can always use extra staff, if only to cover absences.

Jane Hawkes

Vergers Report

In my first year as vergers, I am able to report that it has proved to be both a challenging and interesting role.

Firstly I would like to thank all of you who have assisted me in any way to make my "learning curve" less steep; you know who you are.

Official Duties include 18 funerals; 12 weddings including rehearsals and 6 concerts.

Some of the other tasks which I have been involved with include:-

1. Assisting Electrical contractor during the installation of the new lighting system. Agreeing the layout for the 24 switches needed much thought; The Icelandic dust cloud, caused our electrician to spend an extra week in Mauritius! His "Cherry picker" attended a few Sunday services!
2. Evicting the "phantom controller" of the heating and floodlighting controls.
3. Drawing up the Terrier/Inventory-a listing of all the Church property from candlesticks to kneelers and everything in between.
4. Attending NADFAS representatives who insisted on attempting to measure the "Lantern Lights" in the tower from inside!
5. Escorting Ruth Nicholls (Astam Design) around the church to complete the Quinquennial inspection.
6. Greeting and Assisting film crews from both BBC & ITV when filming the windows & "How to read Churches"
7. Locating "Medieval fixings" for use during the June flower festival which was combined with the return of the final windows, dedicated by Bishop Michael.
8. Recruiting an intrepid mountaineer to release the nylon chord from the roof of the church – used to suspend a ring of flowers during the flower festival.
9. Arranging to replace/repair the flooring to the pews on the north side of the nave to prevent some of the congregation disappearing during a service!
10. Receiving various items of furniture for use both in the nave area as well as along the south wall.
11. Clearing snow and ice from the church path and roof – pictures of the icicles hanging from the nave roof are impressive & may appear on next year's calendar.
12. Installing numerous items for use within the church throughout the year – banners, candle holders, straw bales and even Noah's Ark.

Just a few of the tasks which have been done this year – just makes one think of all the years those tasks were done by Peter Yells.

Alan Baker
March 2011

LMT Report January 2011

Outreach to families

Last May I reported on the outreach to children over the Easter period, so it seemed appropriate this month to talk about the outreach to families in our parish over the Christmas period.

There were 3 notable activities that were offered to children and families. First was the Messy Space party - which took place in all the snow just before Christmas. Messy Space is a run by Churches Together and meets once a month, offering somewhere for families with young children to share activities together on a Saturday afternoon. The party went very well - do have a look at the picture in Church.

On the Monday before Christmas there was a workshop for children held in St Mary's on the theme of St Nicholas. 28 children attended for 2½ hours and enjoyed craft, music and worship activities together. They produced a banner which will also be displayed in church shortly.

On Christmas Eve there was the usual 'Carols round the Crib' service in St Mary's - aimed at families, with straw bales to sit on and children acting out the nativity story. Despite the cold this was again very popular.

Regular activities for families continue throughout the year, including help at the weekly toddler group providing refreshments. People from the different churches take it in turns to make the tea etc each week so that the parents can have a break.

Finally I have news of another planned outreach to be run by Churches Together - a monthly service for families on a Sunday afternoon. Joanne Roberts is organising a group to set this up. It is intended that these will take place at the chapel initially but offered to all families -starting hopefully on 6th Feb. The suggested name for this service at the moment is the Cafe Church, but I gather this might yet change. You will be able to read more about this in next month's Parish News.

So quite a lot going on in outreach to families within the Fairford area - and provided by groups of people who worship in different churches but are working together to provide this Ministry.

Annual Report of Deanery Synod Meetings

Three meetings held this year in January, June and October, the main topic of interest being the possible merger of our deanery team with the deanery of Cirencester.

On the latter, there was an excellent speaker in June, Ian Marsh, who is Lay Chair of the Diocesan Synod and also Lay Chair of the new Stroud Deanery which has been formed of the Stonehouse and Bisley Deaneries. He outlined ten very positive benefits of the merger which appeared to have no contrary difficulties. However, our Synod has since learned that Cirencester has not yet started thinking about a merger, so we shall await future developments.

