



Christ Church Bath

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING Sunday 24 April 2016

**11:30am, Christ Church,
Julian Road, Bath BA1 2RH**

Agenda

1. Opening prayer
2. Apologies
3. Minutes of the previous AGM (Sunday 19 April 2015)
and any matters arising not otherwise on the agenda
4. Remarks from the Priest-in-Charge
5. Elections
 - a. Election of Churchwardens
 - b. Election of Assistant Churchwardens
 - c. Election of Deanery Synod representative(s)
 - d. Elections to Church Council
 - e. Election of Sidespersons
6. Questions/discussion on written reports
7. AOB (to be notified to the chair before the meeting, please)
8. Dates of the next AGM and first Council meeting
9. Closing prayer

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Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of Christ Church, Bath, Sunday 19 April 2015

Present: 34 people. Chair: Sarah Jones, Chair of Trustees.

Apologies for absence:

Madj North, Angela Morris.

1. Minutes of the previous AGM (4 May 2014) were accepted nem. con. (proposed Robin Kerr, seconded Andrew Sillett).

2. Remarks from the Chair of Trustees

Sarah said thanks to her predecessor as Chair of Trustees, Mark Elliott, and his family. She outlined the timetable for recruiting a new Priest-in-Charge. The plan is to advertise in September. Not sooner? First, we should avoid advertising in the summer, when potential candidates may be away. Second, we need to take time to work out who we are and what we seek in a priest. As the Arch-deacon points out, we are not the same church we were in 2010.

An Away Day is planned for mid-June to discuss these things, and a group of people will be needed to lead the compilation of our church profile.

Sarah added that at the same time as recruiting, we also continue as a witnessing community. To do both, she suggested, we need to do four things:

- (1) Love one another. When things feel difficult, we should ascribe the best possible intentions to people's words and actions.
- (2) Share the load. Is there a gift you can bring? Whether it's a gift of preaching, prayer and music, or hospitality, admin and cleaning, help as you can.
- (3) Communicate. Some information will be confidential or sensitive, but the Trustees will share as much as possible.
- (4) Most importantly, pray.

3. Election of Churchwardens

Malcolm Wall and Alex Soboslay were re-elected unopposed.

4. Election of Assistant Churchwardens

Janet Mahto and Yvonne Morris were re-elected unopposed.

5. Election of Deanery Synod Representative

Morny Davison was re-elected unopposed.

6. Elections to Church Council

The following four were nominated:

Rowena Hall (nominated Penny Edwards, seconded Jane Nicholson),

Janet Mahto (nominated Judith Bishop, seconded Mark Elliott),

Judith Bishop (nominated Andrew Sillett, seconded Malcolm Wall),

Sarah Kerr (nominated Charles Rice, seconded Jane Nicholson).

The meeting voted unanimously to increase the number of Council members elected from three to four (proposed Ian Hay Davison, seconded Penny Edwards). Subsequently the four nominees were declared elected and will serve until the 2018 AGM.

Ian Hay Davison, our Tower Captain, was co-opted (proposed Andrew Sillett, seconded Margaret Burrows).

7. Election of Sidespersons

Rowena Hall stood down as a sidesperson. The others on the list were reconfirmed (proposed Alex Soboslay, seconded Judith Bishop, passed nem. con.).

8. Questions and discussion on Reports

(1) Buildings

Robin Kerr reported that B&NES has registered our planning application for external works including the proposed disabled access ramp. The “target date” for a decision is mid June. Rowena Hall asked how long the fundraising and building will take, if the plans are approved. What do we do in the meantime? Penny Edwards commented that the estimated £100,000 for an access ramp seemed to her “a crazy waste”, not money well spent on the purposes for which Christ Church exists. Margaret Burrows asked whether it wouldn’t make sense to investigate the sorts of ramps used around railways stations etc., which were not as expensive. Margaret Heath said a much nicer ramp would be a good thing. Mark Elliott said that there were obviously cheaper solutions that were temporary, but once we do something permanent, we need to meet listed buildings requirements and construct something that doesn’t just provide access but also enhances the building. Robin Kerr said the reality was that we were obliged to build something with dignity and permanence to pass on to our successors.

Sarah Jones agreed that we were talking about a large sum of money, and the church community must participate in making the decision. Hazel Boyd will be putting together a working group to consult with everyone interested, and possibly also consider interim options.

Judith Bishop asked if there were grants etc to assist with funding. We should look into this to help us make our choice. Alex Soboslay observed that we currently meet our legal obligations, but using the choir vestry door as an accessible entrance was not ideal. As for funding, he said he wouldn't have believed a year ago that we'd have a working ring of bells within a year, but it has happened.

Martin Palmer said we want a Rolls-Royce but can afford only a pushbike. Even if the cost is half the estimate, he asked whether we shouldn't spend the £50,000 on making the East end accessible, not the West end.

(2) Finance

Alex Soboslay asked for clarification of some of the figures in the accounts: in particular, "church maintenance" and "utilities" are included in both the Trustees and Council expenditure figures. David Bishop explained that such things as light bulbs and wear-and-tear come under the Council, while fixing the roof is the responsibility of the Trustees. The supply of utilities in the church building was Council; our other buildings were Trustees.

