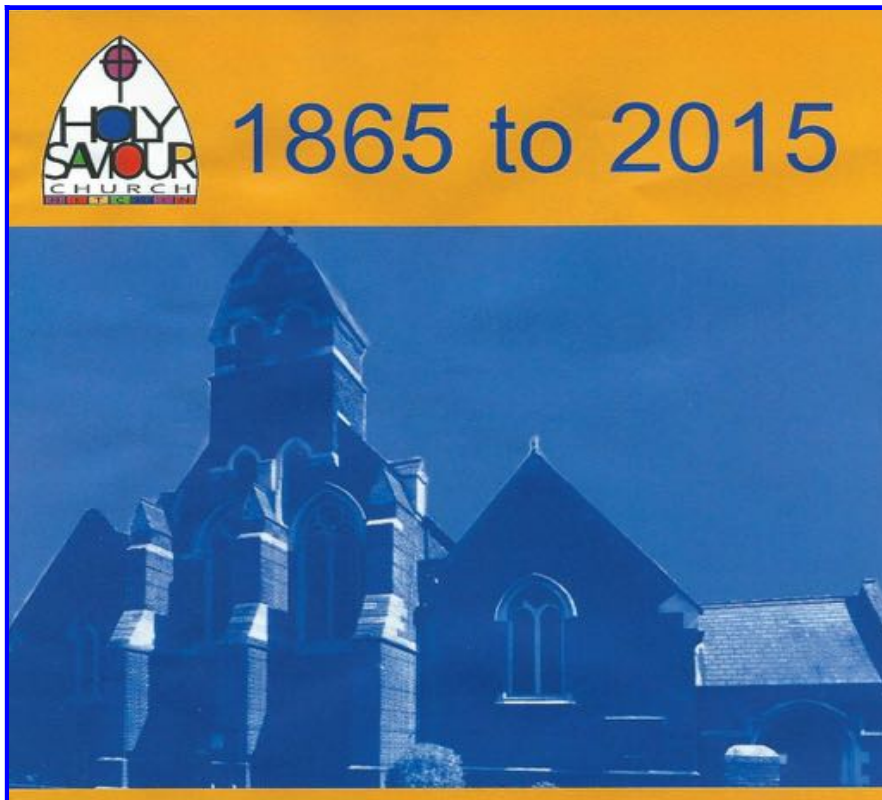


**HOLY SAVIOUR CHURCH
HITCHIN**

**ANNUAL DISTRICT
CHURCH MEETING 2015**

**Wednesday 18th March 2015
at 8.00pm**

**Holy Saviour Church Hall
Radcliffe Rd, Hitchin SG5 1QG**



**Holy Saviour Church Hitchin ADCM 2015
Annual reports covering Jan to Dec 2014**

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Holy Saviour Church Hitchin
Annual District Church Meeting 2015
And Parishioners Meeting

To be held on **Wednesday March 18th 2015** at 8pm in the Church hall

Agenda

Opening prayers

1. Welcome and apologies
2. Minutes of the 2014 HS Annual District Church meeting for approval
3. Churchwardens Nominations
(Nominations agreed here are forwarded to the Annual Hitchin Parochial Church /Parishioners Meetings for election)
4. Review of the Church Electoral Roll
5. Nominations for: *(Nominations agreed here are forwarded to the Annual Hitchin Parochial Church Meeting for election)*
 - 5.1) 2 representatives to Deanery Synod
 - 5.2) 1 lay representative to Hitchin Parochial Church Council
 - 5.3) 3 Representatives to Churches Together in Hitchin (3)
6. Election of the Keeper of the Roll
7.
 - 7.1) Agreement to the Annual election of DCC members
 - 7.2) Agreement to the Inclusion of Deacons / Readers on the DCC
8. Election to the Holy Saviour District Church Council of
 - 8.1) Treasurer
 - 8.2) Secretary
 - 8.3) DCC Lay Members
9. Appointment of Sides-people
10. Consideration and acceptance of reports:
 - 10.1) Annual Report *(to be forwarded to the Parish)*
 - 10.2) Treasurer's report:
 - 10.2. a) Accounts 2014
 - 10.2. b) Budget 2015
 - 10.3) Churchwarden's Fabric reports of Church and Hall
 - 10.4) Deanery Synod, PCC and Churches Together in Hitchin reports
 - 10.5) Reports from Church organisations
11. Vicar's comments
12. Questions

Holy Saviour Church Hitchin

Minutes of the Annual District Church Meeting 2014

Wednesday March 19th 2014 at 8pm in the Church hall

Present: Rev Ian Todd, Team Vicar and Chairman;
and 30 church members: Audrey Stewart, Jenny Hiley, Philip and Barbara Noy, Jenny Nicholson, Ruth Bird, Jean Boothby, Stephen Passmore, David Renney, Geoff Kirby, Martin and Patience Pascal, Sheila and David Daw, Chris Thomson, Jean Kidd, Margaret Marland, David Bunyan, Alan and Nan Cannon-Jones, Trevor and Gill Hughes, Clare Fleck, Brian and Pauline Caswell, Kay Watts, Anne Exall, Gwen and Martin Allen, Gill Chidgey (secretary).

1. Welcome and apologies.

Father Ian opened the meeting with prayer.

Apologies were received from: Tim and Debbie Stalkartt, Emma Stalkartt, Anne Parsons, Bob and Frances Williams, Caroline Hanbury, Vera Laing, Anne Passmore.

2. Minutes of the 2013 Holy Saviour Annual District Church meeting

Spelling mistakes of names and typing errors were corrected; the list of approved sides- people had not been inserted in error. Ian signed the corrected record as an accurate record.

3. Churchwardens Nominations

The following Nominations agreed at this meeting will be forwarded to the Hitchin Annual Parochial Church Meeting on 29th April 2014 for election

Churchwarden nominations	Proposed by	Seconded by
Brian Caswell	Jean Boothby	Trevor Hughes
Alan Cannon-Jones	Martin Allen	David Bunyan

4 Review of the Church Electoral Roll

Debbie Stalkartt had forwarded to the meeting a copy of names on the revised electoral roll, **total 95.**

5 The following nominations (numbered 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3) agreed at this meeting will be forwarded to the Hitchin Annual Parish Church Meeting on 29th April 2014 for election

5.1) Deanery Synod (2 places as the electoral roll is under 100, elected for a 3 year period. The Deanery Synod reps are part of DCC and PCC)

Deanery Synod nominations	Proposed by	Seconded by
Jean Boothby	Anne Exall	Ruth Bird
(One only)		

5.2) Hitchin Parochial Church Council. (Elected members are part of HS DCC)

PCC nominations	Proposed by	Seconded by
Gill Chidgey	Janet Barker	Rachel Thomson

5.3) Churches Together in Hitchin representatives (3)

(those elected are not automatically members of the DCC)

CTH nominations	<i>Proposed by</i>	<i>Seconded by</i>
Kay Watts	Pauline Caswell	Ruth Bird
Jenny Nicholson	Kay Watts	Anne Exall
Jean Kidd	Audrey Stewart	Anne Exall

6 Election of the Keeper of the Roll, agreed (not a member of the DCC)

	<i>Proposed by</i>	<i>Seconded by</i>
Deborah Stalkartt	Clare Fleck	Emma Stalkartt

7 The meeting agreed to continue electing DCC members annually, (as a less daunting prospect for prospective candidates)

8 The meeting agreed without dissent the following nominations to the **Holy Saviour District Church Council:**

8.1) Treasurer

Hon Treasurer	<i>Proposed by</i>	<i>Seconded by</i>
David Bunyan	Gill Chidgey	Chris Thomson

8.2) Secretary

Hon Secretary	<i>Proposed by</i>	<i>Seconded by</i>
Gill Chidgey	David Bunyan	Rachel Thomson

8.3) DCC lay members. 9 are allowed (including the Hon Treasurer and Hon secretary) as there are fewer than 100 on the electoral roll. Hon secretary this year is also the nominated PCC representative so we have:

7 DCC lay members had been nominated and were agreed; and 2 vacancies.

Lay DCC members	<i>Proposed by</i>	<i>Seconded by</i>
Stephen Passmore	Anne Exall	Sheila Daw
Gwen Allen	Jean Kidd	Gillian Hughes
Phillip Noy	Patsy Myatt	Ruth Bird
Jean Kidd	Phillip Noy	David Bunyan
Caroline Hanbury	David Bunyan	Rachel Thomson
Chris Thomson	Audrey Stewart	Jenny Hiley

8.4) Agreement to the Inclusion of Deacons / Readers on DCC

The meeting agreed without dissent to include our Readers **Jean Boothby** and **Martin Allen** as DCC members.

