



**AGENDA, REPORTS and
FINANCIAL STATEMENT
for the
MEETING OF PARISHIONERS
and the
ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING**

**to be held in the Lady Chapel
on
Sunday 22nd April 2018 at
11:00am**

*The front cover shows the statue of St Peter on the High Altar,
St Peter's church, Berkhamsted*

[Type text]



Registered Charity No. 113010

From the Rector, Fr Tim Pilkington

Dear Members of the Electoral Roll,

I have pleasure in introducing these Agendas, Reports and Financial Report in readiness for our Annual Meetings which take place this year at **11:00am** on **SUNDAY 22nd APRIL 2018** in the Lady Chapel.

Do please make every effort to be present at these Meetings which are a significant occasion in our communal parish life. We review the past year, and will be making plans and key elections for the year ahead.

Your participation in this decision-making is important to us all.

Please bring with you to the Meetings your copy of these Reports.

Yours sincerely,

Fr. Tim

Timothy Pilkington, Rector

[Type text]



Registered Charity No. 113010

PARISH OF GREAT BERKHAMSTED ST PETER

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Parishioners
for the election of Churchwardens
held in the Lady Chapel, St Peter's Church, Berkhamsted,
and chaired by The Rector, Fr Timothy Pilkington,
on Sunday 2nd April 2017 at 11am.

1. PRAYER

Prayers preceded the meeting during the main 9.30am service.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Alan Conway, Jane Bartholomew, Chris & Pat Hunt, Margaret & David Burbidge, Michael & Rachael Anderson, Philippa Seldon, Barbara McKenna, Andrew & Julia Newland, Miles & Diana Nicholas.

3. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The Minutes of the Meeting of Parishioners held on 10th April 2016 were approved.

4. ELECTION OF CHURCHWARDENS

Mark Grego and Tim Hennessey were re-elected by the meeting.
Fr Tim gave thanks for their contribution over the past year.

[Type text]

PARISH OF GREAT BERKHAMSTED

Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held in the Lady Chapel, St Peter's Church, Berkhamsted, and chaired by The Rector, Fr Timothy Pilkington, on Sunday 2nd April 2017 at 11.05am.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Alan Conway, Jane Bartholomew, Chris & Pat Hunt, Margaret & David Burbidge, Michael & Rachael Anderson, Philippa Seldon, Barbara McKenna, Andrew & Julia Newland, Miles & Diana Nicholas.

2. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The Minutes of the last Annual Parochial Church Meeting held on 10th April 2016 were received and approved by Fr Tim.

3. REPORT ON THE ELECTORAL ROLL

267 persons are on the Electoral Roll. 8 people have died or moved away. 6 new people have been added to the roll, and 31 names have been taken off.

4. AFFIRMATION OF ONE ALL SAINTS' REPRESENTATIVE TO THE PCC FOR 2017/18

Richard Hackworth is to continue in this role.

5. ELECTION OF SEVEN NEW MEMBERS TO THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

There were 9 nominations. The churchwardens oversaw the election of:

- Penny Abbott
- Astrid Biddle
- Richard Currie
- John Gerry
- Alison McMunn
- David Northcott
- Carolynne Charman

6. APPOINTMENT OF SIDESMEN OF THE PARISH FOR 2017-18

Paper of names accepted.

7. ELECTION OF FIVE MEMBERS TO THE DEANERY SYNOD

Richard Hackworth, Alan Conway, Carole Dell elected. No other nominations at present.

[Type text]



The Parish Church of
St Peter Great Berkhamsted

Registered Charity No. 113010

8. TO RECEIVE THE ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL FOR 2016 INCLUDING THE GENERAL FUND SUMMARY BUDGET FOR 2017

Richard Hackworth presented the report. The report and statement has been available at the back of church for inspection over the past few weeks. There were no questions from those present at the meeting. Richard gave thanks to the office staff and finance committee for their help in producing the report and statement.

Christopher Green proposed that the annual report and financial statement be approved and Sarah Dawson seconded. This was approved by the meeting.

9. TO RE-APPOINT HILLIER HOPKINS LLP, CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS, AS THE AUDITOR OR INDEPENDENT EXAMINER.

This was proposed by Richard Hackworth and seconded by Carole Dell. This was approved by the meeting.

10. TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE CHURCHWARDENS ON THE FABRIC, GOODS & ORNAMENTS OF THE CHURCHES

The Churchwardens' report was received.