Penny Edwards said she was staggered that there was no expenditure on Junior Church. Sarah Jones said they had spend small amounts and not submitted receipts to Council.

The meeting expressed its thanks to the Treasurer, David Bishop.

9. AOB

Sylvia Ayers proposed a vote of thanks to Sarah , and wished her good luck.

10. Date of next AGM

The next AGM was set for Sunday 17 April 2016. The next Council meeting will be Tuesday 12 May 2015.

The meeting closed with a prayer and the Grace at 12:40.

REPORTS for 2016

1 Administrative Reports

1.1 A word from the Priest-in-Charge

Colin and I have only been in Christ Church for the last few weeks of this financial year but we have been heartened by the genuine welcome we have received, which is a reflection of the welcome you give to all newcomers. The depth of your commitment to Christ Church is impressive – many of you travel long distances to worship. Others give time and attention to choir practice, Pilgrim Group, Cedar Tree Café, all activities which enrich our sense of being a worshipping, servant community at this time and in this place.

There's a lot still to be done. The plans for the West end – the welcoming aspect of our building – are underway. In the coming year we will need to turn our attention to the re-ordering of the East end, the space within which we focus our worship. But in the excitement of this necessary work and decision making, let's make a conscious effort to remember, "The Most High does not live in a house built by human hands" (Acts 7:48). The heart of Christ Church is prayerful worship. Out of that worship grow the welcome, discipleship and outreach to the local community – signs of the presence of the Holy Spirit.

Revd Lore Chumbley

1.2 Report from the Chair of Trustees

The current Trustees are: Sarah Jones (Chair), David Bishop (Treasurer), The Venerable Andrew Piggott, Sarah Sheppard, Clive Tilling, Jane Nicholson, Martin Palmer, Sue East and Charles Rice.

This year in the life of the Trustees has of course been dominated by the vacancy. As I have said in various places, I and the other Trustees are very grateful to all those who worked so hard to maintain the life of the church over the last twelve months. Happily, the last few weeks have been a time of welcome and building new relationships since Lore took up her post as Priest-in-Charge beginning with the wonderful Licensing service last month.

As we have said “hello” to Lore we have also learnt that we will be bidding farewell to Angela Berners-Wilson and Andrew Sillett in July this year. Their support of Christ Church has been unwavering, whether it has been Angela’s many slots on the preaching and presiding rotas or Andrew’s service on Council and Standing Committee. We are very thankful for all they have done and continue to do for us.

The vacancy prompted us to spend time reflecting on what we offer as a Christian community and what our aspirations are. The away day in July was a special time of fellowship. It helped us write our profile, but it will inform discussions over the next year about (amongst other things) how we should develop and use our building. Charles Rice has been elected by the Trustees to chair a buildings sub-group. I am confident this will help us progress the work we both want and need to complete, beginning with the West end of the building – indeed the group has already made steps forward. I am delighted that Charles has agreed to take on this role.

In October last year Yvonne Morris decided the time had come to step down from Trustees after 17 years of dedicated service, many as Chair. This is a good moment to reiterate our thanks for all she has done.

As well as the continuing routine work of Trustees making sure we meet the requirements of the law and of the Charity Commissioners, the remainder of 2016 is likely to see some important decisions about how we raise and spend our money. I would ask you to remember the Trustees in your prayers as they work for the Church alongside the Council and Lore, trying to discern the right decisions for the future of our community.

Sarah Jones

1.3 Treasurer’s Report for financial year 2015

The accounts for 2014 were professionally inspected and submitted to the Charity Commission in October 2015. The unaudited 2015 accounts which form the basis for this report have been prepared separately for Council and Trustees.

Council

Income from charitable giving in 2015 was about 8% below 2014 levels. This was partly due to a fall in numbers.

Revenue from use of the church also fell slightly – partly attributable to Toppings making fewer bookings.

Diocesan giving was £10,000, a reduction over 2014's giving, reflecting short term funding of the Bells Project and concerns over possible upcoming project expenditure.

Gift Aid on qualifying charitable donations in tax year 2014/5 amounted to £8,500. This was not applied for during 2015 but the figures shown reflect this accrual. The submission has since been made to HMRC.

Bells Project

The bells project was substantially completed during the year, a testament to Ian Hay Davison's energetic management of the funding and of the project itself, and most outgoings were committed or spent in the financial year. Some elements of the funding were only payable on completion or provided by planned HMRC tax recoveries, and the project therefore ran into negative cashflow. The Trustees agreed to make a loan of £45,000 so that work could continue. VAT was recovered for most of the capital works (with a minor amount still to be applied for), and a Gift Aid refund in excess of £10,000 has recently been applied for. Funding already received or reliably anticipated will cover the capital costs to within 1-2% and the Trustees' loan is due for repayment in the first half of 2016.

Trustees

Both Cottages and the Upper Mews have been continuously let through the year. Cottage No 1 has been subject to various overdue maintenance works, mostly caused by long term damp problems. A number of the Victorian window casements have been replaced. The work was substantially complete at the year-end but the costs, of the order of £10,000, are not reflected in the year's cashflow.