9 The following were **appointed as Sides-people**

Gwen Allen	Jenny Nicholson	Janet Triste
Janet Barker	Phillip Noy	Kay Watts
Pauline Caswell	Stephen Passmore	Frances Williams
Sheila Daw	Maria Rixon	Luis Andrade
Jenny Hiley	Audrey Stewart	Rhona Auld

This does not prevent others helping on an informal basis.

10 Reports (as in items below numbered 1-6) had been circulated by email to all on the church email list; and paper copies were also available. Chris Thomson commented he was impressed by the quality and extent of the 17 pages of reports (ie the actions they refer to) of church activities.

Consideration and acceptance of reports:

1) Annual Report 2014. Passed.

2) Treasurer's report:

a) Accounts 2013 and b) Budget 2014

David Bunyan presented his report, his first as Treasurer. He thanked Chris Thomson and Martin Allen for their support.

The accounts from the 4 district parishes of the Hitchin Team Parish, and the account of the Hitchin PCC need to be consolidated, and will need a formal audit this year. The report today is an interim one, before the Parish accountants Bradley and Johnson have given guidance.

We paid our 2013 parish share, with thanks to the congregation for their giving and their support. Many items used on a regular basis in the church are now sponsored, helping the church to meet expenses. Fuel is an expensive item; gas tariffs and suppliers are under review, and helpful advice has been received,

Questions illustrated that some items do not pass through the accounts: money raised for US (formally (USPG) was paid direct to the charity, rather than through the church.

Ian thanked David for the tremendous job he has achieved as treasurer.

3) Churchwarden's Fabric reports

Church: no comments added to the written report from Martin Allen

And Hall, Gardens:

David Renney said there has been no progress on clearing the down pipe blocked by roots; a working party is needed to dig it out.

Ian gave a massive Thank you to Sheila Daw for her work on the gardens; people comment on our lovely garden. She has bought hebe plants and lavenders and a bird feeder from the £100 diocesan grant, which needed to be matched by £100 from the DCC. Sheila would like help with the bending jobs.

4) Deanery Synod report No comments

5) Churches Together in Hitchin Jenny Nicholson spoke about Bible Way and Phase: both strong organisations; Phase is keen to make us aware of their activities in reaching secondary age school children.

6) Reports from Church organisations.

Comments on these items included:

Cleaning Party: Patience Pascal asked for help to put up the purples which involves using ladders; you need to be aged under 70 to do this (because of insurance /health and safety). Trevor and Gill Hughes volunteered support for this year.

Scouts: Martin Allen told us that the Scouts are sponsored by Holy Saviour and St Mary's. There are now 65 in the Beavers / Cubs / Scouts who are active in the community; please support them. Martin is now inviting them to church parades, which is difficult for Sunday family life. They did so at harvest, and St Mary's for Christingle. It was suggested they are invited to our family service, or joint services.

Youth: the lack of Sunday school was commented on. Are there families who would like to participate in traditional worship? Ian commented that the 'dying' of the traditional school is an opportunity to start again. There is nothing at the moment for the small children to grow into. Martin Allen commented that now he is freed of church warden responsibility he is looking forward to his readership ministry and wants to do a project about ministry opportunities for children.

11 Vicar's comments

Ian talked about the anticipation for the celebrations of 150th year, and looking back at the bold charismatic priest George Gainsford's establishment of the new church, we are still here, an alive church community. What role does the present day church have? The Bishop of Hertford about the changing role of religion when the new St Faith's vicar was licensed recently. Although church attendance is down, there is quest for the spiritual dimension. There is still a need for Holy Saviour in this diverse community, even greater than in the 19C. Common bonds are fragmented, a yearning to belong; we are uniquely places to respond.

What would George Gainsford's attitude be? The Almshouses are still here, the trustees having recently transferred management to Howard Cottage Housing Association; his emphasis on social concern remains for future generations. . Although the Sunday School loss is sad and cause for concern there are committed families coming to the family service. Our challenge is for the small children still having a place as they grow.

THANK YOU to all who offer their time to the church, both large players and those doing small but vital tasks.

The Church Hall is a fantastic resource to which David Daw has committed extraordinary efforts; he now stands down from his role in looking after it; as yet there is no one to take over. Ian's vote of thanks was endorsed by vigorous applause! Thanks too to Vera who has been the helpful and kindly booking clerk for a long time. Mrs Alex Ridout (who lives at St Bridget's opposite the church) has offered to take on the Bookings role, but at present is out of action because of family bereavement and illness.

Christmas Tree Festival: the event by which the church is recognised, and is the 'Hitchin' Christmas Tree Festival. Brian and Pauline Caswell have run it for 7 years with efficient and calm co-ordination; Ian gave them a big THANK YOU. Co-ordination is passed now to Claire Nellis and Gill Chidgey.

Church Warden: Ian spoke about Martin Allen who has spent the last 4 years as Church Warden, 3 with Geoff Kirby and this last year on his own. He has been a tremendous support to Ian, has been calm and with good grace. He now returns to his role as Lay Reader. Ian's thank you was endorsed by applause. Ian welcomed Brian Caswell and Alan Cannon Jones as our new Church Wardens (*when sworn in*) and asked us to pray for them in the big job they have taken on.

Ian hoped this coming year will be a great opportunity for vision and courage to ensure the future of this church in bringing the love of Christ to many people.

12 Questions

Comments and questions from various members present included:

What do people in community say to Ian? Ian said the 'community' is now fragmented , but people are wanting to belong...

Is there a conflict between young people's life and C of E traditions; do we meet the need by moving towards it ...do we need flexibility and adapt what we offer...

But not abandon what we are.

Leafleting the area for 150th celebrations is planned. We are 'here to serve'.. What does this mean? We need to understand our community; we have a resource of people and building; what can we use it for? Can we offer advice? Can we open the church and Hall, eg on Friday mornings; can we find out what the community wants. We need to get out there and talk about our faith to people. People used to be visited when they moved in to the area. And finally Sheila Daw reported we have lost a table from behind the organ.

There was a vote of Thanks for Father Ian's work with us.

The date of Hitchin Annual Parish Church Meeting is to be 29th April 2014, changed from 4th April

Ian closed the meeting at 9.30pm with The Grace.

Signed as an accurate record:.....

Date.....

GMC 02/03/2015

Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Hitchin

Registered Charity number 1132874

Holy Saviour Church District Church Council, Radcliffe Rd, Hitchin SG5 1QG Annual Report for the period Jan 1st to December 31st 2014

Team Vicar: Rev Ian Todd, the Vicarage, St Anne's Rd, Hitchin

1) Aim and Purpose

Holy Saviour Church is one of the four Anglican Churches which comprise the Team Parish of Hitchin led by the Rev Michael Roden, Team Rector. Our aims and purpose are therefore the same as those of the Team Parish but particularly focused on residents and workers in the Holy Saviour district: 'to promote the whole mission of the church pastoral, evangelical, social and ecumenical, to people of all ages'. The Rev Ian Todd is appointed as Team Vicar of Holy Saviour and is part of the Hitchin Parish clergy team.