11. TO RECEIVE THE OTHER WRITTEN REPORTS OF PARISH ACTIVITIES AS CIRCULATED

The reports were received.

12. TO RECEIVE THE RECTOR'S REPORT

This was received.

13. SAFEGUARDING ISSUES

Hilary Elliott has become the parish's new Safeguarding Officer, and is reviewing the parish's current policies in light of the diocese's recommendations, reviewing training within the parish, and ensuring appropriate DBS paperwork is up-to-date.

14. FORMAL ADOPTION OF THE TEAM MEASURE

The Team Council and PCC have already adopted the Team Measure which lays out how the Berkhamsted Team Ministry works. Churchwarden Tim Hennessey proposed its adoption by the meeting. It was seconded by Richard Hackworth, and adopted by the meeting.

15. QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSIONS ON ANY MATTERS OF PAROCHIAL OR GENERAL CHURCH INTEREST

No questions or issues were raised.

16. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the PCC will take place on Tuesday 9th May 2017.

Fr Tim thanked Julian Dawson, PCC Secretary, for all his work.

The meetings closed at 11.38am with The Grace.

[Type text]



**THE ANNUAL MEETING OF PARISHIONERS
FOR THE ELECTION OF CHURCHWARDENS**

11.00am Sunday 22nd April 2018, Lady Chapel, St Peters, Berkhamsted

AGENDA

1. Prayers
2. Apologies for Absence
3. To Receive the Minutes of the previous Meeting of Parishioners
(2nd April 2017)
4. Election of Churchwardens for 2018-2019
5. Closure of Meeting

[Type text]



The Parish Church of
St Peter Great Berkhamsted

Registered Charity No. 113010

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

11.05am Sunday 22nd April 2018 in the Lady Chapel, St Peters, Berkhamsted

AGENDA

1. To receive the Minutes of the last Annual Parochial Church Meeting (2nd April 2017).
2. To receive a Report on the Electoral Roll.

Elections

3. Affirmation of ONE All Saints representative to the Parochial Church Council for 2018-19
4. Appointment of Sidesmen of the Parish for 2018-19.

Other Business

5. To receive the Annual Report and Financial Statement of the Parochial Church Council for 2017.
6. To re-appoint Hillier Hopkins LLP, Chartered Accountants, as the auditor or independent examiner, dependent on the requirements of charity law.
7. To receive a report from the Churchwardens on the Fabric, Goods & Ornaments of the Churches.
8. To receive the other written reports of Parish Activities as circulated herewith.
9. Rector's report.
10. Team Measure
11. Mission Action Plan
12. Questions and discussions on any matters of Parochial or general Church interest.
13. To note the following date:

PCC Meeting Tuesday 8th May 2018

[Type text]



The Parish Church of
St Peter Great Berkhamsted

Registered Charity No. 113010

REPORTS FROM THE PARISH

The following groups (here in alphabetical order) have met, worked and contributed regularly throughout the year within the parish community, and the reports of those who particularly wished to write them will be found in the body of this Annual Report.

All Saints Church	<i>Tracy Robinson</i>
The Bellringers	<i>David Burbidge, Mike Below</i>
The Buildings Committee	<i>Christopher Green</i>
Cowper Society	<i>Penny Abbott</i>
Julian Meetings	<i>Ruth Treves Brown</i>
Little Fishes Toddlers Group	<i>Tracy Robinson</i>
The Mothers' Union	<i>Margaret Burbidge</i>
The Music Department	<i>Adrian Davis, Jean Wild</i>
The Organ	<i>Jonathan Lee</i>
Pastoral Care Group	<i>Philippa Seldon</i>
Sunday School	<i>Lex Bradley</i>
Sundays Together Lunches	<i>Carolynne Charman</i>
The Thomas Coram Church of England School and Victoria Church of England Infant School and Nursery	<i>Rob Halls, Executive Head Teacher</i>
Tuesday Club	<i>Barbara McKenna</i>
Your Berkhamsted	<i>Jacqueline Hicks</i>
Youth Work	<i>Lex Bradley</i>

[Type text]