The need for similar refurbishment is becoming clear in Cottage 2, and this will be tackled in 2016.

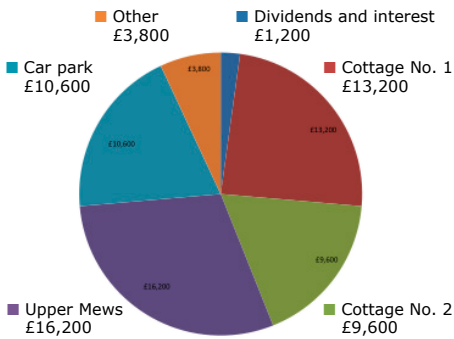
No other major projects were funded during 2015, although design costs were incurred for the west end toilets remodelling and entrance porch refurbishment, the first phase of which is expected to start in 2016.

Trustees' outgoings were reduced by the interregnum from the end of the first quarter, with the Trustees contribution to Ned Townshend's

care as well as Angela's pay stopping after their move to Guildford in March.

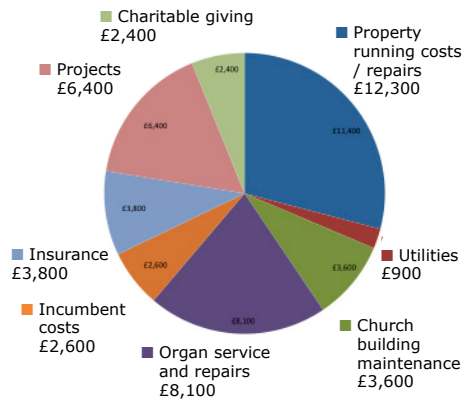
David Bishop

Trustees Income £54,600

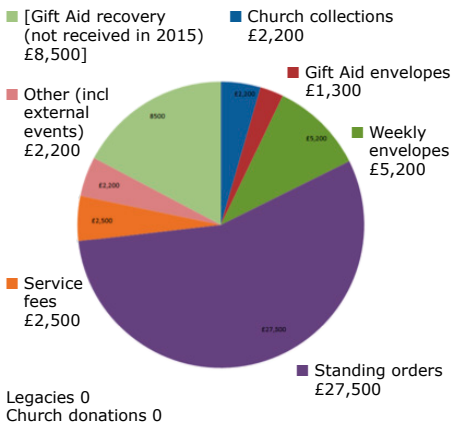


Trustees Expenditure £39,200

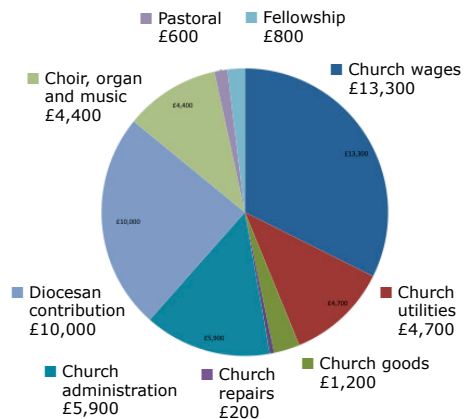
(excl. loan to Bells Project)



Council Income £49,200



Council Expenditure £41,100



Income and Expenditure 2015

Income	2015	2014	2015/2014
Trustees			
Property	39,000	30,700	127%
Car parking	10,600	12,200	87%
Investment	1,200	1,200	100%
Other Trustees' income	3,800	2,100	181%
Subtotal Trustees' income	54,600	46,200	118%
Council			
Charitable giving	36,000	39,200	92%
Gift Aid return	8,500	8,500	100%
Use of church & other	4,700	3,100	152%
Subtotal Council income	49,200	50,800	97%

TOTAL INCOME 103,800 97,000 107%

Expenditure	2015	2014	2015/2014
Trustees			
Property running costs/repairs	12,300	3,200	384%
Church maintenance (incl organ repairs)	11,700	1,600	731%
Incumbent	2,600	8,900	29%
Insurances	3,800	4,300	88%
Project work	6,400	20,500	31%
Charitable works	2,400	3,200	75%
Subtotal Trustees expenditure	39,200	41,700	94%

Council			
Wages	13,300	12,600	106%
Utilities	4,700	7,200	65%
Other church running costs	8,100	7,100	114%
Choir and music	4,400	2,100	210%
Diocesan contribution	10,000	15,000	67%
Charitable works	600	500	120%
Subtotal Council expenditure	41,100	44,500	92%

TOTAL EXPENDITURE 80,300 86,200 93%

1.4 Church Council & Standing Committee

In the year since the last AGM in April 2015, Christ Church Council has met eight times. There were 17 members of Council until March 2016, when our new Priest-in-Charge took office, raising the number to 18. Average attendance at meetings has been 12 (highest 15, lowest 9).

Details of discussions and decisions are in the minutes, which are available on the website: visit www.christchurchbath.org, click on Church Life in the menu bar, then Church Council. Printed minutes will also be made available at the back of the church.

The members of Standing Committee, representing both Council and Trustees, are Sarah Jones, David Bishop, Malcolm Wall, Alex Soboslay, Andrew Sillett and Revd Lore Chumbley. As well as attending to any urgent business that may arise between meetings of Council or of Trustees, Standing Committee acts as a means of communication and co-ordination between Council and Trustees, has been delegated the authority to supervise bell ringing activities, and is the designated body responsible for authorising the sale or supply of alcohol under our Premises Licence.