Christian worship is at the heart of the church's activities; services are open to all who wish to attend regardless of formal church membership, baptism or religious background.

2) District Church Council Membership

The District Church Council (DCC) is headed by the Team Vicar Revd Ian Todd. The two Churchwardens are nominated by the District Church Annual Meeting but elected at the Team Parish Annual Meeting (in April). The District Church Annual Meeting elects lay members for the DCC. Serving members from the annual meeting in March 2014 were:

Martin Allen (Churchwarden from January to May)

Brian Caswell and Alan Cannon Jones (Churchwardens from May onwards)

Jean Boothby and Martin Allen (Readers)

David Bunyan (Treasurer), Gill Chidgey (Hon Secretary), and lay members

Gwen Allen, Jean Kidd, Caroline Hanbury, Philip Noy and Stephen Passmore.

3) Meetings

The DCC continued to meet on a monthly pattern (but not in August and December), in order to allow time for discussion on pastoral and ministry matters, as well as fabric and finance. Between DCC meetings the standing committee (comprising the Vicar, Church Wardens, treasurer and secretary) has usually met but minutes are only taken if there are decisions made which are not brought to the DCC. A DCC Minutes folder is usually available at the back of church for anyone to read approved minutes.

4) Church Membership

The revised electoral roll at the AGM in 2014 stood at 95, and this year 2015, after March revision, it stands at 99. Whilst regular church attenders are encouraged to join the electoral roll and participate with voting rights at the AGM, lack of formal membership in no way restricts anyone from participating in any of the church's activities, whether worship or social.

5) Finance

The Church is a Grade 2* Listed Building consecrated in 1865; an attached church hall was added in the 1970's. The District Church Council manages and maintains these buildings but formal application for faculties has to be made through the Team Parish Council. Whilst the DCC manages its own budget (for buildings and activities) its accounts after accountant examination are consolidated with those of the other three churches. Hitchin Team Parish accounts are then audited and finally lodged with the Charity Commission.

Although finances are 'tight', Holy Saviour DCC paid its parish share in full, thanks to fund raising and planned giving; it is not in debt and holds some limited reserves for building maintenance. The Hall is well used by various local groups, yielding some rental income.

6) Worship The fundamental activity of the church is to draw together people to worship, in prayer and fellowship. The church was founded as anglo-catholic and we maintain

some practices associated with a high church tradition: use of incense, sung services with choral and organ music in a building designed to heighten the symbolism, drama and beauty of the communion service.

Services are held weekly on Sundays at 9.30 and twice monthly at 11.15 for the more informal family services. 8am communion on Sundays is held weekly, and a 9.30am Communion on Wednesdays followed by coffee in the hall. Morning Prayer is said at 8.30 on Tuesdays and Thursdays. There is a monthly evening prayer on Sundays. The services for Mothering Sunday, Harvest and Remembrance Day aim to bring all congregations together at one service, and the church-affiliated uniformed groups are encouraged to participate.

The DCC reported attendance in 2014 to the diocese. Average attendance of adults on Sunday was 70 with 16 children under 16 years. Total attendance on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day was 205 and the worshipping community at the end of 2014 was 28 children 0-10 years and 1 teenager 11-17 years; 61 adults 18 to 69 years, and 31 adults over 70, making a total of 121 adults. There were 7 baptisms and 2 funerals.

Our church hall is used by 3 separate church communities for weekly worship: the Church of God of Prophecy; The Yahweh church and Built on Faith.

7) **Social Activities.**

A social committee co-ordinates an active and successful programme of social events, aimed at attracting newcomers and families alongside regular congregation members, in order to enjoy each others company, enjoy food, music, with opportunities to share faith and to raise money for our building and parish share responsibilities.

A wide range of events have taken place, including a travel evening, a children's' magic show, the Shrove Tuesday sausage and pancake event; a Sunday lunch for the families with young children; harvest lunch and children's Christmas party.

The church choir, the associated Radcliffe Singers, and talented other local musicians put on several concerts in the church and elsewhere much to the enjoyment of sold-out audiences.

8) **Neighbourhood and Church**

This Victorian church is situated in the 'Triangle' area near the railway station. Residents of the parish are very varied in ethnic origin, wealth or poverty, age and abilities. There are growing numbers of families with young children using the two primary schools in the parish. One of these is St Andrews, a church school with strong links to our church and the wider town Parish. We hold a thriving Baby and Toddler group weekly in the hall. The church supports the Hitchin Churches Schools Worker Trust which provides a worker to support students in the town's secondary schools. Clergy, readers and members support many elderly residents in their own homes and a local elderly care home. The Good Old Days lunches held in the hall for the elderly every month are well supported in attendance and by volunteers in the kitchen.

2014 was the 18th year of our Hitchin Christmas Tree Festival which was again very successful in drawing exhibitors from local families, voluntary organisations and businesses and over two thousand people of all ages from the town and beyond to enjoy its special atmosphere in church of decorated trees, music, with food and companionship in the hall..

'The Friends of Holy Saviour Church' organisation aims to raise funds for the church fabric and promotes the profile and use of the church in the wider community.

8) **Communication**

Church and hall (and toilets) are accessible for wheelchairs / pushchairs. A loop system for the hard of hearing is in constant use. The holysaviourhitchin.org.uk website is kept up to date and there are Facebook pages for the Christmas Tree Festival and the Friends of Holy Saviour Church. We use email to circulate notices to congregation members, and have a weekly news sheet in the pews on Sundays.

Rev Ian Todd, Vicar. March 2015

SOUTH WINDSOR DISTRICT CHURCH COUNCIL
 CHURCH STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
 FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2014

	RESTRICTED FUNDS					GENERAL FUNDS				2014 BUDGET	2013 TOTAL FUNDS
	ROBES	CHOIR	GIVING	YOUTH	BUILDING REPAIR FUND	HALL	CHURCH	TOTAL FUNDS			
INCOME											
Program			2141				3614	4173	4000	37574	
Collection							4173	4173	3236	3151	
Ten Tables									8000	8500	
Fundraising Events and Appeals							3816	1876	2030	4894	
Health Month (Stoke Project)											
General Donations									79	500	
Requests and Legacies							2135	2135	1800	5279	
Fuel Report								1200	40	3594	
Free Postcards							40	40	500	90	
Interest Receipts							30	30	45	60	
All other income							77	77	100	143	
Insurance claim											
Specific Donations			140					140	500	900	
Other income									40	170	
Other Income							187	187	500	2000	
Endowment Fund											
TOTAL INCOME	0	0	4502	0	0	1300	3050	13004	8440	81617	
EXPENDITURE											
Public Works							8230	8230	8000	4700	
Charitable Giving			84					84	70		
Maintenance of services							200	200	800	171	
Organic, other and other							143	143	800	800	
Books, school and youth									200		
Maintenance of buildings						814	452	3517	8000	4719	
Insurance							2000	2000	3000	3000	
Light and heat						500	500	500	1000	1143	
Cleaning and waste disposal							100	100	100	200	
Office Expenses							10	10	100	200	
Telephone							10	10	10	10	
Accountancy fee							137	137	50	137	
Building / Funding Fees											
Books, school, youth Project						100	40	110	100	40	
General small items											
Book Purchases											
Fundraising and publicity									4700	3000	
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	0	0	847	0	0	2130	8771	8029	87811	80294	
Surplus (Overruns)							330	330	800	8440	
Transfer between funds											
Total funds brought forward	50	2725	0	1287	3000	0	3000	3000		36,500	
Surplus from Previous Years										5,000	
Total funds carried forward	50	2725	847	1287	3000	2130	7190	7230		41,500	