The Parish Church of
St Peter Great Berkhamsted

Registered Charity No. 113010

CONTENTS

- 1) **Treasurer's Report for the Parish** *Richard Hackworth*
- 2) **The Rector's Annual Report** *Fr Tim Pilkington*
- 3) **St Peter's Churchwardens' Report:** *Mark Grego / Tim Hennessey*
- 4) **St Peter's Buildings Committee:** *Christopher Green*
- 5) **The Deanery Synod:** *Richard Hackworth*
- 6) **St Peter's Music - choir:** *Jean Wild,*
- 7) **St Peter's Ladies' Club:** *Barbara McKenna*
- 8) **The Mothers' Union:** *Margaret Burbidge*
- 9) **The Cowper Society:** *Penny Abbott*
- 10) **Youth Work** *Lex Bradley*
- 11) **Victoria and Thomas Coram Collaboration of Church Schools:**
Rob Halls, Executive Headteacher

[Type text]



The Parish Church of
St Peter Great Berkhamsted

Registered Charity No. 113010

TREASURER'S REPORT

A full copy of the 2017 Trustees Annual Report and Accounts has been on display in St Peter's since 4th April and copies are available from me on request.

The headlines

I summarised the finance headlines for 2017 in a handout I circulated for the Sunday morning service on 25th February:

- St Peter's is supported by many long term donors – **thank you for all you contribute**. Donations are 2/3 of our income. In 2017 members of St Peter's have also run some impressive and successful fund raising events, like the Oktoberfest. But there are challenges.
- Total expenditure was £60,000 more than income.
- Day to day income has fallen. At the end of 2017 the margin of regular income over day to day costs was only £4,000 – less than a week of running our parish (£4,200 - £4,400 a week). This is tight.
- We spent about £63,000 on building projects – including the new church lighting scheme.
- On average we spend about £18,000 a year on routine property maintenance, but the reserves set aside for this important work are low.

Thank you to all those of you who have responded to our call to review our regular giving to St Peter's, and for the generous donations which have been made. I am preparing thoughts and suggestions for the longer term support of St Peter's and our parish for conversation with the PCC over the next few months.

I would like to thank sincerely Hilary and Kate in the Parish Office, and the PCC Finance Committee – Mark, Tim, Jane, Jon, Christopher, Ted, Simon and the Rector - for their support to me and the PCC during 2017.

I will be happy to answer questions at the APCM on 22nd April.

Richard Hackworth

PCC Treasurer

[Type text]



The Parish Church of
St Peter Great Berkhamsted

Registered Charity No. 113010

2. THE RECTOR'S ANNUAL REPORT

My reflections on this past year at St Peter's must needs be seen in the wider context of contemporary British society. Anyone who refuses to accept that the Church in this country is in serious decline - apart from some very large evangelical/Pentecostal style churches – is living in cloud cuckoo land. Britain is a fragmenting post-Christian society. From how we are governed, through what we are fed by the media and advertisers, down to the daily lives and aspirations of the vast majority, **the concept of God as a fixed point of reference is almost totally absent.** During my 32 years as a priest I have witnessed that an ever widening gulf has opened up between the institutional church and the society to which it has traditionally ministered; this is particularly so with the Church of England, "The Church by Law Established". There is a huge mis-match between what happens in the institutional churches and the way people outside think, talk and live. If we just shrug our shoulders and simply expect people to come on our terms to things we have always done and are comfortable with, not least at the time which most suits ourselves, then the last one out of the door simply throws the key away. The question is, how is this gap between church and society to be narrowed? I have no easy answers and would instantly mistrust anyone who claimed to have any! Maybe, just maybe, this year we have begun to bridge that gap.

Following the Church of England's report, *Mission-shaped Church* (2004), "fresh expressions" of church have begun to emerge, the most popular being "Messy Church", examples of which exist locally both at All Saints and Potten End. These are seen as missional ventures, a way of reaching out to those who are not regular worshippers. How successful these particular expressions are in bringing people to Christ I have no way of knowing. What is important to realise is that most people do not come to faith in a single step from atheism to Christian discipleship. Having facilitated the growth of a large church in a former parish of over 180 folks under the age of 40 I am not averse to trying anything, given adequate financial and human resources. Yet I think the case has yet to be proven that Messy Church or any other alternatives actually develop a deepening Christian discipleship in people. Our 4p.m. "T.S.S" service aimed at young families has retained a faithful few, around 30 on a good Sunday and I congratulate Fr.Simon, Lex and their team for their efforts. We shall see.....

I regularly hear folks waxing lyrical about St. Peter's as that "iconic building in the main street of our town". But what of the vast majority who walk by daily and never darken the doors? How do we encourage them to cross the threshold, which for so many is an enormous step? How can we use our "sacred space" to offer the possibility of an encounter with God? Well, we have done so this year, possibly for the first time, on the Sunday before Advent when many gathered in the town for the Festival of Light and the switching on of the Christmas tree lights. Here I want to offer my thanks to all who came together and brain-stormed their ideas.