Our other speaker this year was Dr. Kevin Brown, the Diocesan Secretary. His subject was on the legislation which was due to come into force on 31st January 2011 whereby all clergy would have a level playing field with regard to their 'employment'. Rights regarding time off and statutory rights, the right to appeal to an employment tribunal, new processes to deal with grievance and capability issues, and the requirement to engage in ministerial development, would apply to all clergy, the only exceptions being those with the freehold (a small number). The Diocese was seeking to embrace the pastoral, professional, practical and spiritual in caring for its ministers.

On the subject of ministers, the Deanery has lost three of its clergy during the year, two stipendiaries, and a house—for—duty priest. This has meant a very heavy load on our remaining clergy and we are very grateful for all the hard work to keep the team functioning effectively and smoothly. All three posts should hopefully be filled without too much delay.

The Mission and Ministry group meets bi—monthly, chaired by the Reverend Craig Bishop (CHEQS) with the focus on different topics, tourism, marriage, baptism. The deanery services organised for the year were very well attended. The Palm Sunday gathering on the green by the

Mason's Arms at Meysey Hampton took place in warm sunshine after days of rain, and the procession to church was greatly enhanced by the presence of a delightful donkey. The Area Dean proved to be a man to rise to an occasion when he delivered a telling sermon ad hoc (he'd forgotten he was to speak!). Our second deanery service was at Bibury where we met our new Archdeacon, the Venerable Robert Springett, who gave us a spirited evening of his Desert Island Hymns. St. Luke's day gave us our third deanery special service, a service of healing, and this was held in Fairford where it takes place monthly.

Our two very valued workers with the young, Chris Saunders and Joanne Roberts, have both continued to provide an extremely worthwhile and active service. We are so lucky to be able to employ them in our deanery.

Diana Lee-Browne

Music Report

The past year has been as busy as ever for the choir; practising old and new music for regular services, special music for church festivals, anthems for weddings and memorial services and secular music for concerts. Whatever the type of music, a high standard of performance has always been maintained.

The visit of the Swedish choir in May was a great success – the joint concert was well attended and a wonderful evening was had by all who took part – and, we hope, the audience. We decided to perform an ABBA song in their honour and our rendition of Mamma Mia brought the house down! A very memorable evening.

We showed our versatility again at the Community Concert in December by performing “Lullaby of Broadway” and “Alexander’s Ragtime Band” – great fun!

The choir is in demand elsewhere for weddings. We sang in Bibury Church in early December (no heating, very cold!) and this summer we will be singing at another wedding in Lechlade Parish Church.

We are sorry that Rosie Grigg, a much valued member, is now unable to continue in the choir due to ill health. Over the years she has contributed greatly to both the music and the organisation, and her help and voice are sadly missed.

The Junior Choir practices on Monday evenings at 6pm where the children continue to learn various types of church music. In spite of other Sunday commitments they are an important part of the Family Service music group.

Full choir practice is still held on Tuesdays at 7pm and new singers are always welcome.

Jean Kilgariff

Report for PCC's from Deanery Youth Worker

- Links at **Farmor's School** – Cookie Jar club (year 7 -11/12 year olds) still attracts 20+ regulars and includes 12 coming on our deanery residential – many from non-Christian homes. The older club (Big Fish) has about 10 regulars. Also support of pupils through lessons and mentoring and an active member of the school multi-agency (MAGIC) meeting (which seeks to serve the needs of pupils with particular issues).
- **Deanery-wide events:**
 - Residential from 8-10 April 2011 at the Wilderness. 30 young people attending, very pleasing to get a wide range of attendance from across the deanery and different youth clubs (school and church based).
- **Thirst (weekly bible study group based at Quenington with attendance from across the Deanery and beyond):** Attendance has remained at around 20 on average. Friendships seem to be strengthening and team work has been positive with everyone contributing well. Our combined themes of studying worship and the gospel of Mark have been well received with two sessions on prayer stations being particular highlights.
- **Youth Services:** We relaunch on 27th March – our new-look service will still take place on the last Sunday at Lechlade Methodists but hopefully have a much greater variety of contributors. The summer special is planned for SATURDAY 25th June as a Barn Service at the Emerson's farm in Aldsworth.
- Other support is given through student prayer support and the house group formerly run by the Mack family.

