

SAINT GILES CHURCH, SHIPBOURNE

Annual Report of the Parochial Church Council for the year ended 31 December 2011

Objectives

The objectives of The Parochial Church Council (PCC) of St Giles, Shipbourne are to

- promote in the ecclesiastical parish of Shipbourne the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical; and
- maintain in good order the fabric of St Giles, Shipbourne and its churchyard.

Review of the year

This has been another successful year for St Giles. Some highlights of the ways in which the church has worked to achieve its objectives are set out below.

Ministry and mission

The church continued to hold a service every Sunday morning at 9.30am. In addition Holy Communion, using the Book of Common Prayer, is celebrated at 8.00am twice a month. There were special services to celebrate Christmas, Easter and other church festivals. These services were well attended. The normal attendance for an average Sunday was 51 (2010: 48). Those who regard themselves as regular members of the congregation apply to be on the Electoral Roll and in 2011 there were 133 (2010:133) names on the Roll. The parish Carol Service on Christmas Eve was particularly well attended, with numerous people standing at the back of the church. St Giles celebrated the 400th anniversary of the publication of the King James Bible with a special service on 9 October.

The Rector led various courses on Christianity during the year. A Lenten study course entitled "Different ways to pray" was held as well as the Alpha course. Four courses of study into the Christian faith commenced in the autumn, including a Bible study group, which was attended by some 40 people in all, a Christian listeners' course and the Alpha course.

The PCC participated in the Shoreham Deanery Synod meetings and hosted one of the meetings at St Giles. In addition the annual Deanery Synod service of choral evensong was held at St Giles on 26 June.

The church acquired copies of the NRSV version of the Bible during the year so that a copy is now available in every pew.

Children

Children are an important part of the life of St Giles.

~ The *family service* held once a month is designed to involve children and their parents and is always well attended. The annual *Nativity and Christingle* service before Christmas was again well attended by children and their parents.

~ *Playchurch* is aimed at pre-school and primary school children up to the age of 6 and their parents. It is an opportunity for everyone with young ones to meet and worship at St Giles in a relaxed atmosphere. It is held once a month and lasts about 3/4 hour with Bible stories and craft activities for the children and is an opportunity for parents to have an informal discussion on the week's theme.

~ *Boomerang* is a club for all children aged 6 to 11 years. Meetings take place in the Village Hall and last about an hour. There are Bible stories, music, craft and games. The activities have a scriptural theme and may include a Bible story. During the year children from both groups helped to search for and record flowers in the churchyard on four occasions.

~ In conjunction with the Farmers' Market, there were two sessions open to all village children to search for mini beasts in the churchyard; a moth trap was set up over night to introduce the children to the mysteries of the moth world.

~ The Rector leads assembly once a month at *Shipbourne primary school*

Farmers' Market

The weekly Farmers' Market continues to thrive. There are 21 permanent and 5 seasonal stalls in the church, the churchyard and the church approach; the market is well attended with some 200 or more visitors each week. The market continued to attract favourable publicity, including an article in the Financial Times in April 2011 as an example of methods to preserve our Church heritage. Further details of the market are shown on http://www.kfma.org.uk/index.php?option=com_kfma&view=market&marketID=30&Itemid=106

Shipbourne Newsletter

The PCC prepares the monthly parish Newsletter which is distributed without charge to every household in the parish. The Newsletter carries news of current events in the village, a report from the Parish Council and the County Councillor as well as church news. Further information on St Giles is on the church web page at www.shipbourne.com/stgiles.htm

Other projects for the community

The PCC organised various events for the parish.

The *Right Royal Knees Up* on 12 June was held to celebrate the Royal Wedding. It was a supper event with a jazz trio and dancing, and was attended by 81 people.

Sam Gladstone gave an *organ recital* in St Giles on 18 June, to celebrate the successful restoration of the Lewis organ; he introduced the items in a varied programme which were designed to show off the range of colours and versatility of the instrument.

The *Church Fete*, held on the Common on 29 August, was well attended. There was a good range of stalls and entertainments for children.

The *Harvest Supper* was held in the Home Farm barn by kind permission of the Fairlawne estate on 23 September. It was well attended by members of the parish and was again a very enjoyable occasion.

The Quorum Choir performed a varied programme of music at a *choral concert* in St Giles on 19 November.

Fabric and the restoration appeal

Work continued in the year on the long term restoration plan for St Giles church. The plan is to carry out underpinning work and stonework repairs in the next major phase of the programme.

- Consulting Engineers reported on the extensive cracks in the walls of the Lady Vane Chapel in the south transept. They advised that these cracks were caused by seasonal changes in the moisture content of the clay on which the church is built. They recommended that the foundations to the south transept should be underpinned; when this has been done, the damaged stonework and the cracking can be repaired. They advised that the structure is not dangerous at present but it is clear that urgent action is required to prevent further damage.
- The last quinquennial report dated 2010 by the church's architect identified various areas of damaged stonework which should be repaired in the next two years, that is by 2012. This will require the attention of a skilled stonemason and will involve the use of scaffolding.

Based on builders' preliminary estimates, it is estimated that these works will cost some £200,000. It is intended that the necessary funds should be raised with the assistance of grants and donations, from the church's existing resources and from future fund raising efforts within the parish.