[Type text]

It really began to take off last year with a brightly lit stall, smiling faces and mulled wine for sale as people walked past the building. Why was that an important step? Simply because the perceptions of so many outside the church is that it is miserable and only has negative things to say. This is not helped by the petty arguments within Anglicanism, not least about human sexuality. The key message we have to get across is that Christianity is about human flourishing, which is part of the message we all must convey. Here was life and laughter and welcome. This year the group became more daring and creative. Lights were placed showing a pathway into the building which was illumined by hundreds of night lights and candles, a gentle holy smell of incense and live organ music gently playing as background. People came. More people came. I went in to say the evening office by candlelight in St. Catherine's chapel and people respected the silence along with my mutterings. And still they came, necessitating me rushing around to find loads of votive candles for them to light. Hundreds came through our door and most accepted the gentle offer of a card giving details of our Christmas worship. For me, this has to have been the highlight of the past year; nay, of my three years here. All of this developed with no, or very little, clergy input, merely permission to be creative.



Photograph by Sidney Perera, with permission

[Type text]

Why did so many come? Will we see them at other services? Maybe not, but for a very few exceptions. Yet I have met people in shops and along the High Street who have made comments such as, “Thank you for opening the doors and allowing us in (!!!)” ; “Well, all I can say is that it was a special spiritual experience” (several of these latter type comments). Why was this event so appreciated by folks? What we offered was a “thin place”, where the division between heaven and earth is a mere breath. Most of these people (although some did come to the Advent Carol Service the following week) are church goers of the Alan Bennett or Philip Larkin type, defined in Larkin’s poem, *Churchgoing*:

“Once I am sure there’s nothing going on, I step inside.” (Collected Poems, Philip Larkin, Faber & Faber, 2003).

Clearly many want to engage spiritually within a “sacred space”, yet many are afraid of being caught up in the institution. So what perhaps is, for many, a frequent occurrence in their daily lives? Questions buzz around as we ask how we might connect a moving experience such as several clearly experienced in St. Peter’s that evening, to the message of the gospel. T.S. Eliot captures what I think many feel these days:

“We had the experience, but missed the meaning.” The Dry Salvages, in the Four Quartets, T.S. Eliot, Faber & Faber, 1959

One thing is certain in my mind: not by any formal, structured act of worship. This is simply three steps too far ahead. We need to tread warily, ask for the Holy Spirit to nudge us in the right direction and be creative within our own tradition. Just be aware of one thing: making spiritual connections is not a job solely for the priest: it is for all the baptised.

I have written at length about this, which is not to decry all the other efforts which have gone on in the past year, not least what is now becoming our bi-annual St. Peter’s garden party, with poor old teddy on the wire. This year’s Oktoberfest was another great weekend. Both events provided occasions to experience fun and outreach. We must not beat ourselves up by looking back to the days of say ten years ago; we have to cut our cloth to what we can realistically manage, as with so many other organisations such as the Lions in our town.

This year I must express my thanks to so many who work so hard BEHIND the scenes. I’m thinking especially here of several groups and individuals:

- Our church cleaners
- Our flower arrangers
- Our sacristans
- Our altar linen launderers and those who iron the altar cloths
- Our office staff and those who help fold pew leaflets and prepare booklets

[Type text]

- All who help prepare drinks, coffee and then wash up
- Our Churchwardens, our Treasurer and P.C.C. Secretary who do so much behind the scenes besides and who are a tower of strength and support to me as Rector
- Members of the P.C.C. and the various sub committees which enable our life to continue along with all who simply turn up, roll their sleeves up and muck-in where needed
- The Friends of St. Peter's and especially the magnificent efforts of Dr. James Moir to secure a grant of just under a million pounds for the restoration of the cemetery, thus relieving the P.C.C. of a huge financial burden.
- Whilst not working "behind" the scenes, our Director of Music Adrian Davis does have his back to us. May I say how delighted we all were when, after his stroke earlier in the year, Adrian made such a determined and welcomed return.