- Council youth provision is being entirely withdrawn from the end of June. Significant openings (and gaps) will appear (e.g. up to 40 youth meet each week at the council-run club in Lechlade). Important to decide how to meet needs and seek to gain local volunteer support.

Chris Saunders
Fairford Deanery Youth Worker
25/3/11

Prayer Ministry Team Report 2010

The composition of the prayer ministry team has remained consistent throughout the year with seven members acting as prayer partners and four (an addition of one) acting as ushers. Similarly our role remains consistent and is one of aiding those who encounter periods when worldly cares are difficult to bear by uniting them with members of the team in prayer to seek God's healing and guidance.

Members of the team are available on a regular basis as follows:

- in the Lady Chapel during our 10am Sunday service
- in the Corpus Christi Chapel during a prayer ministry service on Monday evenings at 6.45pm
- in the Church during a healing service held at 6pm on the last Sunday of the month.

During the above periods prayers are also said for:

- those who have asked for them by completing prayer requests for themselves or others.
(Prayer request slips are available in the Lady Chapel and at Park Stores)
- those whose roles embrace the furtherance of Our Lord's teaching
- specific organisations and locations within the Fairford area.

Additionally members of the team are available to visit and pray with residents in their homes.

The team is clear that this form of ministry is that which our Lord requires of us. We are certain that benefits are felt by those who seek to come closer to God by sharing their concerns and praying with members of the team. The number seeking succour in this way remains largely static, but we are encouraged that a number of people return to give thanks for answered prayer. We have this year made greater use of the Pew Sheet and Parish News to explain the team's role. With God's guidance we shall continue this and hope to encourage more to join us in reaching out to Him.

Members of the prayer ministry team arranged and attended the Parish retreat held at Nympsfield from 24th – 26th September, under the leadership of Bishop Peter Vaughan. The themes of the retreat were:

- the God to whom we pray
- the Christ through we pray
- the Church within which we pray
- a great Christian prayer (St. Francis)

Those attending were unanimous that this period of learning, reflecting and prayer was of immeasurable value and we invite others to join us at the next retreat which will again be held at Nympsfield from September 2nd to September 4th.

Members of the team, with others, offered Daily Prayer throughout Lent and will do so again this year. We urge everyone who can to join us in this daily discipline. We also shared with members of other churches in the Lent service on Good Friday in the town Market Place, which feedback suggests was very successful and much appreciated.

Finally members of the team, led by Denise, are following a training course entitled 'In His Name'. This will enable us:

- to improve our capability by enhancing our knowledge of, and gaining further insight into our role
- to nurture the level of spirituality within the congregation of St. Mary's.

Baptism Team Report

In 2010 we welcomed into God's family 19 children, not quite as many as the previous year, but still kept the Baptism Team busy.

The Baptism Team members work in collaboration with the clergy to welcome and support families who bring their children for baptism. Each family is allocated a team member. Who makes contact with the family after the initial enquiry supporting them through the practical arrangements of the Baptism Service. Attending the preparation session with them as they consider the promises they make on behalf of their child. Also taking an active role in the baptism service, by presenting the baptismal candle to the family, including saying prayers or reading the lesson. Afterwards the team member (Baptism Visitor) keeps in touch with the family by taking a gift of a book, inviting them to special services and delivering anniversary cards.

The members of the Baptism Team are: The Reverend Denise Hyde, Elaine Bayliss, Kathleen Hall, Shirley Wall, Jeanne Watkins and Sybil Fleury – note taker for the team.

We would be very pleased to welcome anyone else who feels they would like to join this team, which plays such an important and rewarding role within the life of the church.

St Mary's Fairford Children's Work 2010

Much of our work continues to be in outreach projects – taking the seeds of the kingdom out into the community. Many of these projects are ecumenical; working with other churches in the town.