HOLY HARBOUR DISTRICT CHURCH COUNCIL

BUDGET 2018

	2018 Budget	2018
INCOME		
Pledges	4000	
Collections	4000	
Tax Refund	800	
Fundraising Events and Appeals	1800	
Holker Churches School Project		
General Donations	300	
Requests and Legacies	1000	
Hall Rent	1000	
Fees Receivable	100	
Interest Receivable	50	
Hall other income	50	
Insurance claim		
Specific Donations		
Choir income		
Other income	800	
Anniversary Catech	700	
TOTAL INCOME	£ 17,200	
EXPENDITURE		
Parish share	8000	
Charitable Giving	150	
Maintenance of vehicles	100	
Organist, choir and organ	700	
Sunday school and youth	100	
Maintenance of buildings	1000	
Insurance	300	
Light and heat	1000	
Cleaning and waste disposal	100	
Office Expenses	50	
Telephone	50	
Accountancy fee	50	
Wedding / Funeral Fees	50	
Holker Churches School Project	2	
General small items	150	
Book Purchases	1	
Fundraising and publicity	800	
Anniversary Catech	500	
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£ 17,200	
SURPLUS	£ -	

Church Wardens' Report

In the spring of 2014 we had a visit from the Archdeacon's agent for the Inspection and auditing of the details contained in the Articles of Enquiry for 2013. We can report that this visit was positive and we "passed" inspection for the year. The Articles of Enquiry have been completed and submitted for 2014 and we await an inspection later in 2015.

Fabric

There have been various roof repairs during the year:

- i) Church Roof x 2 repairs for loose/replacement slates and gutters clearing.
- ii) Hall Roof x 1 visit for re-felting and repairs to gulley and pipe work.

Roof repairs will be an ongoing project with work being required at least on an annual basis. This is due mainly to the age of the roof – "Original" – and the slates not being mounted on felt as would be the modern practice. The choice is a new roof or ongoing repairs.

The pump for the Church heating is currently requiring replacement or removal and re-building. We are awaiting reports and costings.

It is 25 years since the organ was built, and although periodic tuning and adjustment are ongoing, the organ is now in need of more extensive cleaning and restoration. We need to include this project (probably £10-20k) in our plans for the next 5 years.

The Faculty application for the Halleluiah Alter Frontal work is slowly progressing through various committees and we have just received a positive outcome. The conservators will be collecting it in March to start work.

2015, our anniversary year will see further progress on other plans to improve the appearance of our church and make it more welcoming to visitors.

The positive achievements for 2014 include:

- i) The Planter Bicycle Rack.
- ii) The clearing of roots from the underground drain carrying water from the down pipe at the west front and the removal of the offending scrub.
- iii) "Real" Coffee after Sunday Services.
- iv) The review and updating of the Church Flower Donation opportunity.
- v) The successful negotiation with Howard Cottage Housing Association for the retention of a church committee room in the refurbished Cloisters.

The "view" from the back pew:

The opportunity to welcome the congregation as they enter Church is an important one and along with the sides people it is one we endeavour to achieve. Whilst the focus is on what is happening at the other end of the Church the congregations contribution to each service should be acknowledged and includes the sides people, bell ringers, element carriers, flower arrangers and not to be forgotten, the cleaning party and laundering of Alter Linen.

These and other often "invisible" contributions from the congregation add value to our life at Holy Saviour.

Alan Cannon Jones and Brian Caswell
Church Wardens
March 2015

Church Hall Management

As you know, David Daw stood down from the responsibility of the hall this time last year. No one has come forward to be the Hall Lead person; it would be most welcome if someone could do so. Meanwhile, I have kept an eye on things, and liaise where necessary with churchwardens, users, cleaners and Mrs Alex Ridout who is the Bookings person, living conveniently over the road at St Bridget's. We are grateful to Alex for taking this role on.

Clare Fleck cleans the floor and monitors supplies on Mondays on a voluntary basis, and the agency cleaners still come in on Friday to concentrate on lobby, kitchen and toilets. David can still be found on occasions cleaning a floor or repairing something that has worked loose: and he is also happy to advise on how things can be done. THANK YOU!

The rental agreements and booking forms were revised at the beginning of the year, and the NHDC licence has been changed from David Daw's name to the DCC.

The year's income will be shown in the financial report; it is a hefty contributor to our financial position. Church groups whilst not charged 'rent' still make considerable donations. Chris Thomson prepares invoices.

We are fortunate that we have regular weekly users, and dancing / keep fit sessions have increased. Mirrors Dance loves our floor! and exhibited a Christmas tree at the festival.

Saturday and Sunday use by other churches and groups restricts the church's impulsive use beyond our normal arrangements; please bear in mind we have committed to give groups at least 3 weeks (preferably 4) notice when we have to cancel one of their sessions.

Gill Chidgey DCC Hon Sec, March 2015.

Holy Saviour Garden Report 2014

The church garden has been enhanced this year, partly due to a £100 grant sourced by the ECO group. 5 lavender plants, 5 hebes, 2 sedums, a dahlia and an achillea have been planted. Gazania, phlox, dahlia, cosmos, nasturtium, sunflower and antirrhinum seeds were purchased and propagated. These were chosen to attract more bees to our garden. Seed, shrub and potting compost was purchased for use with all these plants and seeds.

A bird feeding station, 2 squirrel proof feeders and various kinds of bird food have been bought, but the birds have not shown much interest, partly I suspect because local cats are keeping watch below the feeders.

Fortunately most of last year's geraniums survived the winter so that only a few extra ones and marigolds were needed to fill the space where the forsythia was removed in order to repair the blocked drain. Tulip, daffodil and hyacinth bulbs have also been planted there.

As part of the Easter Activity Morning, some of our children planted runner beans and nasturtium seeds in the garden. Unfortunately the bean plants became infested with black fly so were unable to produce any beans to eat!

Alan Canon Jones sourced a very novel cycle rack which doubles as plant container. Thanks to Pauline and Brian Caswell planting it up with alpiners. The garden seat in memory of Bill and Milly Palmer is much appreciated, especially on a sunny day.

In late summer David Daw made good the edges of the block path leading to the hall. Jonathon Renney continues to keep the lawns well mown and David Daw regularly treats the weeds that grow in the gravel and between the block paving.

I trust that all the new plants will help to make our gardens attractive; for local residents and all the visitors who will come to our church in 2015.

As requested before, I would appreciate more help with the gardening. It is quite an extensive area and there is always work to do in it: e.g. weeding, bush trimming, dead heading and keeping the boundary walls clear of ivy.

Sheila Daw Jan 2015

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE HITCHIN DEANERY SYNOD FOR 2014

We had four official meetings during 2014.

In February Archdeacon Jonathan Smith and Emma Critchley came to Synod to explain Deanery MAPs Review.

In April the speaker was David Lloyd, Police and Crime Commissioner for Hertfordshire. He reflected on his role and how this will effectively serve the wider community.

In June the Bishop of Albans led a service at St Mary's Church, Pirton to commission the new Deanery Synod for the next Triennium. This was followed by the Deanery Social with refreshments.

At the September meeting the speaker was Rev Lucy Davis, Curate at St Mary's, Redbourne and the topic was 'Women Bishops – the future'. The vote for women Bishops went through in July, which was the end of a long process. It had been debated since 1966.

'Celebrate 100' took place in August and, in place of a Deanery Evensong, there was a Pilgrimage to St Albans in October.

The speaker at the November meeting was Rev Ian Stears-Handscomb, Baptist Chaplain – Luton Airport, and the topic was Chaplaincy update – Luton Airport. He gave some background about Luton Airport. It is the 6th largest airport in the UK. 9 million passengers pass through the airport every year. There is 8,000 staff. There is an expansion programme due to take place in the next few years. It is going to double in size. The Chaplaincy at Luton Airport began 25 years ago. The airport recently celebrated its 75th anniversary. The role of a chaplain involves lots of different things. They travel round the terminal buildings, assist passengers who have missed flights, lost passports and luggage. Sometimes people are bereaved and accidents sometimes happen. The list of is endless.