This year I must make mention of the Cowper Society who are responsible for preparing the church for outside events, often shifting pews and stage material for choirs. Penny Abbott worked tirelessly this year when St. Peter's hosted the fashion show for the St. Francis Hospice. This was so very appropriate given that the whole idea developed from a meeting of people from and in St. Peter's all those years ago. The lighting made St. Peter's look stunning; all I was waiting for was to see Fr. Simon sweep down the catwalk in the gold cope!

Having taken his name in fun I must say what a tremendous privilege it is for me to be a training incumbent and how much I enjoy working with Fr. Simon as a colleague. It was a great joy to share in the laying on of hands at his Ordination and then be asked to preach at his first mass, which was a truly moving and joyous occasion.

Another joy has been to have Miss Lex Bradley with us for a third year. Sadly for us we say farewell at the end of this academic year with thanks to Berkhamsted School for sharing her with us two days a week.

Lex has been accepted for ordination training in September; she will be very much missed. However, we look forward to welcoming her replacement in September.

Whilst we continue to be nourished by the preaching of Fr. Anthony, now even racier that he has a new motorcycle, we are fortunate to have welcomed Fr. Chris Rogers, recently retired and living in Fr. Basil's old home in Northchurch. (A brief biography appeared in this January's issue of *Your Berkhamsted*). We are so fortunate that he has decided to hang up his cassock with us for we shall need all the help we can muster in the next few months, for two principal reasons.

[Type text]

- First, we must recall that we are part of the Berkhamsted Team Ministry for which I am team rector. The Rev'd Penny Nash will be going on a three month extended study leave (sabbatical) from the beginning of February. This will mean that I will need to be there at least once a month just as I still like to visit All Saints' and the Gaddesdens from time to time, whilst Fr. Chris will be at Potten End at least twice a month and be responsible for weddings and funerals during this period. As always, I remain hugely thankful for the support and humour of Fr John Russell.
- The second reason for being thankful for our retired priests is that I am going on what is now called "extended study leave" or a sabbatical. Those in full time ministry are entitled to three months' study leave every ten years. After 33 years without sabbatical leave, Archdeacon Jonathan rightly suggested it was time to have a break. This also fits the parish: with nearly two years under his belt Fr. Simon should enjoy the experience of being in a position of responsibility as part of his development for a parish of his own. In my absence he will be under the care of Fr. John. I need this time to have an extended retreat, to pray, study, reflect and contemplate what might be best for the parish, Alys and myself in the years ahead. Diocesan guidelines are firm in that once I begin the sabbatical study, I withdraw totally from the parish and so I will not be available during this period for any pastoral or liturgical duties. I do hope that you will both appreciate my need for this and understand that after over 30 years of giving in ministry, batteries need to be re-charged and the future assessed prayerfully and carefully. My leave begins immediately after the A.P.C.M. until the end of July when I shall return to bid farewell to Lex. Please pray for me as I shall continue to pray for you.

I end with thanks to all, not least those who may not have had a mention in the rectoral despatches this year. It is impossible to cover everything and everyone, yet I know that you do not do it for public thanks, but for God. Amen to that.

Fr Tim Pilkington

[Type text]



The Parish Church of
St Peter Great Berkhamsted

Registered Charity No. 113010

3. THE CHURCHWARDENS' REPORT

Welcome

Two themes that were identified by you at the Vision Day were welcoming newcomers and engaging with the community, or to give it an Anglican term, Outreach.

We are grateful to the Welcome group which spent a considerable amount of time looking at all aspects of how we welcome people into St Peter's, in particular looking at the role of sidesmen, welcomers, and the new role of pew welcomer. A subgroup defined the responsibilities of these roles and these have been published. We hope that the pew welcomers will support those who are new to the Sunday Eucharist and might be hesitant and unsure but, as Fr Tim pointed out in a sermon, it is the responsibility of all us to welcome and engage with people both in church and afterwards in the Court House.

There has been a noticeable increase in attendance at coffee in the Court House, including by young families. This has been helped by the reconfiguration of the tables, which encourages interaction between newcomers and existing members of the congregation, and by the presence of Fr Tim and Fr Simon.

Outreach

Pru Murray organised a successful Petertide Tea in June last year, raising money for People not Borders. Last month, Fr Simon took part in the sponsored sleep out in front of the church. The total raised was at least £3,600. This was an excellent way of raising money and publicising both the charity and also the increasing problem of homelessness. The pictures show a very wet curate. We thank you for continuing to support this charity which is important when one considers the increasingly unsympathetic climate that it exists in.