- We maintain a children's area in church. We welcome the PCC decision to provide a proper welcoming area for children and families in the main body of the church, not tucked away out of sight. We feel it is very important to give a message to everyone that children, as well as adults are welcome here and also to provide a place that parents and children can use during services. We look forward to this time, not too distant, when this will be in place.
- Our children's team together with other churches have organised and presented popular workshops and holiday clubs throughout the year.
 - **Maundy Thursday** We produced stories and crafts along a theme of Endings and Beginnings including stories about forgiveness and thinking about some of the things Jesus said on the cross. 28 children attended and the older ones enjoyed doing pyrography with Steve Hutchinson
 - **Toybox holiday club** In August our holiday club was held in the school and around 25 children attended over two and a half days. We learnt about prayer and persistence, compassion, change and observation, action and justice. We also discovered about children who live on the streets in Latin America. In November a few of the children and helpers met up and made crafts to sell the following weekend at a coffee morning and £155 was made for the Toybox Charity which supports these children.
 - **St Nicholas Workshop** In December despite the snow, 27 children attended the workshop where we found out about St Nicholas and did various crafts, had tea and sang carols with the parents and children.

Some of these have resulted in banners and other art work which has been displayed in the church.

- **Experience Easter and Open the Book** With the Local Ministry Team and help from the congregation members we again presented Experience Easter for the Primary School. We are part of the Open the Book Team taking Bible stories every week to the Primary School.
- **Flower festival** Children this year helped to produce a flower tapestry of the West Window for the Flower festival. They have also been involved in decorating the South Porch at Easter and harvest
- **Family Service** This provides informal worship for many older members as well as children and their families. A highlight this year was the pet service in June with real sheep and donkeys thanks to the Reverend Andrew Bowden, as well as many of our pets.
- **Praying Like Hannah** In July we took the theme of praying for our children using different colours to represent different aspects of childhood. This continues with prayer stations through August.

- **Christmas** This is celebrated with the ever popular Crib Service with many children involved. Advent is marked for our families with the journey of the crib figures of Mary and Joseph towards Bethlehem, calling at different homes in our parish each night until Christmas Eve.
- **Messy Space** This is an outreach to families providing monthly craft sessions on a Saturday afternoon once a month and runs from September to April.
- **Mini Praise and Toddler Group** We maintain contacts with children and families through the Friday Toddler group, the playgroup and Mini Praise.

We hope we have risen to the challenge of families not attending on Sunday mornings, but there is always more to be done and we always welcome suggestions and offers of help. Cafe Church is a new venture of Churches together held monthly on the first Sunday of the month at 4:30. The first event at the United Church was well attended and the time seemed popular. Please remember in your prayers our school, young people and their families and all those who work with children in our parish and deanery.

Kathleen Hall and Joanne Roberts

CHURCHWATCH 2010

In spite of the snow at the beginning and end of 2010 when there were few or no visitors to the church, the number recorded when there were Stewards on duty has been maintained.

2010	11,340
2009	11,397
2008	11,793
2007	12,369
2006	14,541
2005	11,339
2004	10,251
2003	10,800

The maximum recorded in one week was 731 during the Flower Festival when so many visitors came it was impossible to count and they gave up! The highest number recorded in an ordinary week was 369 in August and there were several occasions during the summer when over 100 visitors were recorded for one day.

The peak numbers for 2006 and 2007 are associated with the TV programmes which included views of the church and the Victoria and Albert Museum exhibition which displayed one of our windows.

St Mary's new website and the news that the restoration programme for the windows is complete is bringing us more visitors and the PCC is discussing how the church can cope with the extra numbers and how we can meet visitors' needs.

We are starting our tenth year with Stewards on duty all the year round while the church is open and we are fortunate to have had a loyal band of Stewards for many years to provide this service. However, inevitably, several feel the time has come to retire and they are proving very difficult to replace. Stewards do not have to be members of the congregation – or churchgoers. Their role is to ensure the security of the church while it is open, to welcome visitors and deal with general enquiries. No special knowledge is needed but it is interesting and there are opportunities to talk to visitors from all parts of the world. Anyone interested in becoming a Steward at St Mary's should contact Jo Williams (01285 713341) for further details.