Alex Soboslay

1.5 Electoral Roll

The number on the electoral roll as at May 2015 was 70. We have lost 5 members through death or relocation. However, 15 members have joined the roll. The total as at April 2016 is therefore 80.

We would like to extend an invitation to all of those who have joined Christ Church but are not yet represented on the electoral roll to sign up. Please see Judith Anderson for details.

Judith Anderson

2 Reports on Church Activities

2.1 Bell ringing

This report covers the period from 31 January 2015, when the first practice was held at Christ Church on the new bells, to 31 December 2015.

Ringings

During the year we rang for 54 services, including evensong and a funeral, and held 44 practices. Our regular times are 9:15 to 10am on Sundays for the service and 9:30 to 11am on Saturdays for practice. In addition we welcomed six bands of visitors, including from Australia and Canada. Six quarter peals were rung. The branch striking competition was held at Christ Church, and our band came third.

Ringers

The following were our principal ringers (up to 100 attendances each). As most of them have other affiliations we decided to call ourselves "The Society of Christ Church Youths". Will Willans, our Ringing Master, ensured that a very high ringing standard was observed, and we have received compliments from the neighbours.

		Principal Tower
Will Willans	Ringing Master	Abbey
Maggie Willans	Chief Instructor	Abbey
Dave Kelly	Steeple Keeper	Batheaston
Ian Hay Davison	Tower Captain	Christ Church
Michael Brett		St Michaels
Jim Cook		Abbey
John Cope		Abbey
Richard Curry		Abbey
Richard Doubleday		Abbey
Valerie Duff		Abbey
Katherine Newbery		Unaffiliated
Barry Quintin		Dunkerton
Martin Pearson		Keynsham
Julie Perkins		Abbey
Rosalind Thomson	Trainee	Unaffiliated
Philippa Turner		St Michaels
Karen Tyler		Unaffiliated
Giles Wood		St Michaels

At our 54 service rings we averaged 9.89 ringers, so our eight bells were fully occupied. We averaged 10.41 ringers at practices, several of the band being occupied at their home towers on Sundays. Sadly we have only acquired one learner – Rosalind Thomson – and we must try to drum up more, if possible from the congregation.

Complaints

A very small number of complaints have been received – five or six – and we are satisfied that the sound level with the shutters open (about 75 decibels at the foot of the tower) meets the BANES requirements for noise nuisance. However there is little further attenuation with the shutters closed and this has inhibited us from using the bells as much as we would have liked, especially for quarter peals. We are continuing to work on improving the sound-proofing with the shutters closed.

Finances

Funds remain available for the cost of fitting the opening casements in the ringing chamber and for a small amount of further work on sound proofing. We will also need to commission a donor board when work on the new porch starts. Tower collections banked during the year came to £426.64.

*Ian Hay Davison
Tower Captain, Correspondent, Secretary and Treasurer*

2.2 Building projects

2.2.1 Bells

As reported at last year's AGM, the installation of our new bells was completed in January 2015 and they were first rung officially on Sunday 22 February 2015. Since that time, however, we've established that the sound control measures installed in the tower are not performing quite as well as specified. Remedial works have been undertaken, and further works are planned in the next couple of months, which are expected to solve the sound leakage issues and make the sound control system fully effective. Separately, opening panels have been installed in the windows of the ringing chamber, providing welcome ventilation and making things much more pleasant for our ringers.

Alex Soboslay

2.2.2 Lavatories SW Corner

After much deliberation, an application for “formal advice” on our plans for the lavatories in the SW corner of the church was submitted to the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC) on 15 February 2016, and formal approval is awaited. The design for which approval has been sought is a fully-compliant accessible toilet, together with one conventional unisex toilet, including basin. See also “Heating” below.

2.2.3 Lavatory – Choir Vestry

A specification for refurbishment and redecoration of the choir vestry lavatory and porch in the NW corner of the church was drawn up and agreed on 9 March 2016 and has recently been submitted through the new “List B” (minor works) procedure for the Archdeacon’s approval. The Archdeacon was invited to inspect it on 12 March 2016. It is the intention that this work is placed on contract and completed before the SW corner lavatories are started. See also “Heating” below.

2.2.4 Lavatories – Lower Mews

Drawings for upgrading and conversion of the accessible toilet in the Lower Mews were approved by Trustees on 11 March 2016. The design is for a fully accessible toilet and one conventional unisex toilet, including basin. This work falls under the new “List A” (works that do not require approval), and it is the intention that this work is placed on contract and completed before the SW corner lavatories are started.

2.2.5 Heating

It is the intention that phase 2 of the heating upgrade project will be carried out in parallel with the SW corner lavatories work, and consequently a renewed quotation for it has been obtained from our contractor, J.S. Tams. This will entail (a) separation of the radiators at the west end of the church from the crypt boiler, (b) installation of a new wall-hung Combi-type boiler in the kitchen, also providing hot water, and (c) extension of pipework for heating and hot water to the SW corner lavatories and installation of radiators there. The contracts for the NW corner choir lavatory will also include heating (extended from the vestry).