During the year Synod Business was covered at each meeting.

Dorothy Grieves
5th feb 2015

Holy Saviour Church Hitchin

Annual Meeting 2015 2014 Report from PCC representative

Holy Saviour is represented at the PCC by our Vicar, Churchwardens (usually Brian Caswell from May 2014), 2 Deanery Synod representatives Jean Boothby and Stephen Passmore, and one lay member, Gill Chidgey. Stephen resigned at the end of the year for personal reasons. Each church and St Andrews School are used for the meeting venues in turn. Team Rector Michael Roden has chaired all meetings.

In 2014 the PCC met 5 times, in Feb, (the APCM on April 29 not well attended) June, July (plus finance AGM), September, December.

Particular themes have received on going attention.

Finance All 5 accounts from the 4 churches and the PCC itself need to be consolidated before audit, but it emerged this had not been done sufficiently in the previous year. Also, because 2013 income was boosted by the St Mary's Bells appeal monies, the threshold for a full audit was reached rather than a simpler examination. 2012 and 2013 accounts were not ready for approval at April's Annual meeting, and annual returns had not yet reached the Charity Commission, which was causing concern. Eventually 2013 audited accounts were lodged on 30th Oct 2014 and annual return lodged 8th Jan 2015 with the Charity Commission.

In July 2015 there will be an additional Parochial Church Meeting to approve accounts because the audit will take time.

United Benefice proposal, to bring St Pauls Walden-with-Preston into the Hitchin Team, has been debated for at least 2 years. Whilst there is a general will for Hitchin clergy to support the rural parish, concerns have been expressed about how the formal structure would work. In the Feb 2015 meeting a vote was called again on a willingness to proceed with the plan, and for work to begin on revision of the parish terms of reference / constitution. It was carried, but not unanimously.

Hub Church Dan Drew leads a congregation of young adults and is supported informally by the Hitchin team. The Diocese explored how best to support the church, with a recent decision that the present arrangement is likely to continue.

Parish Share There has been Diocesan pressure in 2013 and 2014 for Hitchin to improve its monthly payments of the share, as diocesan income has only 4 to 6 weeks lee-way. Inevitably this led to discussion. More recently discussed were the changing demographics in Hitchin and whether the split between the 4 churches deserves change. By the end of 2014 the total parish share was met by all 4 churches, but with difficulty, in different degrees in each church.

Faculty requests All requests coming before the PCC were agreed without dissent. Holy Saviour presented one for the Alleluia Altar Frontal repair, and another for the upgrading of the porch doors. The PCC has to agree these before they progress to the diocese and beyond.

Inclusive Church After a couple of meetings when this item was deferred it was passed to a smaller working group for attention and recommendations.

Child Protection Michael Roden was concerned whether wording of hall hire agreements was sufficiently rigorous. The parish lead, Joanna Chugg, was unable to attend the meeting but submitted notes having consulted the diocesan lead who advised that hall hirers (not the church) are responsible for conduct in their sessions. A final decision about wording has not been made at the PCC.

Gill Chidgey 4/3/2015

CHURCHES TOGETHER IN and AROUND HITCHIN (CTH) in 2014

This was the year when CTH was chaired for the first time by a member of a black majority church - namely Jane Litchmore Grant of the Church of God of Prophecy. She lives in Luton and is married to Pastor Linton Grant, (Pastor of the CGof P which meets in Holy Saviour hall for worship on Sundays at mid-day.) Jane and Linton both come originally from Jamaica.

Notable events in 2014:

On Jan 19th the annual united service for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity took place at St Mary's. The church was full (18 churches now are members) and Jane Litchmore-Grant preached on the theme 'Is Christ divided?' It was a service of Holy Communion 'under one roof' so R.C's could receive the sacraments at a separate altar. (Later described as 'a memorable occasion')

An Ash Wednesday lunch was held at a new venue - namely the Little Wymondley Baptist church. 12 Lent Groups were held.

On May 8th there was held a hustings meeting at Christchurch at which a panel of candidates for the European Election explained their stance; it was a lively meeting with interruptions! (But well chaired)

A 'Party in the Square' was held on Pentecost Sunday and was well supported. Jane Litchmore Grant was one of a number giving a witness testimony.

A Guide to Pastoral Care in Residential Homes in Hitchin has been produced

The first anniversary of the Food Bank was held at Our Lady's (Scout Hut) and achieved good notice in the Comet

Two Pastors, one from the New Testament Church of God, Pastor Nigel Williams, and one from the Church of God of Prophecy, Pastor Linton Grant gave a joint historical survey of Pentecostalism across the world - 'the fastest growing church in the southern hemisphere' A factor which often prevents pastors taking part in the local Ministers' Meeting. Is that they work full time outside their role as pastors. Nevertheless there is a growing presence of their congregations at CTH meetings.

Ongoing initiatives have grown in strength but still need giving by our churches in money, volunteers and our prayers. They include the Food Bank, PHASE, (the Schools' Worker Project,) the North Herts Sanctuary, Street Angels, and Christian Aid house to house collection in May. Ongoing prayer is facilitated by the Hitchin Prayer Link produced throughout the year with a prayer included in our church notice sheets. The PHASE team produces an Annual Report (available for reading at the back of the church.

A new initiative: Phil Jackson, of HCC has taken on the role, supported by his church, as counsellor on debt for the charity 'Christians and Poverty' He asks for volunteers to join him in this important work.

Lastly a request from Trish Bonnet concerning the Food Bank was sent out in November and sheet copies are available. (*Food bank updates can be found on the church hall notice board under 'Churches Together in Hitchin'.*)

CTH Council meetings are held 3 times p.a. when in the second half of the meeting (at 8.30 pm) all are welcome to hear the visiting speaker. These are advertised in the weekly notice sheet

Jenny Nicholson, Kay Watts and Jean Kidd
Feb 2015

CLEANING PARTY

Report to Holy Saviour Church AGM 2015

As in previous years, we have met most Tuesday evenings between 6:30 and 8:00 to clean the church. We also held special sessions to clean all the silver and brass before Easter and Christmas; thank you to the extra people who came and helped-out. It speeded the task and made it more sociable.

This year we have been pleased to welcome Irene who has joined the regular team of Margaret Marland, Ruth (who also helps but she has her other duties as Sacristan), Martin P, Anne Exall and myself.

In addition special thanks are due to Trevor and Gillian who helped with the putting-up and taking down of the purple covers before Easter; the rest of us having reached the advanced years when the church insurance precludes us from climbing ladders. However, any other ladder climbers would be most welcome as Trevor, though willing, is not at all keen on climbing!

With this level of help we can only regularly sweep the church, the carpets, the doormats, and the porch together with general dusting of the pews and furnishings. However, our occasional high points include cobweb removal from the windows, reredos and the organ pipes, whilst the low points are the twice annual vacuuming and sweeping-out of the in-floor heating ducts, especially after the Christmas Tree festival. Even so pine needles continue to appear throughout the year, even though they had all been swept-up earlier! !

I am very grateful to everyone who helps to keep the Church as clean as it is. A big "thank you" to you all, but if any one else could help, even for just the occasional Tuesday evening, they would be most welcome.

In this special 150th Anniversary year, more comprehensive cleaning may be needed, for which additional help will be required.

Patience Pascal
5th February 2015

Sacristans

Margaret Marland, Veronica Cane and their assistants Norman Cane and others soldier on. Detail of their work may be found in last year's report!
Ruth Bird Feb 2015.

Flower report 2014-15

Once again we have had a wonderful year for flowers in our church. I would like to thank all the flower ladies for their beautiful arrangements each week, and also those who have given their contributions towards the cost of flowers.

We currently have 10 ladies and would welcome anyone else (men also) who would like to join us.

There has been one change this year to the way special occasions are booked. All dates throughout the year including advent and lent can be booked and acknowledged on the appropriate date in the weekly notices (even if during advent and lent there will be no flowers during these times).