The service provided by the Stewards is greatly appreciated and results in many favourable comments in the Visitors' Book. Our thanks are due to them all for their work, and especially their efforts to maintain the service during the very difficult snowy conditions of the past year.

Jo Williams, Co-ordinator of Stewards

Bell-ringers' Report

The bell ringers have had a quiet (!) year.

We rang for the 10am Sunday services throughout the year, and for all the weddings that requested bells.

On Good Friday we rang a half muffled quarter-peal, and also rang half muffled for Remembrance Sunday. In October we rang a quarter-peal for the Cirencester branch Peal/Quarter-peal Week.

We had an enjoyable outing ringing at churches in the Burnham-by-Sea area.

Peter Harris remains our Tower Captain, with Joyce Tucker deputy. David Bostock is our Treasurer, Barbara Lyne is the secretary and Andrew Roberts is Steeple-Keeper.

March 2011

Barbara Lyne

PARISH NEWS

2010 saw a change of editors for the Parish News. After 18 years' service, Jane and Geoff called it a day and passed the baton. Many thanks to both of them for all their work over that time; it would be nice to think that they are enjoying a peaceful retirement but we all know they are just as busy as ever!

Jo Williams and Heather Gorton took over the editorship on a temporary basis, which lasted three months; so thank you to them too.

Next came an interlude; no issues appeared for the months of May and June and it did seem at one time as if the Parish News would cease to be. However, after many appeals for volunteers the present team formed and their first issue came out in July. The idea was that we have a rota of editors so that they could choose months most convenient for them. Currently we have an Editorial Team consisting of Pam Nelmes, Sandra Rymer, Don Cobbett and Jo Williams (Reserve) – we take turns to produce the PN. Kathy and Brian check the final copy before it is printed and amend where necessary – however, human frailty rules and errors do occur, so apologies for that.

The PN is printed on the Town Council photocopier as it allows us to produce pictures and illustrations better than the Risograph machine, which uses ink and limited the type of picture which could be reproduced. The photocopier also collates the pages for each copy so we have only to staple, count and pack the finished product in the Distributors' folders. Whilst it prints more slowly, the overall production time is much shorter as it is considerably less labour intensive than the old system of collating the pages for each copy by hand. We owe a great debt to the voluntary Collating Team who have spent hours each month assembling the Parish News over past years.

Jo Williams and Barbara Gibbs are the Production/Distribution Team. We have hopes of using a better machine in the future, or perhaps funds permitting using a commercial printer to do the whole job – leaving us only to distribute to subscribers.

The price of the Parish News was increased to 50p per copy in July to help cover printing costs, having previously been 30p. No extra subscription fees were asked for 2010 as there had been two months where no magazine was printed.

The church cannot afford to subsidise the Parish News, so the income from subscriptions and advertisements has to cover the costs of production – paper and the charge for the use of the photocopier. Labour is provided free by the volunteers! Currently each issue contains 10 pages (20 sides) - we would like to have more but can only increase if we can increase the income – either with more advertisements or more subscriptions. You could help us by persuading people to subscribe and/or advertise. It would be really good to make a significant profit, for the benefit of St Mary's and this is one of our goals.

The other goal is to produce an interesting and informative magazine. We're getting there but without your input it's hard! So, a plea here: there are numerous people reading this who have a story to tell. It may be a wartime experience, memorable holiday, school day reminiscences... *Tell us about it. It can be anonymous if you prefer, but do tell.*

So, that's the story so far; 2011 will be the first complete year for this team and it will be interesting to see how close we get to our goals during the year. Wish us luck!