Lunches Together for the elderly continues every month and a big thank you to Carolynne Charman and to those of you who have volunteered to help. Saturday Morning Coffee is still going after all of these years but faces considerable competition from the ever-expanding number of coffee shops. On an occasional Saturday, do drop in and taste some home-made cake and coffee. We guarantee you will not meet a bearded hipster.

The Film Club 'Carry on Screening' is still going and offers a good time on a budget.

The Oktoberfest group with festival directors Jon Lee and Uli Grego put on an excellent programme, particularly a very successful choral concert in Ashlyns School Chapel with Handel's Anthem for the Foundling Hospital. The connection with the Foundling Hospital was further reinforced with a talk by a former foundling. The concert was attended by 100 people who were not members of our congregation.

[Type text]

The same group then volunteered to support the selling of mulled wine outside the church on the Festival of Light from the 'fun hut'. A last-minute idea led to the completely unexpected stream of people drawn into the church. The atmosphere inside the candle-lit church provided a complete contrast to the festival on the High Street.

Buildings

We must mention the continued work of the Buildings Committee with ongoing maintenance work, especially the Court House and Court House Cottage, and projects such as the replacement lighting scheme. Although the lighting project is not yet fully complete, the LED lights are far more effective and less dazzling than the halogen ones they replace. We must also thank our administrators, Hilary and Kate, and Carolynne Charman for arranging to replace the gas cooker and the famous safety cut-off with a domestic electric cooker. We understand that things are a lot calmer in the kitchen now.

The flat roof of the Court House will be renewed in the coming months, with the use of some of the legacy which will be mainly used to pay for the work to the St Catherine Chapel. Both of these will use up the greater part of the Buildings Fund, which reinforces the importance of increasing our income through Planned Giving as recently presented to us by Richard Hackworth.

The Clergy

We thank the Rector, Father Tim and our curate, Father Simon for presiding over our services, for preaching and for pastoral care. We thank Lex for leading children's worship during the Eucharist service. We, of course, thank Father Anthony for his preaching in that warm and mellifluous voice of his. Another newcomer whom we are pleased to welcome is Father Chris Rogers, recently retired to Berkhamsted and now a licensed member of the clergy in our Parish.

Conclusion

For the last three years, it has been a pleasant experience not to have had to worry about funding a budget deficit, something we would not have believed possible in the preceding years. We are having to once again turn our attention to our income, but we have made good use of this time to think about the future of the church and have put in place changes which are incremental steps towards securing the future of St Peter's. Whatever happens, we must continue to be a church where we take our faith seriously but with a sense of fun and of humour.

Mark Grego & Tim Hennessey
Churchwardens

[Type text]



Registered Charity No. 113010

4. THE BUILDINGS COMMITTEE

The Committee met three times during the year and welcomed Astrid Biddle as a new member.

Throughout the year individual Committee members attended to minor maintenance requirements as the need arose, and members also gathered on several occasions during the summer to undertake a programme of maintenance and repair work in and around the church and Court House. This work included the first stages in clearing the overgrown area in the NW corner of the churchyard with a view to levelling it and planting it to grass. In the church, work on the installation of a new dimmable LED lighting scheme has been taken forward and the preparations for the enclosure and re-ordering of the Catherine Chapel have been largely completed. The re-ordering proposals have been submitted to and commended by the DAC and tenders have been received for the main elements of the work. In addition, the joints of the copper roof of the chapel have been re-sealed to eliminate a problem of rainwater ingress. A Faculty has also been obtained authorising the development of the west end of the north aisle as a children's area. Work on the conservation of six monumental brasses was completed during the year and the brasses have been relocated on the wall in the north aisle.

Following several cases of anti-social behaviour in the church a CCTV camera has been installed to act as a deterrent. During the year, pigeons roosting in the tracery of the west window also became a serious nuisance and netting and other deterrents had to be put in place. The issue of unauthorised parking in the church carpark was revisited and a quotation was obtained for an automatic barrier. The committee concluded however that the possible benefits would not justify the substantial expenditure and they were also concerned that the complex pattern of use in the carpark would make the management of the barrier difficult.

In the Court House a new fire alarm system has been installed, the door and windows in the Parish Office have been replaced with double glazed units and improved security and the central heating system has been power-flushed to improve performance. Following health and safety concerns, the gas cooker in the kitchen has been replaced with an electric unit.

In the Court House Cottage a new gas boiler has been installed and in the bathroom the bath has been replaced with a shower cabinet, to reduce the risk of spillage and consequent damage in the Court House toilets below. Following this plumbing work the Cottage bathroom was also redecorated.