Thank you all again for all your support.

Veronica Cane March 2015

Servers and Bells

Another stable year for the Serving squad - What are we doing right? We have eight members at present filling the required four available berths each Sunday at the 9-30 Service, plus of course other Services as required such as Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday etc. Jean Boothby and Martin Allen normally fill the MC roll, with another 2 of us to fill in if they are not available. Jean Kidd has seen the 'error of her ways' and returned to the team after a break away. Welcome back Jean. So everything is tickety boo. If only we could get a couple more people in to help out the two bell ringers each Sunday.

David Renney

Children

There was no Sunday School alongside the 9.30 service this year, due to the decline in numbers of children attending that service. Instead the 11.15 family services on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month continue to build in numbers. Young children from 0 to about 10 attend with their parent, a considerable number with both parents, and with the occasional grandparent too. The families are getting to know each other better, and this was helped along by a lunch specifically for family service attenders held in September in the hall and organised by the social committee.

In the Easter holidays an activity morning was organised in the hall and church, with very good attendance and much enjoyment. Children's magic show and Christmas party were also successful events. Families have come and enjoyed Pancake Day, the family garden party and harvest lunch. The crib service on Christmas Eve was very well attended by children and families, and the Christingle service is well supported.

Father Ian and Martin Allen both regularly visit St Andrews school, and groups come from the school to services and introductions to the church. There is a vacancy for a church sponsored governor at present. The uniformed groups have been on parade to one service at least this year, and Martin is encouraging the scouts to attend more often.

There were 7 baptisms, most as part of scheduled services.

GMC

HOLY SAVIOUR CHURCH – A.G.M. 2014 - MUSIC REPORT

During 2014, both **Holy Saviour Church Choir (HSCC)** and **The Radcliffe Singers (RS)** have maintained their important rôles in the life of the church, in both outreach (in concerts), and also effective musical support and direction (in services). I remain indebted to all members of both choirs not only for their continued dedication, enthusiasm, friendship, and loyalty, week by week, but also for the continued quality of what they provide, both in our worship, Sunday by Sunday, and also in concert. We are, of course, always eager to welcome new members to both choirs.

In addition to the usual full programme of sung services throughout the year, other musical highlights occurred on:

- 22/3 – **HSCC** gave a concert at, and in aid of Royston Methodist Church. The programme featured solos by **Rachel Auld, Clare Fleck, Yvonne and Julian Barnard, Brian Caswell, Geoff Kirby, and Anne Passmore**, as well as items, including a world *première*(!) of pieces written by **Douglas Coombes**, for, and performed by, guest artist **James Risdon** (recorders)
- 4/4 – **RS** gave a concert at, and in aid of Holy Saviour Church, entitled “**In the spring-time**”, and which included solo items by **Rachel Auld, Clare Fleck, Gillian Hughes** (clarinet), **Maya Hola**, and guest artists **Fiona Robertson** (violin), and **Morag Robertson** (viola).
- 6/4 - members of both choirs joined with members of other choirs in a very enjoyable and memorable liturgical performance of **Will Todd’s “Mass in Blue”**, directed by **Alan Childs**.
- 9/5 – former long-time HSCC member **Marjorie Barrow** sadly passed away in April, and choir members sang at her funeral.
- 21/5 – although not a former choir member, but closely linked to **HSCC**, very active church member **Derek Jenkins** also sadly passed away, and a Service of Thanksgiving was held, at which **HSCC** sang, accompanied by **Clifton Hughes** (organ).
- 30/6 – **HSCC** sang at the **Parish Confirmation Service**, at Holy Saviour.
- 9/7 – we hosted a visit and a very happy and memorable concert given by the **Florida Singing Sons Boychoir**.
- 3/8 – members of **HSCC** sang at the **Rhythms of the World Parish Service** in Priory Park.
- 17/8 – **David & Sheila Daw** celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary!
- 14/9 – **HSCC & RS** gave a concert entitled “**A Transport of Delight**” at Bunyan’s Barn, Maydencroft Manor, featuring the music of Flanders and Swann, Noël Coward, and the Rat Pack, featuring guest artists **Mark & Claire Adams**, and **Pam Rhodes** (narrator). The event was supported in many ways by very many people in the church, and all of their hard work made for a hugely enjoyable evening.
- 30/11 – to mark the start of Holy Saviour’s Sesquicentennial celebrations, **Advent Sunday** saw **HSCC** singing in the chancel, to mark the dedication of the beautiful new hassocks, embroidered by **Martin and Patience Pascal**, at the High Altar. In the evening, **HSCC** sang a **150th Anniversary Choral Evensong**, accompanied by the **Buccinate Brass Ensemble**, and we were delighted to welcome the **Rev. David Hall** to preach.
- 7/11 – both choirs sang in the **Advent Carol Service**.
- 12/12 – both choirs sang in the **Christmas Tree Festival Preview Concert**, which this year celebrated, in words and music, the 150th anniversary of Holy Saviour Church, and the centenaries of both the outbreak of World War One, and also the birth of Dylan Thomas.
- 13 & 14/12 – both choirs sang during the **Christmas Tree Festival**, and there were some delightful solos by choir members **Gillian Hughes** (clarinet and saxophone), **Sally Ann Hayes, Rachel Auld, Eleanor Edwards, Clare Fleck, Claire Nellis, and Anne Passmore**.
- 21/12 – both choirs sang in the **Candlelit Christmas Carol Service**.
- 22/12 – members of both choirs sang carols again at **Elmside Care Home**.

As ever, my thanks go to:

- **Audrey Jenkins, Howard Roberts, and Clifton Hughes** who deputised for me during the year; and
- the D.C.C., Treasurer and Churchwardens, for their continued, and, as always, **very** generous support of music in the church; and
- Ian for his encouragement and support for music at Holy Saviour.

Trevor Hughes

Social Committee Report 2014

The social committee consists of 17 persons representing the 9.30 am and 11.15am congregations. Meetings are held at the homes of members. The committee has had a lot of extra meetings this year – mostly to deal with our input for the 2015 year of celebration.

In January Tim Stalkarrt was joined by 55 people to sample his selected Italian Wines. This generated a profit of £198 for church funds.

In February we held an entertainment weekend – designed to include everyone at one or more event. 33 children enjoyed a magic show after school on the Friday. On the Saturday members of the congregation showed pictures and film of recent travels On the Sunday afternoon the hall was crammed with an eager audience who enjoyed superb music by Trevor, Fiona and Morag Robertson and Rachel Auld followed by a wonderful afternoon tea. The weekend added £323 to church funds.

Shrove Tuesday brought 103 persons to the hall for our traditional sausages and pancake meal. Many thanks to all the cooks and servers. This event generated a profit of £354

Next, it was time for the Easter Activity Morning for children. This involved a lot of helpers from the congregation to supervise all the activities and serve refreshments. New this year was the making of a beautiful floral cross which was displayed outside the church.

Frances Williams planned the Bluebell Walk from Maydencroft Manor A wide age range of 40 to 50 joined her walk in lovely weather. In June 78 of us returned to Maydencroft for a Family Garden Party and BBQ. Once again we had good weather for all the activities including races for the children organized by Wayne and Holly Mitchell. Meanwhile Tim, Debbie and Chris were busy cooking the BBQ. As usual Bob and Frances made sure the grounds were immaculate – so many thanks to them for hosting us all. A profit of £161 was passed on to our treasurer.

New this September was a Sunday Lunch cooked by the committee in the hall to which the 11.15 am congregation were invited as well as Ian and the church wardens. The purpose was for everyone to become better acquainted. Holly and Wayne had the children singing and playing Teddy Bear games. A profit of £117 was made.

Harvest Lunch this year was held in our hall. The lamb was from Frances' Hebridean flock and the shepherds pies for 50 of us were cooked by members of the committee. This made a profit of £317.

