

ALL SAINTS CHURCH, HERTFORD

REPORTS TO APCM – 2016

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Hertford and Ware Deanery Synod Report for 2015

The Deanery is part of the St Alban Diocese and consists of 23 churches with 11 clergy (one is a vacancy) and many supporting clergy and laity

The joint Rural Deans, the Revd Canon Pauline Higham and the Revd Nick Sharp, retired in June. We also learnt of the death of the former Lay Chair Janet Mayes.

The Revd. Canon Jo Loveridge (All Saints, Hertford) was appointed Rural Dean and the Revd. Mark Dunstan (Hunsdon with Widford and Wareside) the Assistant Rural Dean and Diana Perkins (Christ Church Ware) continues as the Lay Chair.

Diocesan Synod Elections for 2015-18

Laity - Diana Perkins, Pat Parker, Janet Bird, Colin Bird and David Scott
Clergy – Revd Canon Jo Loveridge, Revd Mark Dunstan, Revd Ginni Dear, Revd Canon Pauline Higham and Revd Nick Sharp

There were four meetings during the year.

- February meeting was held at St Andrew's, Hertford.

The topic was Prayer and Derek Hinge spoke reminding us all that we are on a journey. This journey goes deeper than intercessory prayer but many of us get find it difficult to progress beyond this point. Derek spoke of different ways to pray but said each person needed to find their own way. He himself had been influenced by Lee Abbey and silence. We were encouraged to try different styles of prayer on our own. Derek had set out various Stations around the church to give time and space to sample these. We finished with a time of meditation using the poem *Just Talk to Me* by Bill Colclough for Lee Abbey. A very different evening from most of our meetings.

- May meeting was held at Christ Church, Ware

The speaker was Revd. Canon Tim Bull who gave a presentation on the Diocesan Lay Ministry Strategy. The Synod were supplied with copies of various papers. Following the presentation we broke into small groups with question to discuss and respond to. We were able to then give Tim our ideas and thoughts.

- July meeting was held at Essendon Village Hall

Our speakers were Revd Phil Abrey Chaplain from The Mount Prison, and Revd Doug Loveridge Chaplain from Watford hospital .

Revd Phil Abrey opened by telling us about the statutory requirement for him to see every man to comes into the prison within 24 hours. He gave us an interesting picture of the day to day activities of himself as Chaplain and the other members of the team. He was very positive about the growing numbers of men attending chapel on Sundays and gave us ideas how as parishes for we could help – being prison visitors and helping with the work of the Angel Tree project which provides Christmas gifts to inmates' children.

Revd Doug Loveridge described the work of the hospital Chaplaincy Team and the very different people and situations they can find themselves involved with. The Chaplaincy team are available for anyone in hospital needing spiritual care or a listening ear regardless of faith.

Doug and Phil answered questions from the Synod. A very instructive evening.

- October Meeting was held at the Wilshire Hall, Stansted Abbots
The speaker was Reg Bailey, retired CEO of the Mothers Union and Government Advisor. Reg spoke to us about his work on preventing the commercialisation and sexualisation of children. He explained how today's world has changed our children's sense of self and surrounds them with commercial and sexual images; how the internet gives such easy access to inappropriate images and targeting by advertisers. Parents today feel voiceless and helpless in the face of this bombardment. Reg was invited by David Cameron to create a series of recommendations to redress the balance and much work has been done – increasing the controls on advertising; trying to persuade music/video providers to apply age ratings; responsible retailing and new watershed guidelines. Following his talk Reg answered many questions about how we can continue to improve things further, eg asking stores to change inappropriate displays and talking to our children and grandchildren about 'real' life, not the life displayed on the internet.

All Saints' Hertford Mothers' Union Annual Report 2015

We have had another successful year and our members continue to be involved in many aspects of the worship and life at All Saints. Our branch includes several members who worship elsewhere and we maintain close links with MU members in other churches.

Our programme in 2015 was varied and interesting. John Earle always gives us a fascinating talk in February and this year it was a musical evening "Bing Sings" about WWII songs. Peter Ruffles came to give us a talk with slides about Hertford. We had two more slideshows, Ann and Iain Wilson talked about their nomadic life and the Boltons talked about their trip to Indonesia.

Once again some of our members were involved in the Easter Journey and Ginni very kindly led us in a memorable evening Lent Meditation travelling around the Easter Journey, reflecting on our own journey with Christ.

We had a book club social evening, talking about books we had read over the summer and our favourite novels. We had a sociable craft evening making straw stars for Advent with Nick Hoyle and made our usual Advent wreaths for Christmas in December. We had some lovely visits to the Gibberd Garden in Harlow, Hopley's Garden Centre and lunch at Pearce's Farm Shop Cafe.