2.2.6 Porch

Advanced drawings for the refurbishment of the main entrance porch were submitted by our architects in February. These will form the basis of another faculty application in due course. This work will include the reversal of the outer doors, addition of inner automatically-operating doors and removal of the existing wooden “draught-lock” structure,

co-ordinating with the accessible exterior ramp design for which planning permission was obtained from the Local Authority last year. These drawings have received favourable comment from the Trustees and so will be worked up to full faculty standard and submitted in due course for formal approval.

Robin Kerr, Project Manager

2.3 Cedar Tree Café

Serving the Community for ten years

Cedar Tree, the inspiration of Nicky Gladstone, will be celebrating its tenth anniversary at the end of the year. The café continues to open every Friday with the help of a dedicated group of volunteers. We have only had to close on one occasion this year due to “staff shortage”. We provide a friendly, welcoming and safe environment for the local community including some of Bath’s homeless people. Occasionally tourists come in to visit the church and stop for coffee and cake. Our community constable also stops by if he is in the area.

Resourcing

The café is staffed by a few regular, dedicated volunteers from Christ Church. There are always at least two people “on duty”. It would be useful to have more help so that there is back-up for holidays and events such as unexpected illness. We open the doors and serve food from 11am to 1:30pm on Fridays, with volunteers arriving 30 minutes or so beforehand to prepare salads etc. It usually takes about half an hour to clear up afterwards.

Financially the café is stable and makes a slight profit. There are enough funds available to buy Genesis vouchers, which are given out at the café to those who need them as well as after the service on Sundays.

Thanks

Many thanks to those who willingly give up their time to help run the café on Friday, and those “behind the scenes” who bake cakes, set up the tables and pray for us. We think we should have a party to celebrate the anniversary, hopefully at the beginning of November. Move information nearer the time!

Janet Mahto

2.4 Charities of the Month

As a charity, Christ Church cannot legally give money to any other causes than those specified in its governing document, and our Trust Deed of 1801 lays down very narrow aims. In order to enable us to give practical support to charities we want to help, Council decided in 2013 to establish a “Charity of the Month” scheme, under which money would be collected for a specific nominated charity each month.

A mix of local, national and international charities was nominated for 2015, and these are the amounts raised. These donations are sent direct to the charity concerned and do not go through the Christ Church accounts, so are not included in the financial report.

January 2015	Water Aid	£71
February	Blind Veterans UK	£57.70
March	Médecins sans Frontières	£200.00 (<i>note 1</i>)
April	Brake (road safety)	£79.00
May	Freewheelers EVS (blood bikes)	£80.00
June	Mothers’ Union Wheels Appeal	£80.00
July	Church Housing Trust	£70.00
August	Brain Tumour Support	£60.50
September	Children’s Hospice SW	£47.39
October	Bath Stroke Support Group	£72.36
November	US Advent Appeal	£90.70 (<i>note 2</i>)
December	Genesis/Julian House	£520.54
	Médecins sans Frontières	£361.10 (<i>note 3</i>)

Note 1: Includes money from Lent Lunch held jointly with St Mary’s RC.

Note 2: United Society refugee appeal.

Note 3: Extra appeal for refugees and migrants.

Alex Soboslay

2.5 Choir

It has been another successful year for the choir, with the usual highlights around Advent & Christmas and Holy Week & Easter. I was particularly pleased with the Good Friday Music & Meditations – everyone present, choir and congregation alike, seemed to agree that it was a powerful and affecting act of worship with music from across five centuries wound around some striking texts from Bishop Stephen

Cottrell's "The Nail". If you didn't manage to catch the service this year, please give it a go next year! The Advent and Christmas Carol Services were great successes as usual – I have no hard evidence, but it seems to me that we are welcoming more visitors each year to the Carol Service in particular. It would be great to find some way of encouraging them back a few more times during the year!

It has been lovely to be able to welcome Peter Woodward and David Simmonds to the choir this year – new singers are always welcome, and new male singers are at a particular premium! Our junior singers continue to make great progress, but as always, it would be fantastic to have more to join them too. If you know of any young people who enjoy singing (or who might enjoy it if given the chance!) then please point them in our direction.

Thanks to Keith for all the hard work and dedication he puts in to playing the organ for us. I throw a lot of notes at him week by week, and the variety of music we enjoy during worship wouldn't be possible without his skill and commitment. And thanks to Emma for her help with the juniors on a Friday night.

I can wave my arms as much as I like, but without people there to respond to my eccentric gesticulations, there wouldn't be much of a choir! There are currently 25 members of the Christ Church community who sing regularly in the choir, and without their commitment to Friday nights, Sundays and festivals, Christ Church would be a very different place. Many, many people comment week-by-week how much they appreciate the music in our worship. So finally, my thanks to the choir members for their time and energy, and to the non-choir congregation for their support and appreciation.

Mark Elliott

2.6 Churches Together in Bath

The *Christ Church Link* has published regular reports of the activities of the north eastern area. To add to these: at least two couples from Christ Church attended the Christian Unity Week service in St John's Roman Catholic church and were most impressed. I was so pleased Christ Church was represented as I was in Wells wearing my Australian hat for Australia Day (well, not actually bobbing corks).

