

Annual Church Meetings

By our Staff Reporters

Vestry Meeting

Gillian Harman presented the new Electoral Roll, which showed a net increase of 13 from 162 to 174 during the last year. Of those on the roll, 99 live in the parish and 74 outside.

There was warm and sustained appreciation for the huge effort Richard Toyn had made during his extended term as Churchwarden, covering the interregnum and Wendell's unfortunate illness. Wendell Newbold and Dorothy Toyn were proposed, seconded and approved unanimously as wardens.

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

Full minutes will be available shortly from the PCC secretary (currently Dorothy Toyn, but she will be standing down and her replacement will be chosen at the next PCC meeting). The following is a 'snapshot' of some of the key points and information.

Election of PCC Members

The following were elected to the PCC:

Newly elected to serve for three years:

Martin Bird, Fiona Earle, Pippa Jenkins, Kath Oates and Richard Toyn.

Re-elected with two years still to serve:

Chris Benham, Renee Booker, Rosemary Graves, Malcolm Oughton, Judy Oughton and Martin Penny.

Re-elected with one year still to serve:

Rosemary Bolton, Edwin Godfrey, and Julia Gough.

Deanery Synod representatives (for three years):

Colin Bird, Janet Bird and Leon Ajao.

Finances

Colin Bird, Treasurer, presented the various accounts. A full report on these was given in the February Magazine.

He then moved on to the 2008 budget as approved by the PCC. In summary, we have planned this on the basis of no real increase in giving in 2008 – though we hope

and will work hard for much better than that! Our costs will be higher, due to inflation and a return to payment of a full Parish Share now that Jo is here. It is important to bear in mind that virtually all of the Parish Share comes back to us in the form of the Vicarage, the Vicar and her pension, central costs amount to less than 9% of the Diocesan total.

The result is a significant and unsustainable deficit. We have plans to address this by 2009 (some are outlined in Jo's report below). If these plans are not showing some effect by the end of 2008, then some harsh decisions will need to be made.

	2007 Actual	2008 Budget
INCOME		
Planned giving (net of tax)	36,274	37,500
Collections & donations	9,845	10,000
Income tax	11,668	10,500
Baptisms,/Weddings/Funerals	5,805	6,000
Magazine	556	-
Bookstall	-	250
Festivals (Xmas Tree 2008)	3,949	3,000
Soundbites contribution	2,000	2,000
Other Events	2,490	3,000
Church Hire	1,837	2,000
Dividends/Interest	1,458	1,250
	<u>£75,882</u>	<u>£75,500</u>
EXPENDITURE		
Assistant Clergy honoraria	500	300
Clergy working expenses	1,308	3,600
Church Services, organists, music	8,242	8,500
Choir pay	3,320	3,500
Heating	9,096	10,000
Less: Cull Fund income	(2,511)	(2,500)
Electricity	2,106	2,250
Insurance	5,017	5,500
Administration and Copying	5,747	5,750
Charitable payments	250	250
Parish Share	<u>43,953</u>	<u>52,100</u>
	<u>77,028</u>	<u>89,250</u>
	(1,146)	(13,750)
Special transfer from St John's Hall-----		<u>2,500</u>
ESTIMATED SURPLUS/ (DEFICIT)	£(1,146)	£(11,250)

Colin highlighted the tremendous value of the (often unsung) work done by work parties in maintaining our large buildings.

The vicar thanked Colin for the huge amount of time and skill he puts into keeping our affairs in such good order and for the clarity of his presentation.

Group and Churchwardens Reports

Copies of individual reports are available either electronically (where we have them) or in hard copy on request for:

- Churchwardens
- All Saints Art
- Child Protection
- Choir
- Christian Aid
- Churches Together
- Deanery Synod
- Flower Club
- Mothers' Union
- Sidesmen
- Vergers
- Women's Fellowship

Vicar's Report

Having thanked everyone at the APCM for their very warm welcome and their hard work, Jo set out her vision.

"My vision is that we "Go for Growth", growing our congregation, both spiritually and numerically. This has already begun with an invigorated Family Service, good publicity, and through developing networks and good relationships with schools and the local community.

"The Lent course gave us – and the whole town! - the opportunity to explore the meaning of the cross today in creative art and word. The Hertford Stations project enabled exploration to be taken to a wider audience in Hertford, with fifteen installations, including a choral work, "Women of Jerusalem" by Martin Penny, and a drama presented at Bircherley Green. This project even featured in a double page spread in the Church Times!

"We are continuing to explore our patterns of worship, looking at the liturgies that we use, experimenting with the position of the altar and front pews. There are monthly communion services at the Malthouse and Bircherley Court.

"In order to grow we all need to play our part in making connections, giving a warm welcome to others and developing a positive Church. As part of this process, we are developing questionnaires asking significant questions about what do we do well at All Saints, what we could do better and even what we might give up! We will examine our own time, talents and gifts as part of this process and see how we can all participate by using them wisely.

"The development of the Clergy Team means mutual support, sharing resources, exploring youth work, and nurture courses.

"All of the churches will keep and grow their individual identities, and retain their parish priest, and, in many ways, it will seem that nothing has changed except that the clergy and congregations will feel more supported and grow closer in fellowship.

"Things that can be done better together will be done as a Team and we believe, as St Paul said, 'that the sum will be greater than the parts'.

"On the parish business side, we need to aim at more people doing less work. Other people may well be able to take up part of the churchwarden's role at the 'back of house', freeing the church wardens to welcome people.

"We aim to hold PCC meetings every other month and on the alternative months to hold four main subcommittees covering internal affairs (worship), external affairs (social and outreach), financial affairs (including stewardship) and buildings (fabric). Accountability, good communication, teams of visitors and a dynamic social life will ensure our growth as the family of All Saints.

"I am excited by the great potential which we have at All Saints to glorify God together, using our abilities and resources in mission and worship, and I believe that God is already blessing us in our life together as followers of Christ."