

Primary School through the foundation governors & regular clergy visits.

Child Protection: Checks in accordance with Diocesan policy and CRB checks continue to be administered by Mrs Maureen Aisher (Child Protection Officer) and Mrs Jean Parker (Approved Parish representative, on behalf of Oxford Diocese – for CRB checks).

The following church organisations continue to be active
Choir & Band, Adventurers and Friday Youth Club, Altar Servers, Bellringers,
Study groups (this year "Then & Now"), Mothers' Union, flower arrangers and refreshment team.

The Joint Church Council is responsible for the maintenance and usage of the church & St. Mary's Centre. It has met regularly and ensures that Health and Safety matters are dealt with. Standing Orders for the conduct of the JCC were adopted, following advice from the Sharing Review in 2006. Reporting to the JCC are Livearts@StMary's (responsible for the arts & concerts event), the team of church stewards and the Gift Shop all of which have had another demanding but successful year.

The remit of the JCC is to oversee what might be called the 'housekeeping' aspects of church life and it covers four main areas: the fabric of the church buildings, joint church life (the common commitment to each other of the two congregations, joint services, stewarding, gift shop etc), finance and Livearts@stMarys. In 2007, the rewiring of the church (partly scheduled and partly in response to a fault), repair to stained glass windows, redecoration of the vaulted ceiling of the south gallery and obtaining the faculty for the new chancel furniture and the renewal of the faculty for the foam under the pew flooring were the main fabric issues. The redecoration of the outside notice-board and the cleaning and re-oiling of the main front doors have considerably improved the look of the church from the street.

We were able to celebrate with Livearts their 5 years of existence and we clarified Livearts' relationship with the JCC. With regard to finance, the management of funds to make possible our repairs and running costs is a regular commitment. In this the St Mary's Appeal Trust and the JCC work closely together. An important milestone of the year was receiving the final instalment of the HLF grant which marks the end of the

St Mary Banbury Parochial Church Council Summary of Annual Report 2007 (for APCM April 2008)

Aims and Objectives

St Mary's PCC has the responsibility of co-operating with the Priest-in-Charge of the Parish in promoting the whole mission of the church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. It is also responsible for the maintenance of the building of St Mary's Church and Church Centre. In practice this responsibility is shared with the URC congregation through the Joint Church Council.

Shared Church

St. Mary's is a shared church of the Church of England and the United Reformed Church. These statements relate purely to the Church of England side of the church. The two churches also have a **Shared**

Mission Statement.

We, the Anglican and United Reformed Church congregations at St Mary's Church, in the heart of Banbury, are committed to a journey following Jesus by: -

- Celebrating God's love in worship
- Offering our resources in a spirit of loving service to the wider community
- Caring for one another
- Challenging injustice
- Nurturing a spiritual space

The **APCM** was held on 29.04.07 and prior to it we worked hard to encourage membership of the Electoral Roll. This led to an increase from 101 to 126 members.

The PCC has met 8 times in 2007, including 2 Saturday mornings. John Punter stood down as Churchwarden at the APCM. Maureen Aisher was elected. Phil Measures, Jackie Graham and Sue Riches were elected to the PCC at the APCM. At Easter we said farewell to The Rev'd Louise Adey Huish and at Peteride welcomed the Rev'd Jeff West. We have also been pleased to welcome David Ford, ordinand on placement, to meetings.

The meetings are chaired alternatively by The Rev'd Janet Chapman (Priest-in-charge) and Giles McDonald, Churchwarden & elected Lay Chair.

Renovation and Restoration work which commenced in 2001 – and it left us free of debt, and indeed with a surplus towards the next project!

Significant Events and Developments

- 2006 marked the Tercentary of St. Mary's Choir; we didn't realise this until 2007 but we have celebrated in style with the production of a CD and a series of concerts & organ recitals.
- The Pastoral Care Team is now well established.
- We have developed stronger links with the local community through our open evening in May, by holding stalls at town-wide events (Hobby Horse Festival & Canal Day), by moving the Business Carol service to a lunch-time and by broadcasting our Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols outside.
- We hosted the Visitation by the new Bishop of Oxford – a colourful event!
- Stewarding of the church has taken a step forward to include some Sunday afternoons at special times.
- Our link with St. John's Parish in Kimberley and Kuruman was formally approved by the Diocese.
- We held a parish day in March linked with the 200th anniversary of the Abolition of Slavery and now have a wonderful banner on display in the church.
- Our stained glass windows continued to inform our worship, this year scenes from Jesus' last earthly week during Holy Week Back to Church Sunday was a very special day with a service to mark 20 years of ordained ministry by the Rev'd Stella Fairbairn and it was shortly after that we had over 100 communicants on an "ordinary" Sunday.
- Stella also kicked off our "Then and Now" fellowship group with her "Now" story. This group has been well attended and we have learnt about some very interesting historical Christians as well as the personal journeys of some we see in church on Sundays.

Each Sunday we have up to 50 people involved in enabling our worship and a similar number of people doing some form of mid-week duty to further our mission. We are indeed greatly blessed as "Team St. Mary" for which we give thanks to God and to one another.

St. Mary's PCC
April 2008

Attendance at the meetings has been high, with a change of evening to Tuesday helping attendance. Meetings are held in the Centre (or the Church if the Centre is being used) and usually last 2 hours.

The year began with a strategy planning meeting in January when the PCC met to review its mission and vision. The council continued to meet during the year to plan the strategy, receive reports from the working parties, to cover the annual pattern of business and approve the financial aspects of the church. The 4 key strategies in bringing about the desired vision were confirmed as

1. Building a congregation that has confidence and ability to enable St Mary's to be a church that lives and proclaims the good news of the resurrection – IT IS TRUE!
2. Working for there to be a wide range of activities and engagement with the community through wide use of the church AND by encouraging the town centre churches to work collaboratively
3. Working to encourage and develop the musical gifts of all (and especially young people) as a key activity of the church both within and outside worship
4. Building a group of people within the community at large who will support and campaign for central government to fund historic church buildings that are still used for their original purpose in ways more favourable than at present.

In addition we affirmed some **Key Values**:

As the church moves into broader activities it is important that these activities are developed in ways that promote the beliefs and values that are at the heart of St Mary's worshipping communities, in particular: -

- through encouraging the principles of fair trade.
- through behaving in all senses responsibly towards the environment.
- through working towards sourcing local produce/ locally produced food for use at church gatherings.

The PCC has active working groups covering the following areas: Finance, Social & Fundraising, Worship, Education, Outreach & Welcome & Pastoral Care. The Standing Committee has met regularly. The church maintains strong links with **St. Mary's CofE (controlled)**