CHARITIES COMMITTEE

The charities selected for 2010 and the amounts raised were:-

January	BibleLands Trust	£185.50
February	Church Missionary Society	£195.67
March	Jerusalem and Middle East Churches	£214.37
April	The Bible Society	£208.91
May	The Diocesan Fund for Social Responsibility	£216.26
June	The Bishop of Tewkesbury's Bangalore Fund	£252.78
July	Mission to Seafarers	£219.39
August	Action for Kids	£238.26
September	Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institution	£329.09
October	Helen and Douglas House	£265.92
November	Help the Heroes	£223.04
December –	Service of Nine Lessons and Carols – CRISIS	£514.94
	Christmas Eve Carols round the Crib	£528.64

In 2010 a total of £4,428 was paid to the charities included in the Charity of the Month list. This included a contribution from church funds plus the money from the candles on the Chrissie Rose memorial stand after the deduction of expenses. A special collection for the disaster in Haiti raised £834.93 plus Gift Aid.

Elephant Boxes to save coins for USPG were discontinued in 2010 and replaced by plastic boxes to raise funds for The Children's Society. These boxes will be collected and emptied for the first time in the spring of 2011. If you would like to support the scheme by having a box at home please let me know. In 2008 the Children's Society raised a fantastic £2.2 million through the house box scheme and it would be nice to contribute in a smaller way in Fairford.

Jo Williams, Secretary to the Charities Committee (Tel: 713341)

MOTHERS UNION REPORT FOR YEAR ENDING 2010 FOR FAIRFORD, KEMPSFORD AND WHELFORD

At the end of the year we had 26 members. An average of 15 members attended our monthly meetings throughout the year.

Not having a Branch Leader for the last twelve months the branch has been run by Committee members with Jean Whitbread at the 'helm'.

We had a varied programme throughout the year with interesting speakers, including Mary Chick and two of her friends who came to talk to us about the Quaker Movement. Jean Brown, Curate of Lechlade church spoke to us in November. Two members, Kathleen Hall and Jean Whitbread spoke to us informally - Kathleen in March telling us about the Easter Experience involving children from local schools and Jean in September together with Derek, who gave an illustrated talk of their holiday travelling by train from Toronto to Vancouver.

We enjoyed lunch at The Bridge in April. The outdoor meeting planned in July was held inside The Community Centre as it was too cold to sit outside. Bring and Share eats were enjoyed by all members.

We had a favourite hymns night in May when members chose their favourite hymns and said what it meant to them.

We held our 100th Birthday celebrations in October which was the highlight of the year. Members past and present and Brian our vicar attended a service of celebration which was led by Kathleen Hall and branch members. The address was given by Denise, our curate. After the service everyone enjoyed the lovely buffet prepared by Alan Baker. Elizabeth Warren, one of our oldest serving members cut the celebration cake made by Denise. The collection at this service was given to the Mothers Union Away From It All Scheme which is run by Gloucester Diocese. A family from Fairford benefitted from this scheme last summer.

Our members have been involved in Deanery events - The Lent Lunch organised by Lechlade Branch. Fairford Branch organised the Deanery Cream Tea which was held in the centre in June.

Members of our branch have helped out at various events with lots of cups of tea being made!!

In May MU members from Worcester had a visit to Fairford. They had lunch at The Bull followed by a tour of our Church and windows. Tea and biscuits followed served by our members before their journey home.

We served Coffee at The Deanery Quiet Morning at St.Mary's in May.

Our members were asked to serve refreshments after the Re-dedicating of the Church Windows attended by the Bishop.

We made and sold cakes at The Country Fair. And finally... we served coffee and cake for the Church Coffee Morning in December.

The Branch organised a Teddy Bears Picnic in the vicarage grounds for the Chapel playgroup. This was a first event which we had organised for them. It proved very popular that we have been asked if we can do it again this year.

What else do we do? Brass cleaning, Arranging flowers in the Corpus Christie Chapel, refreshments for Mother and Toddler groups, parenting classes, baptism preparation, fundraising.

After a very busy year members enjoyed a splendid Christmas Lunch at The Bull for the second year running.