Our planned 10 pin bowling afternoon was eventually cancelled due to difficulties with booking conditions and price changes.

Our year concluded with a Christmas Party for 35 organized by Holly and Caroline children with games and food. Father Christmas arrived after tea so all the children left with a gift.

Most of our events this year have included food and I wish to thank the committee and all church members who have contributed delicious food for these occasions.

As I mentioned at the beginning of this report, the committee have had a lot of extra work and meetings to get a super event organized for the autumn of 2015. It was planned to have an Anniversary Ball in the newly refurbished Town Hall. After research and discussions we thought that we had the venue, catering and band all lined up. However, as you will have read in the local press, the management group have encountered problems and we have been forced to make alternative plans. This has entailed researching about 6 local venues to ascertain their suitability. The overriding feeling has been that the event should remain in Hitchin. It was concluded that Hitchin Priory would suit most people This is not a suitable venue for a ball so instead the committee will plan a Dinner Dance to be held on Saturday 14th November 2015. I trust the congregation will support us by inviting family and friends to this final celebration of 2015.

Sheila Daw. Jan 2015.

Report of the 150th Anniversary Sub-Committee.

During the year the committee met six times to plan the activities which started on Advent Sunday 2014 and will end with a service of thanksgiving on Sunday 22 November 2015. Having considered all the suggestions that had been submitted and would let us have fun, enjoy friendship and raise some funds we decided on the following:

A leaflet advising the Triangle residents of our plans and to invite their participation was printed and delivered as was a programme of events and church activities delivered to all the homes in the Church District.

Advent Sunday 2014:

At the 9.30 service the Blessing of High Altar Kneelers kindly made and donated by Martin and Patience Pascal and an Anniversary Evensong with Preacher Rev. David Hall.

2015 FEBRUARY

15th – The Preacher will be the Dean of St. Albans, Very Reverend Dr. Jeffrey John

17th - **Shrove Tuesday** Lunchtime and Supper Sausages and

28th - 6.00 to 9.00 p.m. Family Barn Dance at St Michaels Community Centre

MARCH

15th – 10.00 a.m. Mothering Sunday Family Communion Service

29th – 3.30 p.m. "**A FESTAL FLOURISH**" – concert with Gillian Hughes and Trevor Hughes

MAY

14th - 8.00 p.m. Ascension Day and Feast of Dedication Service.

17th - 10.00 a.m. Anniversary Celebration Communion Service . Preacher: Bishop of St Albans Right Reverend Dr. Alan Smith

and at 7.00 p.m Brahms' Requiem, Conductor Dr. Douglas Coombes

JUNE

7th – Songs of Praise with Pam Rhodes

20th – 12.00 to 4.00 p.m. Holy Saviour Community Garden Party

JULY

Holy Saviour School Reunion

AUGUST

Anniversary Lunch at the Radcliffe Arms

SEPTEMBER

12th and 13th Heritage Weekend **with displays**

20th – 10.00 a.m. Harvest Festival Family Communion

1.00 p.m. Harvest lunch at Maydencroft Manor

3.30 p.m. Informal concert

NOVEMBER

14th – Anniversary Dinner Dance at the Priory

22nd – 9.30 a.m. Holy Communion Service to conclude our Anniversary Year.

Thank you to the committee who have helped to prepare and action these activities and all those who delivered the leaflets. Hopefully some of these events will appeal to you and you will want to join in. Further details will be available nearer the time.

Chris Thomson.

Good Old Days' Lunch Report to Holy Saviour Church Annual Meeting 2015

This lunch for the elderly continues to be popular and we are regularly catering for 40+ with new people joining as our good food and fellowship is made known. It takes place on the last Wednesday of each month except December. The Helping Hands bus is a boon, transporting those unable to make their way independently; occasionally we give one month's profits to them in gratitude for their help.

Many of those who come are not members of our congregation; some come from other churches and some are friends or hear of us by word of mouth, so we are part of Holy Saviour's outreach to the community.

As usual, our Christmas lunch at the end of November, was very festive and well attended. On that occasion most of our cooks are involved and other helpers prepare vegetables, so it is a combined effort.

The event relies on our voluntary cooks, Sheila and David, Rachel and Clive, Rhona and Julia and Celia and Claire. Our helpers who put up tables, serve & wash up and help to clear the hall at the end are augmented from time to time if we're short and we are always glad of more. It's a jolly occasion and I will personally recommend the food. The cost of £4 per head & £5 for the Christmas lunch still enables us to pay in a reasonable profit every month to Church funds. Where else could you get a home-cooked meal for that price?

Audrey Stewart

Knit, Stitch & Sew

Knit, Stitch & Sew has been running since September 2013 and the group continues to meet each Wednesday morning in the church hall. The group has established a regular attendance of around seven members with other group members attending occasionally. The group is thoroughly enjoyed and looked forward to by those who regularly attend. Attendees make a £2 donation per session and this has equated to a total of £300.40 from Jan to Dec 2014

Caroline Hanbury

HOLY SAVIOUR BABY AND TODDLER CLUB

This club continues to be run by Jean Kidd, with help from Pauline Caswell, Rachel Thomson, and occasionally Rhona Auld. Our popularity continues and the number of families on our books has increased, with more grandparents and childminders attending. Jan Wilkinson, a disabled volunteer still enjoys helping with tea-making and announcements (she is proud of her loud voice, invaluable over the noise of toddlers and chatting parents).

We meet every Tuesday during term time and the average number of families attending each week is 28. It is a relaxed and supportive group and there are a variety of activities for the children to enjoy, with paint and sand being great favourites. Children quickly find their way around, learning where to find the puzzles, the kitchen area, the slide or the book corner, with the all-important area where they gather for refreshments. Refreshments are served half way through the sessions when everyone gathers together to exchange news or gather information or celebrate birthdays.

We are always pleased to welcome Ian to the group, and the families enjoy going into church to mark particular occasions in the church's year, particularly Christmas, Easter and Harvest. Once again the Christmas Tree Festival was greeted with enthusiasm, much baking of cakes and lots of offers of help over the weekend. The theme of our tree this year was 'Christmas Tweets', with bird related decorations made by the children.

There is no club meeting on Shrove Tuesday so some families join us for pancakes instead. The family services are well publicised and we are pleased that a few families are coming regularly so we hope that all our members really do feel part of the Holy Saviour Family.

We are proud of the reputation we have for being a warm and friendly group so we endeavour to continue the same way so even more families can share the fun of Holy Saviour Baby and Toddler Club!

If anyone wants to know more about what we do, or would like to help then please come along one Tuesday morning between 10.00 and 11.30. You will be very welcome.

Pauline Caswell

Christmas Tree Festival 2014

The 18th Christmas Tree Festival took place over the weekend of 13th and 14th December 2014, taking the usual format of the Friday evening preview concert, followed by two public viewing days on the Saturday and Sunday. As new organisers this year, our aim was to continue with the original objective of the Festival: to welcome as many people as possible into our beautiful church, and to share with them the real joy of Christmas, through a community event which was at the same time atmospheric, thought provoking and fun.

The Tree Festival was, as usual, a huge team effort – there was a great sense of camaraderie in the days leading up to it, and over the weekend itself - and we would like to thank all the Holy Saviour Church members and volunteers from across the wider community who helped to make this very special event such a success.

The church played host to 49 exhibitors, who represented a wide cross section of the local community, encompassing a number of schools, charitable groups, families, individuals and pleasingly, a number of local shops. Take up of the church supplied trees was high, with 80% of exhibitors opting to purchase a tree from us. The range of tree 'themes' was diverse; some were simply beautiful trees, some with a serious message, and some just a bit of fun. The standard, effort and care taken over many of the trees was outstanding.

In addition to the trees this year, the flower arrangers decorated the church with white and gold floral designs and many comments were received as to how these enhanced the church, especially in the nave. We also had two real trees outside the Church, which we felt improved our presence over the Christmas period, and helped to advertise the Festival.