The Rectory Lane Cemetery project has been taken forward very successfully during the year with the completion of the Development Phase of the HLF grant and the award for the Delivery Phase of a grant of £907,000.

Early in the year, the PCC reviewed priorities for the maintenance and improvement of its several properties. The re-ordering of the Catherine Chapel and work to maintain and modernise the Court House were recognised as the main priorities.

Christopher Green

[Type text]



The Parish Church of
St Peter Great Berkhamsted

Registered Charity No. 113010

5. BERKHAMSTED DEANERY SYNOD

Our Rural Dean is Revd. Jonathan Gordon (St Mary's North Church). The Deanery Synod has met three times during 2017. Speakers have included:

- Richard Stanforth, the Humanitarian Policy Advisor for Oxfam GB on 25th April,
- Dr Caroline Ellwood, who spoke in depth at the Deanery lecture about the West's relationship with Islam on 8th June, and
- Bishop Michael (Hertford) visited the Deanery on 21st June to host a discussion about Making New Disciples.

The Deanery Synod is active and in fine form. For information the 2018 Deanery Lecture will be on 24th May when the speaker will be Terry Waite.

Richard Hackworth

6. ST PETER'S CHURCH CHOIR

Throughout the year our young choristers have worked hard and their singing has grown in confidence and musicality.

During the year there have been 3 successes in those taking the RSCM Award examinations:-

- In March 2017 Nick Armstrong passed his Dean's Award examination
- in October 2017 Sophie Armstrong and Daisy Groet both passed their Bishop's Award Examinations.

Jean Wild

[Type text]

7. ST PETER'S LADIES' CLUB

(Formerly The Tuesday Club)

As several new members of the congregation have asked what The Tuesday Club was we felt we should change our name to "St Peter's Ladies Club". We still meet on the first Tuesday of the month in the Court House, and we still continue to enjoy fellowship, social occasions and interesting speakers as well as to help with Church activities.

We welcome new members, so please speak to Barbara McKenna on 01442 871159 or Roslyn Laidler on 01442 879992

Barbara McKenna

8. THE MOTHERS' UNION

Mothers' Union (MU) is a worldwide organisation. By belonging, members in this branch join with over 4 million others in 83 countries to put their Christian faith into action. Central to our meetings are prayer and worship, and all are welcome to come. Talks and social activities build our fellowship with and care for each other. Our commitment, through fund-raising and activities, supports MU projects that build healthy and flourishing relationships in this country and overseas.

Margaret Burbidge

[Type text]



9. THE COWPER SOCIETY

We have had a busy and eventful year.

We have succeeded in making very positive links with our local community and have hosted a number of town events.

These include *The Mikado* (rescued at short notice from a very wet castle!), a very successful charity fashion show (promoted by Fine and Country), a 'launch' concert (promoted by Chiltern Arts Festival) and a visit from St Albans Abbey Choir.

Our Madrigals last May introduced bacon butties to the breakfast and proved to be very popular.

The usual concerts included Bridgewater Sinfonia, Chiltern Chamber Choir and Berkhamsted Choral Society. We also continue to host Rebecca Harte's *Bring a Bear* Concerts and Rachel Gordon's Pupil concerts. It is good to know that our grand piano is being used for young people.

Our Winter Talks continue to be popular and we at last managed to 'get a handle on Handel', a talk by Adrian Davis, after three attempts!

The organ recitals didn't take place but are rescheduled to appear later this year.

A questionnaire completed by the members of the Cowper Society indicated that we need to raise our profile within the church and invite some new members to join us.

We all work hard to support many different events in our church and feel gratified that the building is being well used.

Future events include a concert by Alexander Ardakov and a performance by the Dacorum Youth Orchestra.

Very sadly our secretary Priscilla Watt is now in a care home. She has given many years' service to the society.

Our thanks to all our helpers and those who have supported and given generously to our events.

