

Parish Meeting and Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) – 27 April 2010

Report for the Parish Magazine and the Web Site

The two meetings were held consecutively in the Church Hall on 27 April with 45 people present.

At the Parish Meeting we were informed that there are now 159 people on St. Mary's electoral roll of whom 39 live outside the parish. Lorna Bourdeaux and Gaynor Dean were then unanimously re-elected as church wardens after Andrew had thanked them for all their work over the last year.

The APCM began with a prayer. Then Andrew presented the Annual Report. First he thanked very many people for a wide variety of tasks. He then mentioned three points of concern: a) the parish link with Uganda – about which we are still waiting for information b) the problematic situation of the music at St. Mary's – which has now hopefully been solved by the formation of two choirs and c) the decline in our work with children, young people and families – which Sarah McKearney has offered to coordinate this year. However, there have been plenty of extremely successful endeavours: the Missions of the Month now have a much higher profile and our educational work has been furthered by outside preachers in Lent, a seminar on St. John's Gospel by John Muddiman and a positive experiment with two Emmaus courses. In addition the structural changes to the Church Hall to enable better access for the disabled, the work of the PCC committees, the information about St. Mary's made available through the Parish Magazine and the website and the meticulous work carried out by the development group on the enhancement of our church building all bear witness to a flourishing community.

Paul Butler then gave the Treasurer's Report, pointing out that this year's shortfall in the budget of around £32,000 was largely due to the building work on the hall, though the recession has had an impact on general donations and investment income. The PCC has agreed to allocate £32,000

from the Fabric Fund for the enhancement of the church building. It is thought that the church's financial situation will remain stable this year when we shall have to raise funds for the church building work.

Jonathan Stockland, Roger Wagner and Dick Richards have ended their term as members of the PCC. Four new members were unanimously elected: Anne Wagner, Penny Tyack, Stephen Michael and Hilary Pearson. The list of the Deputy Church Wardens, Sides People and Ushers approved by the APCM is up in the church.

Andrew then drew our attention to the section in the Annual Report on our vocation as a church. He wanted the meeting particularly to take stock of the aspect we have called 'Deepening the Centre'. Some areas of this, such as Morning Prayer and Taizé services have continued from the past but this year a small group has also led a series of 'Quiet Times' on week days. These have been attracting increasing numbers of people with 50 attending the Parish Quiet Day last summer.

David then spoke about the plans to enhance our church building. The Diocesan Advisory Committee has not yet given its approval but it clearly regards the plans in a positive light. The Victorian Society has made no objection to the replacement of the pews in the chancel by moveable benches. The funding of the proposal will be a challenge. The Friends of St. Mary's have kindly offered to pay for the lighting but, even with the £32,000 allocated from the Fabric Fund, there will be a shortfall which we shall have to raise.

Lorna brought the business to a close by thanking Andrew for all the work he has done in the parish, sustained by his own discipline of prayer and reflection and also Sarah for the role she plays in so many of our activities. Andrew then ended the meeting with a prayer.