We are on the look out for new members. If you are inspired by what we do come along to our meetings. We meet on the Fourth Wednesday in the month at 2.00 p.m. in The Barker Room. See Pew sheet and Parish News for further details. We look forward to seeing you.

Jean Whitbread Branch Secretary 01793 751558

Fairford Men's Society Annual Report 2010-2011.

We have 10 Members.

Feb 2010, Canon Curwin Rawlinson was our Speaker, his life in the Army, as Army Chaplain for 28 years, also his path on leaving the Army. Based in Gloucestershire, Leyhill Open Prison & Gloucester Prison working as a Chaplain.

March 2010, Members & Partners(20) attended a Lunch at the George Kempsford.

May 2010, Bill Mountford(ex-Chairman)Talked to us, finishing the meeting with Compline.

June 2010, Geoff Heyworth(member) Talked to us with the assistance of Mike, John Mason Neale who wrote the majority of Ancient & Modern Hymn Book.

July 2010, Church Crawl, A Pilgrims Way, Tetbury, Shipton Moyne, Leighterton, Lasborough, Beverston and Kingscote. Lunch was taken at The Hunters Hall Kingscote.

Sept 2010, Cathedral Day, this year was a trip to Malvern Priory with Lunch at the Priory Tea Room.

Oct 2010, Phillip Meadon(member) Talked to us.

November 2010, A.G.M.

December 2010, Men Society sell Raffle Tickets at The Coffee Morning.

Jan 2011, Gerry Willis gave a talk to us Around the World in 45 minutes, his travels since 2005.

Flower Team

2010 was a very very busy year for all concerned. There were eight weddings and a few funerals. We now get all our flowers from the Gloucester wholesalers who have proved to be very knowledgeable and helpful. Due to the VAT increase and the cost of flowers our charges have had to be increased for weddings.

The highlight of the year was the Festival of Flowers from the 11th to 14th June to celebrate the completion of the restoration of the stained glass windows. There was a lot of planning involved and as I was incapacitated (with a new knee) in January and most of February I was able to sit with my laptop and start the ball rolling. We had great support locally and on the weekend there were many locals visiting the church as well as those from many miles who had either heard about it on the radio or read about in the newspapers. The only disappointment was Cotswold Life who for some reason only known to them have never printed the event. All the flowers came from our wholesalers who delivered them in two journeys. The church was completely taken over by us for the week before and I can only say from the comments received that it was well worth it. Although perhaps we didn't make as much money as we had hoped - flowers not being cheap - it did put Fairford on the map and contributed to a most successful weekend. If you haven't seen the results please go to www.fairford.org.

The team of seventeen has remained the same over the year but if you know of anyone who might be interested in joining us do please contact me. It would help if they have a knowledge of flower arranging. I cannot speak highly enough of the present team. Everyone was brilliant over the Festival and those who were slightly nervous produced spectacular arrangements. We are so blessed with such a beautiful church in which to do our arrangements and the best comes out of everyone. My very grateful thanks to them all and to the support given to us by everyone involved in the Church especially Brian and Alan.

Heather Gorton February 2011

Church Cleaning – 2010

As always, keeping the cleaning rota going has been a challenge. Many of our volunteers are elderly and might like to retire, but continue because they feel that this is a duty which they can fulfil, which is not too high-tech. We are extremely grateful to this devoted group of people, who do not consider that cleaning their place of worship is beneath them; on the contrary, it is a privilege.

Church cleaning need not be very onerous. One hour of your time every eight weeks is not much to ask. We are in desperate need of a few slightly younger (under 80, anyway!) people of either gender who can wield a Hoover and the few heavier duties involved. If we cannot cure the reluctance of the 60 year-olds to volunteer, we will have to pay a professional to do the job, at a cost of at least £20 per week. There is a choice to be made between paying extra to cover this, or doing it ourselves – perhaps a Lenten obligation? Some of us remember a time when being employed (i.e. under retirement age) did not mean being unavailable for voluntary tasks, even if they might have to be done at weekends.

Please consider joining this group, particularly if you are under 70. Your Church needs **YOU**.