Unfortunately our annual Deanery coffee morning had to be cancelled due to illness but we enjoyed a lovely evening with Susan Roberts, the outgoing Diocesan President, discussing the MU Theme "With Love from the Mothers' Union". Our Wave of Prayer service was well attended at Bramfield Church and led once again by our Deanery Chaplain Janet Bird. The Lady Day service was at Stapleford Church

We were all very much saddened and upset to lose Joan Allum. Although Joan could not make many meetings, she was an important member of our branch and had supported the MU for over 20 years. We are all going to miss her very much.

For 2016 we have another varied programme of events and would be delighted to welcome you to attend any or all of our meetings – you do not have to be a member to come!

Our Coffee Morning will be at Janet Bird's house, 140 North Road, Hertford on Tuesday 10th May from 10am to 12 with proceeds going to MU funds supporting work in the UK and overseas. You are warmly invited to attend.

At our Triennium elections Ann and Rosemary were once again voted in to continue running the Branch. Please pick up a programme at the back of Church or talk to us. Please come and join us anytime! We look forward to welcoming you.

Ann Stephens-Jones and Rosemary Bolton

Report for All Saints Art for 2015 – 2016

The Art group has had another good year, with an average of six people each week. We have breaks at Christmas and Easter, otherwise we continue all year. It is good to have some meetings in the summer when other activities stop.

We had a new summer visit to Panshanger Park. It was a particularly beautiful evening and we will definitely return this year. We also painted in the churchyard and revisited the gardens at Fiona and John's house and at 2 Valley Close.

In September we had a very interesting evening when the Rev Alan Stewart talked about his book 'Do you feel like winter?' and the illustrations for it. Our new craft activity was decorating boxes and coasters, some of which were sold at the Xmas bazaar. We also decorated candles for sale. This term we have had Pauline, a friend of mine from Hertford Art Society, to sit for us so we could practice portraits; and our annual visit from Dr Roger Aubery who fascinates us with his knowledge of religious art. We have also painted and drawn all sorts of subjects using watercolours, acrylics, pastels and crayons.

We meet on Thursdays 7.30–9.30pm in the church meeting room. A varied programme is arranged, printed and circulated for each term. Everyone pays £2 each week they attend; this goes to meet the cost of speakers, tuition and craft materials, and a donation towards church heating costs.

New members are always welcome to join us at any time. We could do with some more men and some younger members! Anyone who likes creating!

I am very grateful to Nick Hoyle and Pauline Geering for helping in the smooth running of the group.

Gillian Harman
Co-ordinator

Safeguarding Report

The Churches Child Protection and Advisory Service provides an online application system for clearance by the Disclosure and Barring Service. The St Alban's Diocese will only accept online applications through this route. The service has proved very successful in that it is easy to use, and there has been a much faster response by the DBS in providing disclosure certificates.

Four people have applied for and received clearance since May 2015, one of which was a renewal. Anyone who has a DBS certificate needs to renew it after five years.

While it is necessary for me to see personal details online when a person applies, as soon as the applicant receives their certificate those details are no longer available. I am the only person from All Saints' who sees them, and there is strong password protection on the website. Chris Lees, the safeguarding officer for the diocese is able to view details should anything untoward be disclosed, and initially he would be responsible for dealing with it.

Anyone going through this procedure at All Saints' can be assured the only record kept is a list of people who have been checked. This shows the name, the certificate number, the date obtained, and the date for renewal.

We have a Safeguarding Policy in place, and a poster on the board in church giving details of contacts should a problem arise.

I feel we have a very thorough procedure in place, and I am grateful to all who have been more than willing to apply for a DBS certificate.

Helen Harvey-Wright
Lead Recruiter for Safeguarding

Messy Church and Youth Group Report for the Annual Parish Meeting

Messy Church meets on the third Sunday of the month in the afternoon in St John's Hall. Numbers continue to grow and in 2015 59 different children came to one or more sessions, of whom 40 attended regularly. We follow a theme each month and 7 or 8 craft activities are offered, based on the theme. Last year these included the Tower of Babel, Daniel, the Good Samaritan and Following Jesus. We also had sessions which followed the major Christian festivals. Our craft activities are followed by an act of worship and then we all sit down to tea together. This is a very valuable time as it gives us a chance to chat and get to know each other better. Our special Messy Church session with a fireworks display still sees our largest attendance of the year (44 children this time) with many families bringing friends along with them. We are fortunate in having such a large number of committed helpers without whom Messy Church could not take place each month.

We have been considering how to engage the Messy Church children as they get older and in September we launched a youth group. The group, which is run by Jo, Ginni, Martin Bird and myself and meets monthly, is open to children from year 6 at primary school. 10 young people attend the group and so far we have held games and drama evenings, a film night and a Christmas party. We have also been bowling. The young people have also taken an active part in our Family Services, particularly on the theme of St Nicholas in December and on Mothering Sunday. This is something which we hope to develop further.