It was sad to learn of the death of Gaby Grace, who had been a most dedicated County Ecumenical Officer. Her successor, Major Alan Dixon, is sending monthly newsletters, which I pass on to those in our church who might be interested.

The future of Churches Together in Bath seems uncertain. As I have reported, the constitution was suspended and there was no AGM. I understand that David Pendle is in conversation with Father Ryan.

At pushing 85, I no longer drive long distances and avoid night driving. This limits my scope for participation in Churches Together in Somerset events and I am now resigning as your representative and hope the Council can find a younger ecumenical enthusiast to take my place. I am happy to pass on any information on my file. I could not have wished to work with a more congenial group. The next informal gathering of our area representatives is in September.

Margaret Heath (Lady Heath, CTB rep.)

2.7 Concerts and Events

Christ Church has continued to be a useful venue for Topping & Company Booksellers. We have hosted Patrick Gale, Anthony Beevor, Anthony Sher, Graham Hancock, Sebastian Faulks, Melvyn Bragg, Kirsten Elliott and Neill Mennear, Max Hastings, Charles Moore and Vince Cable, with audiences up to 220.

Bath Camerata, led by their new conductor, held their Christmas concert in Christ Church. Christ Church was considered by composer Julian Marshall as one of the venues to host his project "Dark Disputes and Artful Teasing". Julian had chosen venues in London, Oxford and Bath. However, due to budgetary restraints he had to cancel the Bath event. He does expect to use Christ Church at a future date.

We were also able to provide Christ Church Lower Mews for teaching speech and drama and other ad-hoc events and expect from time to time to be able to continue this in the future.

Our income from all events in 2015 was over £1,500. It is important that we maintain the church's facilities in top order if we wish to continue to attract outside users.

Since the end of last year, we have introduced an official booking form with terms and conditions for hire of either the church or the Lower Mews. All events, whether public or private, will be required to complete a booking form in future. This helps to protect Christ Church in the event of inappropriate use or misuse of our property as well as protecting our close neighbours against inappropriate behaviour and noise.

We continue to consider any request for an event to be held in the Mews and/or the church. Provided the nature of the event is not contrary to the church's ethos, this is an excellent way to promote the church and increase the footfall, with a chance of attracting additional members for the congregation.

None of this would have been possible without the tireless help of a few individuals and the church is indebted to them all for their support.

Judith Bishop

2.8 Deanery Synod

Your representatives at Deanery Synod this year have been Andrew (Sillett), Morny (Davison) and Brenda (Wall). Deanery Synod has so far met twice in the last 12 months:

On 24 June 2015 we met at the Church of the Ascension. The Arch-deacon of Bath led us in prayer as we commissioned, and "laid hands on" (amongst others) our new Rural Dean (Revd Richard Wilson) and Assistant Rural Dean (Revd Jane Burgess). We discussed the challenges and opportunities that face us as we work together on our goal of seeing hundreds of new disciples and our whole city transformed by God's loving rule. We were also encouraged to sign up to being a "Fairtrade Parish".

On 22 October 2015 we met at St Matthew's, Widcombe, and were briefed about the role of "Task Groups" within the Deanery, e.g. to understand the needs of, and work with and for, the elderly. Task Group members are sought, who are mission minded, have understanding and insight, enthusiasm, energy and enthusiasm. Within every congregation there are retired and frustrated people with untapped skills and resources sitting in the pews who can be mobilised to help.

Deanery Synod is next due to meet on Thursday 21 April at St Mary's, Bathwick.

Andrew writes:

It has been my great honour and privilege to be one of three lay representatives for Christ Church (and thus a “voice from the pews”) on Bath Deanery Synod since (I think) June 2009. Given the impending move of Angela and I to the Quantocks I shall not be able to continue in this role after 21 April 2016, and the AGM on 24th April will be asked to elect a successor in my place.

Being a lay representative for Christ Church on Deanery Synod has been and is a fascinating and inspiring role – and I see it as being extremely important that Christ Church continue to be fully represented at (and have a lay “voice” at) Deanery Synod level, given the challenges and future opportunities for mission that exist for Christ Church and for all the other churches in the city.

Andrew Sillett

2.9 Genesis Sunday Centre

The Sunday Centre is one of the many projects run under the umbrella of the award winning Genesis Trust (Compassion in Action). A hot meal in a warm, welcoming environment is provided by teams of local churches on a six weekly rota. Food is served between the hours of 12:30 and 3pm on most Sundays throughout the year. The venue is generously provided by Walcot Methodist Church (Nexus church) in their Hall. On rare occasions when this is not available the undercroft at St. Michael's is the venue.

Each team provides its own menu. We (Combined Churches with Christ Church) do hot meat or vegetarian pies with jacket potatoes and vegetables followed by trifle. Our cook Sue from Sladebrook Evangelical Church does the best jacket potatoes in Bath!

Our commitment from Christ Church involves food preparation, setting up of the tables in the dining area, manning the dishwasher, providing hot and cold drinks, clearing up afterwards and most importantly talking to the customers. Food preparation starts at 11am, followed by setting up when the room is free. Once serving starts it is “all hands on deck” to avoid a queue.