Penny Abbott (Chair)

[Type text]

10. YOUTH WORK

Sunday school has changed format in the last year, and has begun to take on fresh energy and life. The changes have predominantly happened because of dwindling numbers, both in terms of children and helpers - a sustained issue of the last few years. Sunday school now meets in church, in the Lady Chapel during the homily, creed and prayers. The session continues to consist of some short, gospel based, input from the leader, followed by a craft activity. While this new arrangement isn't without its own problems, namely the noise that sometimes drifts into the main body of the church and the difficulty of doing craft on the floor occasionally, the new set up seems to be solving some of the old issues. We now have a sustained number of children who attend sessions, around 10 each week, sometimes attracting upwards of 15. This number includes some choristers, who can attend Sunday school now as well as singing in the choir. Children who are visiting St Peter's are also more inclined to come as they get to stay in the same building as their parents and don't have to cross over to the courthouse. We realise that it isn't perfect and the new format doesn't suit everyone, but it is workable for now and with the glazing of the St Catherine chapel on the horizon, this could be a new location for the group. On the topic of Sunday school, we still **drastically require additional helpers** to volunteer to lead a small story and craft activity once a month or so. This term we will also need someone to take over the **oversight of Sunday school** from Lex when she leaves in July. This would entail organising rotas, taking a few sessions personally and keeping an eye on resources in the courthouse cupboard.

Our **Third Sunday Service** has now settled in to its new time slot of 4pm, but has now become known simply as TSS or The Sunday Service, as we moved to being less rigidly fixed to the third Sunday of each month, fitting flexibly around school calendars. Numbers have sustained themselves at around 30, and relationships are being made between regular attendees, which is wonderful to see. The theme-heavy worship, activity and tea style of TSS have linked well to the newly reinstated **Easter and Advent workshops** for children, which are gathering momentum once again.

Work in our two **parish schools** continues to be a weekly feature of parish life. Victoria Infants School has a weekly collective worship delivered by either Rev Penny Nash, Fr. Simon or Lex and they also meet in church for a service once a half term. Thomas Coram also have a weekly collective worship led by either Lex or a member of the clergy. With these schools becoming a federation, the collective worship has become much more closely linked, with the same themes being covered in each

[Type text]

school and some special services in church being combined. It is an exciting opportunity for the collective worship of both schools.

Looking ahead to the future, Lex will be leaving in July and will be looking to release responsibility of children's work by around June at the latest to allow for hand over. Our **new parish assistant** is called **Olivia** and will be joining us in September. While she has had some experience of leading children's activities, she will not be responsible for the running of Children's work, like previous parish assistants haven't been. **Therefore a replacement from amongst our own congregation is a very real need, if we want vital children's work at St Peter's to continue.**

Lex Bradley

[Type text]



The Parish Church of
St Peter Great Berkhamsted

Registered Charity No. 113010

Our two parish church schools, Victoria CE Infant and Nursery School and The Thomas Coram CE School (the largest junior school in Hertfordshire), are places where everyone matters. We are inclusive, family Church schools with a welcoming caring ethos that is at the heart of all we do.

Over the past year, we have continued to provide not only good learning opportunities, but a range of high quality enrichment activities to develop the moral and social education of our children.

We are very grateful to all the staff at both schools for their hard work; to our parents for their support; and, particularly, our PTAs (the VSA and The Friends) for all the valuable events and support they provide for our communities.

Both schools visit St Peter's Church for worship regularly, and enjoy acts of worship in school, led by, particularly, Fr Simon, Rev Penny and Lex.

In September 2017, our two parish church schools formed one of the first formal collaborations in Hertfordshire and the Diocese of St Albans, but one of many such school organisations across the country. In April 2018, both schools formally joined under a new joint Governing Body, Castle Church of England Federation.

Our vision is to be a Christian family that ensures the highest quality outcomes for all children through integrated and outstanding teaching and learning experiences. Our culture of high expectations and continual improvement is underpinned by effective and inspirational leadership.

Our schools' governors – the majority of whom are appointed by St Peter's PCC - need a special 'thank you' this year. They have continued to work tirelessly on ensuring we have two great schools, but have also been focussing on creating and leading our Collaboration and Federation. As we dissolve our two governing bodies and create a new Federation one, a number of governors will be standing down. We're saying thank you to these current (or recent) Foundation governors or those associated with St Peter's: Rob Barham, Sheena Coster, Nicola Fulcher, Uli Grego, Paul Jullien, Peter Matthews, Philip Wilton.

We are proud to be blazing a trail in Hertfordshire and the Diocese of St Albans with our new and exciting federation, combining the best possible outcomes for pupils with great professional opportunities for staff within the context of a distinctive and effective Church of England foundation.

Rob Halls, Executive Headteacher

Caroline Crozier, Head of School, Victoria CE Infant and Nursery School

Jackie Cutler, Head of School, The Thomas Coram CE School

[Type text]