The Fabric Committee carried out a security survey in the year, based on advice from Kent Police; various measures were taken as a result to improve the security of the church, without restricting access.

A working party reviewed energy usage at St Giles, drawing on the Church of England's *Shrinking the Footprint* initiative to promote carbon reduction in the church. The group recommended various possible improvements. The Fabric Committee will consult the church's architect on implementing these ideas.

Shortly after the restoration of the organ was completed in 2010, the tracker rods in the organ were damaged during a break-in to the vestry. These were replaced by the organ builders and the organ is now again in fine working condition.

The Committee continued with its normal programme of repairs and maintenance of the fabric of the church and of the churchyard. Volunteers shared the work of cleaning the church on a regular basis and also assisted with maintaining the churchyard.

Finance

Total incoming resources in the year were £75,633 (2010: £63,807), the increase of £11,826 reflecting an increase in general church income of £17,424 offset by a reduction of £5,598 received in respect of the restoration and organ appeals. Resources used of £61,999 (2010: £83,894) were similarly reduced on last year as expenditure on the organ appeal was completed in 2010 and final amounts were paid on the roof and stone repairs.

Revenue from normal church resources (General Fund) amounted to £64,587 (2010: £49,417) being an increase of 31% on last year. After the encouraging reversal of the downward trend in income seen in 2010, resulting from the Stewardship campaign in October 2010, regular giving in the year has brought much needed stability to the Church's day to day finances. In addition, a number of successful events were organised to raise funds for the Church through involvement of the local community, as described above, and these raised £5,486. Expenditure on normal church activities in 2011 was £50,256 (2010: £47,939). Costs were held at the same level as the previous year and, with the increase in the Church's income, the PCC felt able to recommence its previous practice of 'tithing' part of its income for charitable purposes. The accumulated surplus on the General Fund at the year end amounted to £45,283, an increase of £12,931 for the year, reflecting a surplus for the year of £14,331 (2010: £1,478) and a transfer to the diocesan repair fund of £1,400. Much of the surplus is earmarked for use in the restoration programme.

Accounts for the Farmers' Market for the year ended 31st December 2011 are consolidated. Apart from the proceeds from the church stall and the provision of tea and coffees, St. Giles Church derives no direct financial benefit from the market, all surpluses being donated to agricultural charities here and abroad. Owing to the level of control exercised by the Church, however, it is necessary to incorporate these accounts into the official accounts published by the Church.

It is the policy of St. Giles to maintain in the General Fund free reserves at a level which equates to between three and six months unrestricted expenditure. This would provide sufficient funds to cover day to day running costs. Unrestricted funds were maintained in excess of this level.

Risk Management

During the year, the PCC reviewed the risks affecting its activities and has taken steps to ensure that appropriate measures have been taken to minimise these risks.

Structure, Governance and Management

The PCC of St. Giles, Shipbourne is a corporate body established by the Church of England. The PCC operates under the Parochial Church Council Powers Measure. The PCC is a charity exempted by order from registration with the Charity Commission. St. Giles Church is part of a benefice that also includes Plaxtol Parish Church. It is part of the Diocese of Rochester within the Church of England.

St. Giles Church is situated at Stumble Hill, Shipbourne, Kent TN11 9PF. The address for correspondence is The Rectory, The Street, Plaxtol, Kent TN15 0QG.

The members of the PCC are the trustees of the charity and are either appointed ex-officio or elected at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) in accordance with the Church Representation Rules. During the year the following served as members of the PCC:

Rector	The Rev. Andrew D. Procter	Chairman
Church Wardens	Mrs. Monica Long Mr. John Boyd	
Secretary	Mrs Mary Perry	
Treasurer	Mr Martyn Williams	
Deanery Synod	Mr. Nicholas Ward	
Elected members	Mr Andrew Boorman Mrs Flora Boorman	(resigned 26 April 2011)
	Mr. Rodney Levett Mr. Jeffrey King	(resigned 26 April 2011)
	Mrs. Elizabeth Moore Mrs Viv Packer	
	Miss Lynette Sargent Mrs Jackie Raven	
Co-opted member		

The PCC met six times during 2011 to plan worship, discuss the care of the church building and to prepare other community activities.

The PCC has five sub-committees:-

~ Finance Committee, chaired by the Rector, oversees the finances of St. Giles, monitors income and expenditure, budgets and financial controls.

~ Standing Committee, chaired by the Rector, transacts the business of the PCC between its meetings, subject to any directions given by the Council. There are joint meetings with the Standing Committee of Plaxtol PCC to discuss financial and administrative aspects of the ministry, which are shared by the two parishes.

~ Farmers' Market Committee, chaired by Mr Robert Taylor, oversees the running of the St. Giles Farmers' Market.

~ Fabric Restoration Committee, chaired by the Rector, monitors the fabric of the Church and the upkeep of the churchyard; oversees the regular maintenance of the fabric; manages major works under the restoration appeal programme; and advises on raising funds for restoration projects.

~ Buildings Development Committee, chaired by John Boyd, works on plans for improving the facilities of St Giles in the longer term.

Many people continue to assist the work of St Giles by giving generously of their time and skills and by making donations. The church would not be able to continue its work without their assistance. The PCC are deeply grateful to all these individuals for their continuing generous support.

Signed on behalf of the PCC on 23 April 2012

The Reverend Andrew D. Procter