All volunteers are very welcome. Please do feel free to come along to see what we do and how we work. We are grateful for any help you can give – “front of house” serving drinks or behind the scenes in the kitchen. A notice of the next date is provided in the weekly notices and a sign-up sheet is on the notice board at the rear of the church.

Janet Mahto

2.10 Hospitality

It's been a quiet year for social functions. There was Janet Mahto's apple picking party and lunch in September, always a day to look forward to, which enjoyed lovely weather this year. As usual, donations went to Genesis, and this year the total raised was an impressive £455. In October there was a Coffee Morning in aid of Macmillan Cancer Relief, which was well attended, and we hope to hold another this autumn. As usual we held a joint Lent Lunch with St Mary's Roman Catholic Church – a good time to share a meal with our neighbours, especially with their church out of action because of fire damage. We were also glad they took up our offer to use Christ Church for some of their services over Christmas. We had refreshments after our Advent and Christmas Carol Services, which were especially well attended this year as they were joint services with Churches Together in Bath and St Mary's RC Church respectively. Finally there was the installation of Lore on 12 March, when we welcomed Lore and Colin as well as visitors from their previous parish. Thank you to all who have made cakes, provided food or helped out in any way at any of the social events and celebrations during the year.

Angela Soboslay

2.11 Junior Church

The Junior Church has a weekly session to learn about the stories and people of the Bible and how they might influence our everyday lives. The children leave the main service after the Collect and re-join at the time of the Peace.

We remain a small group and our age range is increasing, currently standing between 5 months and 10 years! This is fantastic in many ways but can make it a challenge to meet the needs of everyone in

the group, and we will be giving some more thought to this in the next few months.

You may have noticed one or two of the older children now sometimes stay in to hear the sermon and intercessions. We are also trying to find occasional opportunities for them to discuss their faith and their experience of church in a more grown-up and less time-restricted setting.

We have recently adapted our topic selection so that we more often use one of the lectionary readings as our starting point, particularly around festivals. However, the lectionary doesn't always offer an easy starting point for discussion with children, and we use the Scripture Union online materials as an alternative topic guide when appropriate.

The children still very much value the opportunity to share their activities with you and we also continue to explore other ways for them to feel fully engaged with the life of the church. We look forward to doing this alongside Lore. We would like to add how much we appreciate the encouragement we receive from many members of the congregation who affirm and celebrate the presence of children in church. Thank you.

Sarah Cade, Emma Elliott and Sarah Jones

2.12 Mission to Seafarers

For some years, I have been the registered Christ Church contact for the Mission to Seafarers. When I took over this duty, several members of the congregation gave annual cash donations to the Mission, and I also received regular parcels of used stamps. Sadly, as the years have gone on, the number of supporters has dwindled, and the cash donations have now ceased altogether. In the same way, the flow of stamps has also all but dried up, as I now have only two regular contributors to this cause.

However, I do acknowledge that Royal Mail's practice of printing its own labels for our parcels has much reduced the availability of genuine used stamps. The Mission will not take the ordinary first and second class red and blue used issues, but even so there must still be many other used British and foreign picture stamps which are being thrown away. I can send all these to the Mission's headquarters in London, where they are passed to stamp dealers for sale to collectors. The

market for used items is immense, with some being sold for as much as twice their mint price, so why not help me to continue to support the Mission to Seafarers throughout the world? I always look forward to receiving your parcels on Sundays after the morning service.

Sylvia Ayers

2.13 Mothers' Union

We began 2015 with six paid-up members, three of whom subscribed to the MU "Families First" Magazine, but sadly both numbers were reduced when Canon Angela left. During her time with us, we had several meetings at her home, and also some mid-week Communion, but since her departure these have all ceased. However, with the help of the Christ Church congregation, our reduced and elderly membership has still been able to carry out three of our annual projects. We have given away a total of £202.25, including £80.00 for our June Overseas Appeal. In November we sold 51 items from our Christmas Catalogue, and the congregation donated 75 much-needed gifts to the Bath Women's Refuge. In order to increase the scope of our activities, we really need a dynamic younger leader who can put fresh life into the Branch. With a new Priest-in-Charge at the helm, we can only hope that an active group can be formed once again at Christ Church.

Sylvia Ayers

2.14 Pilgrim Group

"Teach me your way, O Lord, and I will walk in your truth".

The small but valiant Pilgrim Group has made great strides and discoveries in the last year. We have taken a close look at the Beatitudes, a short but profoundly beautiful and influential collection of sayings by Jesus, which sum up His teaching about what it means to live as a child of God's kingdom. They are found at the beginning of Matthew's Gospel as part of the "Sermon on the Mount". We found this study to be very relevant to our world torn by prejudice and sectarian violence.

The next study in the Pilgrim series was about the Ten Commandments. They were approached in a different way by looking at Priorities, Reverence, Rest, Respect, Righteousness and Reliability.

We have all learned a lot over the last year and had time to consider assumptions and long-held beliefs in a new light. We've had some passionate discussions and we've spent valuable time praying together.