The Friends of Fairford Church

June 2010 saw the culmination of a project that had been under way for a quarter of a century: the restoration of our unique set of medieval glass. The Friends of Fairford Church was originally set up to provide the church with support in addition to routine expenditure by the PCC. Their first task was problems with the roof but soon it was clear major work on the glass was required and this became the focus of activity for a long period. Inevitably it was a long process to decide what was to be done, how and by whom. In 1988 the first practical step was taken with the removal of the Four Evangelists. Last June the Bishop came to consecrate the completed work. For Keith Barley our conservator this was an emotional moment. He had lived this project for a major slice of his career and indeed made a fine reputation from it. It was also an emotional moment for the Trustees and for all members. We inevitably thought of the many people who steered the project through, who from the early days had found sources of funding to make it possible. Fittingly Denys Hodson felt he could safely step down as chairman having seen the conclusion of a magnificent enterprise.

The Friends will still have plenty of responsibilities to take on. Any old building will make demands and the recent quinquennial report notes various areas in need of attention. They may not be as all-encompassing as the windows but they will still be important and costly. We continue to need the support of our membership and of the community. Freda Lang has now taken over as Clerk and the previous clerk has moved offices!

Geoff Hawkes (Chairman)

Postcards and Guidebooks

Towards the end of 2010 we undertook preparation of a new edition of the guidebook. The last edition was in 2005 and significant changes had taken place since then. The opening of space at the front of the nave, the new floor and the nave altar with its accompanying liturgical furniture all had to be reflected in the new edition and we managed to increase the number of windows illustrated. We feel the quality of our guidebook is equal to that of many cathedrals and visitors seem to appreciate it. Sales of our publications produce important income for the church. There are plans to try some new ideas which are in keeping with our character as a place of worship and a source of spiritual and artistic inspiration.

Geoff Hawkes

Churches Together Around Fairford

The Churches Together group lost one member with the withdrawal of US personnel from the airbase and the closure of the Base Chapel. Through the year various activities were organised. The Harvest Supper was on more of a self-help basis this year (not least with some wonderful home-grown entertainment) and we ended sending over £200 to Water Aid. The Advent austerity lunch allowed us to send £100 to the Salvation Army Christmas Appeal. We are pleased to have supported the successful initiative Messy Space and will do the same for Cafe Church as required. It is important the churches of the town combine and co-ordinate activities where possible. In addition to the vicar, St Mary's representatives are Joanne Robert and Geoff Hawkes. They would undoubtedly welcome ideas and suggestions from others, and even offers to join the committee.

GCH

FAIRFORD COMMUNITY CENTRE

The restored Community Centre is proving very successful. We have many regular events including Art classes, Active & Able remedial exercise, Brownies/Rainbows, Bridge club, Church activities, Country Market, various Fitness classes for mixed abilities and ages, History Society, Happy beans for young children, Pilates, Recorder group, U3A activities, Weight watchers, Yoga, Youth club, Messy Space for families and new groups for Kick Boxing and Belly Dancing. The centre is popular for meetings, activities, private parties large or small, and very suitable for funeral wakes.

In order to improve our services to the local community, a hearing loop and fitted projector and large pull-down screen have been provided in the Farmor room, and a second hearing loop in the Barker room. We have recently passed Stage 2 of the Hallmark scheme, the quality standards scheme for Village halls, with congratulations from the assessors on the hard work done to achieve this level.

The building is run as a registered charity and has to pay its way. There are 6 rooms to let, catering for various sizes from small groups to more than 100, including a large office suitable for business meetings, plus kitchen and pleasant courtyard. Rooms can be booked by the hour, the day or for longer periods. Rates vary from a few £ to around £10 per hour with concessions for regular bookings. If you wish to rent a room for a church or private activity, please book early direct with the FCC office. Booking forms can be downloaded from the website. For more details:-

Phone 01285 711571, email bookings@fccentre.co.uk

Web site www.fairfordtowncouncil.gov.uk / community centre

or you are most welcome to call in and look round

any weekday morning.