We continue to support the work of Send a Cow through the plant sale and the cow bucket. This year we sent £450, which was matched by the government as part of their commitment to international development.

Thank you to everyone who helps us in our work with the young people of the church. We appreciate your support and encouragement very much.

Kath Oates

FLOWER CLUB REPORT 2015 - 2016

The Flower Club continues to manage, despite some traumas and diminishing numbers, to have a Team on each month, except in December when it is "all hands on deck"! Not quite as bad as it sounds as we just have greenery in Advent and the Christmas decorations gradually build up for the schools, Hertford Choral Society, the Nine Lessons and Carols and finally Christmas itself. Not having a team in December enables the teams to move on a month each year so we all work with different seasons. We also have another team of 'ad hoc helpers', growing in number, who are available to assist at Festival times to help ease the workload of everyone.

We aim to continue to provide flowers or greenery for the church throughout the year, and try to be creative using plants and some artificial flowers on occasions. In June we used red Amaryllis, blue Hydrangeas with real white Chrysanthemums to create an arrangement to celebrate The Queen becoming the longest reigning monarch, and similarly used the blue and red for the service in October to lay up the Colours of the Hertfordshire Regimental Association. It was nice to get compliments about the quality of the Hydrangeas! We have all worked together to decorate All Saints' for the major Festivals of Easter, Harvest and Christmas so a huge thank you to everyone involved in these events, Thank you to those who donate money, and to those who assist in the clearing away afterwards which is often more work than decorating originally and can get easily forgotten!

There were 2 full 'wedding packages' sold during 2015, one with Pew Ends and candles in the Autumn and a Ruby Wedding service for Kay & Andrew Povey-Richards. It is always a special pleasure to decorate the church for regular members of the congregation, and we tried out the new archway which has proved a great success and is generating more money when used at Weddings! It was also good to have two baptisms of regular members and the Vicars Grandson. Grateful thanks for our efforts were received from all the wedding parties, the Baptisms and from The Hertfordshire Regiment Association which is lovely to feedback to members.

Income and expenditure has been broken down to give detail of both. Easter donations were down in 2015 but general flower donations up. Money also came in for Jean Gilbey's Memorial service, and for the Regimental service. We are really grateful to those who contributed to these two very special events.

Expenditure was well controlled by prudent spending by the Team Leaders and sourcing some flowers directly from the Nurseries, and we made a profit of just over £27. The floral 'Oasis' (the green base we put flowers into) seemed to stretch much further this year, possible due to the greater use of vases. I would like to thank Charles Murkin for donating a traditional blue vase which belonged to Connie which we shall treasure, and has been used on the Memorial Book. The payment from the PCC was repaid and this was a communication problem than financial one, and is now resolved. We end the year on a sound footing and hope to continue to pay our own way at All Saints, but we do appreciate the PCC's offer of financial help if required.

Anyone interested in arranging flowers is welcome to join us – no experience required, and we aim to be a happy and relaxed group!. Sincere thanks to all in the Flower Club who work so hard to make All Saints look so lovely, and comments that come back to us show that all the effort is appreciated

Dorothy Toyn
All Saints Flower Club Administrator

Music in 2015

Martin Penny

This is my seventh report and is much as in previous years. There were some great achievements, individual progress, welcomes and sad farewells.

Following Christopher Joyce's decision to step down in March, David Ford gave, and continues to give, sterling support as Associate Director, allowing me to play. He has done this at a time of significant increase in his responsibilities at work – no mean feat and we are very grateful for his continued support.

We were fortunate to welcome back, on a part-time basis, John Norris as Organist from October. He has rapidly become an established member of the team and has put in many hours learning/relearning our repertoire. Michael Stephens-Jones also stepped up to some stiff challenges and now regularly accompanies whole services.

Sam Chadwick has continued to put much energy and ingenuity into providing instrumental arrangements for the All the Family Service.

Natasha Page has been working with all our young choristers, giving them individual support and tuition funded by the MDF.

Much of what follows is, of necessity, a reflection of highlights. I hope everyone knows that we regard every service as special and prepare for each 'regular' with the same care and attention whether it be a swinging number for the All the Family Service, an anthem we know almost too well or a deeply contemplative motet for Compline.

Membership

Overall, we again grew slightly during 2015. We welcomed Soraia Jorge into the front row, Rachel Brett to the Altos and Lynford Neville (a familiar face) and Helen Dellar to our portfolio of regular deputies. We also saw rather more of Hazel and Zoe Ford than we expected. We hope they both return to full health (and University) soon.