Just before Christmas we enjoyed our first annual Pilgrim Feast! It was a splendid event, with the Mews looking very festive and a buffet table groaning with delicious treats we all brought to share. The party games led to much head scratching and laughter (thank you, Jude Bishop, for a fiendish quiz).

A final thank-you must go to our hostess Beatrice Varma and our biscuit maker extraordinaire Georgina Bowman.

Pilgrim will be taking up residence in the new Mews Sitting Room, with a new format. Watch the weekly news sheet for more details. If you enjoy discovery and discussion and delight in good company, please join us... You are very welcome!

Brenda Wall

2.15 St Andrew's School

St Andrew's School is flourishing. There are 197 children on the books. We are ethnically diverse, as you might guess from the 27 languages the children between them speak at home. The school's aim is to give all the children the best possible start with their education, picking up as soon as possible when additional help is needed in order for some of them to flourish. Sue East and her team have to have great powers of resilience. At St Andrew's no two days are alike, and a quietly cheerful morning can suddenly take on the demands of rush hour at Clapham Junction Station. The unpredictable keeps on happening.

This January, with some heaviness of heart, the school said farewell to the Rector of Walcot, Simon Holland, one of its great supporters. He gave us a wonderful final assembly when we all crossed the Red Sea dry foot between two giant blue sheets. We made it into freedom (the playground) and finally reached the promised land (a.k.a. the school hall) to find it flowing with the milk and honey of refreshments.

2016 is the silver jubilee of the school's move to its present site. And now more building work is in hand. The Cornerstone rooms (new rooms

created from the old foyer of St Andrew's Church) will soon be formally opened. And in time the plan is to make an entrance on this south side. With a gentler gradient than the current entrance, it will meet the new legal standards for disabled access.

I love my link with the school, and for this I must thank you all at Christ Church. St Andrew's is your school in many ways. Might you be able to help in one way or another? There is always more that needs doing and I know St Andrew's would be very appreciate of additional supporters.

Sarah Sheppard

2.16 Traidcraft

The stall has continued to be held on the first and third Sundays of the month, and we continue to be a Fair Trade church, which means that we are committed to serving fairly traded tea and coffee at our own events, promoting fair trade throughout the year and in particular supporting Fair Trade Fortnight.

Sales were down on last year, amounting to just under £1,400, compared to the previous year's sales of around £1,700. There have been fewer orders from individuals in the last year. I have also stopped selling Christmas cards for the first time, as sales had been consistently low. However ground coffee and all sorts of chocolate remain extremely popular items, and many thanks to those who routinely purchase from the stall.

People may feel that it is preferable to buy fair trade goods from supermarkets, with such items being increasingly available there, sometimes at lower prices. However organisations such as Traidcraft are not only providing a sales outlet for fair trade goods, they are also active in campaigning on fair trade issues, supporting farmers, producers and craft workers and developing new products, so in buying from the stall you are supporting their work as a charity, as well as making your purchase.

Many thanks to all those who help on the stall.

Rebekah Cunningham

2.17 United Society

For a variety of reasons our support for US (United Society) has been quite low key over the past year. One reason has been that the speaker who has visited us twice in previous years has sadly left the organisation. This however has given us the opportunity to rethink what would be good for our charitable and mission giving.

Some of us have felt that it would be good for Christ Church to develop an ongoing link with specific individuals or projects within an overseas organisation. This would have the potential for engaging our interest to a greater degree as we would receive feedback and could build up links and a sense of relationship with such work. At the moment we are looking into what possibilities there might be on these lines.

Rebekah Cunningham

The Trustees of Christ Church as at 24 April 2016

Ex officio

(The Bishop of Bath & Wells)

The Ven. Andy Piggott Archdeacon of Bath
Sue East Representing the Rector of Walcot

Appointed

Sarah Jones Chair
David Bishop Treasurer
Sarah Sheppard
Clive Tilling
Jane Nicholson
Martin Palmer
Charles Rice

Office holders as at 24 April 2016

Churchwardens

Malcolm Wall
Alex Soboslay

Assistant Churchwardens

Janet Mahto
Yvonne Morris

Deanery Synod Representatives

Andrew Sillett (elected until 2017)
Brenda Wall (elected until 2017)
Morny Davison (elected until 2018)

Sidespersons

Ken Ayers, Sylvia Ayers,
Morny Davison, Margaret Heath,
Janet Mahto, Jane Nicholson,
Andrew Sillett, Margaret Silver

Church Council

Ex officio

Revd Lore Chumbley	Priest-in-charge
Mark Elliott	Reader
Malcolm Wall	Churchwarden, Council Treasurer
Alex Soboslay	Churchwarden
Morny Davison	Deanery Synod rep
Andrew Sillett	Deanery Synod rep
Brenda Wall	Deanery Synod rep

Elected until 2016

Margaret Burrows	
David Rawlings	Lay Chair of Council
Angela Soboslay	

Elected until 2017

Judith Anderson
Matthew Jones
Sharon Rawlings

Elected until 2018

Judith Bishop	Acting Secretary
Rowena Hall	
Sarah Kerr	
Janet Mahto	

Co-opted

Ian Hay Davison

Three members to be elected at this AGM will serve until 2019