Team Work/Special Events

The year began with choral services on 4th Jan and an Epiphany Carol Service a week later (one rehearsal only!). The following week saw us host a

Team Eucharist with choristers from across the team.

February was a quieter month and gave us the chance to fully (re) learn two large-scale anthems (*Gibbons* and *Stanford*) that are now firmly back in the repertoire.

March saw us collaborate in a rather different form of worship on Palm Sunday morning (including Lloyd-Webber) which was followed in the evening by a 'Bring & Sing' *Messiah* (Part Two). All four soloists (Natasha, Hazel, Michael & Chris) were 'home grown' – a remarkable achievement for a Parish Church.

Easter-tide was the usual blur of services – and we learnt the hard way that one piece in a flat key doesn't fit comfortably with four in sharp ones!

May saw the annual Civic Service and the first service of the new Bishop of Hertford. We relearnt *Gibbon's* "O clap your Hands" for this and were delighted that logistics meant we had to sing it under the tower (the only place in the building which adds any 'bloom' to the sound).

In June, Michael Stephens-Jones took his Grade VIII Organ exam passing with distinction (138/150). Congratulations to him on the effort and thanks to his mum, Ann, and gran, Beryl, for many hours sitting in All Saints whilst he practises. At the end of the month, we hosted the Admission & Licensing of Readers for the diocese. We were asked to provide contemporary music and obliged with *G. Jackson, Stopford* and *Penny* (after *Poulenc*) – all 21st Century.

After the summer break a relatively quiet September gave us a second opportunity to do some detailed work on pieces old and new.

October began with Harvest and then the Laying Up Service. It was a privilege to make music for such an occasion and great to work with the Regimental Band – leading to some surprising keys and harmonies on occasion. I had just enough notice of these to cobble together two descants.

November brought three 'big' events in the form of our Patronal festival (with Baptism), Remembrance and the Advent Carol Service. Each was marked with specially learnt music – a huge effort by the team, especially those who

had not sung with us for long enough to have encountered the pieces we 'revived'.

I would particularly like to single out John Norris who spent many hours untangling the knots within the accompaniments – undoubtedly the most challenging of which, for singers too, was the *Dove Missa Brevis*. We sang it in full in February 2016 and parts on Easter Day 2016.

December had as many Carol Services/concerts as last year with some 6500 people attending services. Trixie Wraith was a fearless soloist in *Once in Royal* (and bang in tune).

As well as delivering the two major Carol Services we again sang at Isabel Hospice. Though we are delighted to do it we were very touched by not just the very warm welcome, mine pies etc, but several donations from patients.

Repertoire

I have tried to continue to keep our music making alive by refreshing the familiar with new material, often sourced, at little or no cost, from the web.

We continue to add contemporary material in both 'traditional' and modern guises. Particular thanks are due to several anonymous donors who have provided the funds to do this. There's more in the pipeline!

In total we learnt (or relearnt) pieces that hadn't been sung for so long that they were unfamiliar to most of the choir by *Gibbons* (2 major pieces), *Byrd*, *Victoria*, *Stanford* (2), *Leighton*, *Lloyd-Webber*, *Chilcott*, *McDowall*, *Whitbourn* and *Dove*. For those who have joined us in the last three years, there were many more 'first performances'!

If you have any particular requests or recommendations, please let me know.

Concerts/MDF

Chris Benham pulled together three more great series of 'Soundbites' concerts and, aided and abetted by Ann, an equally skilled catering team. The income from this is a key part of the whole All Saints economy. Thank you to you all.

The income from this goes to our Music Development Fund. This allows us to make grants to support individual studies and also to provide support and assistance (and materials) as needed.

Everyone who is eligible has benefitted from support in 2015 resulting in a slight 'overspend' due to an overoptimistic assumption on recovery from the recession by me. Nevertheless the Fund is within the intended target balance of £10-12,000.

We also further increased the number and nature of customers who hire the building for (mostly musical) events.

Thank You's

Firstly to the choir for:

- Delivering week in, week out
- The music for Epiphany, Holy Week/Easter 2015, the Laying Up Service and Advent/Christmas.
- Turning out in force for Remembrance Day
- Willingly working on new anthems/carols from all ages and styles.
- Working together as a large family – encouraging and supporting each other
- Putting up with me!

but also to

- David, John, Michael, Natasha and Sam for their skill, support and constant good humour
- Jo, Ginni, Janet and Helen for their support and encouragement of all we do
- Nicola, Julia, and all the committee for their hard work in pulling things together
- Mary and Rachel for the weekly work with the folders
- all the adults, young adults and choristers who make such wonderful music and their parents who do so much fetching & carrying
- all of you for your comments and suggestions
- and, finally, to Mary who keeps me sane – and firmly grounded in reality!

Love, Martin