The Friday preview concert was well attended, with all tickets selling prior to the event. The audience was treated to a programme of fine music, audience participation carols and readings, followed by a glass of mulled wine and the opportunity to view the trees. The Saturday morning saw the Church open early to receive disabled visitors, with the St Andrews choir singing for the official opening on the Saturday and Codicote School on the Sunday. Visitors were entertained by a variety of live music throughout both Festival days, and of course the opportunity for refreshments in the ever popular 'Festival Café'. The Festival drew to a close on the Sunday with a simple service of thanksgiving at 6pm. The organisation of the Festival ran very smoothly once again, and the system of stewards/ central control worked well. The St John Ambulance personnel were on hand at all times, but happily their services were not required.

We wanted to more accurately measure visitor numbers this year, which was done via a numbering system of voting slip 'batches'. From this, we were able to confidently say that around 2,500 visitors were welcomed through the door. Overall the event raised in excess of £9,300, an increase of approximately £700 on 2014. However, as Brian and Pauline stated last year, the Festival is about so much more than the money, and once again we were very heartened and delighted by the lovely comments and feedback from so many of our visitors. We received some very positive press coverage, both before and after the event, with The Comet and The Mercury featuring very comprehensive write-ups.

Claire Nellis and Gill Chidgey

The Green Group

We have met 4 times during the last year.

This year has seen a cycle rack being installed to encourage people to cycle to church. It has been planted with bee friendly flowers. We also received a grant of £100 from the diocese which Sheila Daw has used to supply bee friendly shrubs and flowers to the gardens.

At present the replacement of wire mesh in the church doors with laminated glass to reduce draughts is waiting for a faculty. Also there are plans which the DCC has to approve being drawn up by the architect for parallel glass doors to be fitted inside the north and south doors of the church to reduce draughts and create more light in church. Funding, it is thought, could be a project for the anniversary.

There are many other things we have discussed. As we have sent in an application to A Rocha for renewal of the eco-congregation award the forms for application are on the green topics board and these show all the ideas we have been considering.

We would like to show we remain an eco friendly church by people attending the conference at St Albans Cathedral on Saturday 25 April on 'Caring for God's Earth' details of which are also on the Green Topics board.

Any members of the congregation are welcome at future Green meetings which are advertised in the bulletin and any ideas for future discussion are also welcome.

Kay Watt Feb 2015

UNITED SOCIETY SUPPORT 2014

Only one event has been held, and it is perhaps time we had a new boost of ideas! Members of the congregation were individually invited to a Saturday lunch in March '14 at the Vicarage. Two speakers from Zimbabwe were there. They were the daughter and grand daughter of an Anglican priest in Zimbabwe. Their names are Christine Rondozi and her daughter Rachel. Christine has been working in Croyden as a social worker for some years but Rachel is recent in this country and joined her mother, as a student to take her A levels in 2013. They were both very articulate about church life in Zimbabwe and good discussion followed their talks. It was a pity only a few people invited were able to be there.

Donations, with gifts given through the year amounted to £281. Other income; £255 was given at Marjorie Barrow's funeral. US was nominated by her family to receive that sum. Some of it was gift aided so the total would be more. A small display of the United Society's work was put up in the church and US gift aided envelopes were available there.

'Christmas gifts for US' involve choosing a project run by the Society and giving a nominated sum towards it. In return for this the donor will receive a Christmas greeting card and send it to the friend/family member. The card explains the gift. Publicity for this was in the notice sheet in November. At least £38 was given, but unknown people may have taken up the idea so it could be much more.

Jenny Nicholson attended the annual US conference held at High Leigh, Hoddesdon in June. Although a 3 day conference, it is possible to attend as a non resident for the middle day for just £25. She found it an exciting and enjoyable experience and recommends others attending. (The date in 2015 is July 21st)

Good news: US now provides a service 'Connect with the world church' Zimbabwe is one of the four programmes of US support which can now be accessed on its special website. www.weareUs.org.uk/connect The first of these items will shortly provide information/news for our HS bulletin (We have previously had articles in the bulletin about ordinands at Bishop Gaul Theological College and about acute difficulties Anglican churches have faced in recent years.)

Used stamps for United Society (US for US) A first batch has been sent to US and gratefully received. From churches country wide more than £9000 has been raised in 10 years. We are told our first contribution 'will make a significant increase in the next month's total' (quoting the thank you letter). Keep the stamps coming!

Jenny Nicholson US Mission contact person

GUIDES

Jo Clinch apologised for not quite making the deadline for this compilation but hopes she will be able to submit a separate report for the ADCM. She has been extremely busy with Guide Leadership training or conferences at 2 recent weekends , as well as work , home and running Guides on Thursdays. Clearly the guides are still reaping the benefit of her excellent leadership on Thursdays in the Church Hall, with the support of her husband; the girls always appear happy and happily occupied with a huge range of activities each week.

GMC

12th Hitchin Scout Group
Sponsored by
St Marys and Holy Saviour Churches.

The Scout Group is divided into three sections, the first section is the Beaver Colony, and they are the youngest at 6 to 8 years. These boys and girls follow an active programme during the year. Once a year they have a sleepover in a church with all the Beavers in the District, they also join in outdoor activities and will visit a weekend Cub camp for one day, there are also visits by outside organizations e.g. the Fire Brigade, Guide Dogs for the blind and they visited Stotfold Mill and learnt how bread flour was made.

The second section is the Cub Pack; these children are aged 8 ½ to 10 ½ and follow a weekly programme of badge work over a period of two years. The pack has many and various outdoors activities including camping both winter and summer. The pack has a behavior code that they are expected to conform to, they are also taught social skills, how to respect other people especially the disadvantaged, they also learn that bullying at any time either a pack meetings or in any other situation is not acceptable.

The third section is the Scouts, they are aged 10 ½ to 14, they also follow a program of badge work, these consist of a core of subjects and personal interest badges, it is possible for an individual to work through these and become a Queens Scout. They also go camping in summer and winter and we are considering a week camp instead of the more usual weekends. During the year one of the camps will be a "Back to Basics Camp" where Leaders are on site but they are encouraged to look after themselves, the intention is to let them learn to be more self supporting and independent. The Troop are currently fundraising as they are planning to organize an exchange visit with a troop in America,

Four year ago the group had 44 members both boys and girls and that number has now grown to 72 in total. You can see that there has been growth and that continues, by the end of the year it is expected that the group will grow to 84 in total. We are currently looking to add another Cub Pack but as usual the difficulty is in finding Leaders and a place to meet. Holy Saviour Church has agreed that the group can make an application for finance to purchase some needed equipment. St Marys have not yet responded to our request for support.

We all know that children are our future and that it is important to try and teach them some of the skills that they might not receive at home. The aim is to encourage them to grow up to be considerate self- supporting people who can contribute in a positive way to the society in which they live. Scouting does that throughout the country and does need your support, not just financially but through volunteering either to be involved with the children or to be part of the group of parents that help to manage the group with fundraising and helping wherever they can.

Beavers and Cubs meet in St Johns Community Centre on a Monday evening and the Scouts meet in Church House on a Friday.

I trust that this gives you an overview of the 12 Hitchin Scout Group and that your Church or the Church House Trustees feel able to support the work being done for the future of our children.

Martin Allen
Group Scout Leader.
16 February 2015

The Friends of Holy Saviour Church

2014 has been a good and successful year. The Friends currently comprises a Committee of 10 including the Vicar *ex officio*; it has a membership of 67 individuals, and its bank account stands at £10,595. The Committee has resolved to consider any application by the DCC for funding towards a project, whilst retaining some objectives of its own – such as the cleaning and redecoration of the chancel – which it recognises may come further down the list of others' priorities, and may cost significantly more than current resources could support.

The central events of 2014 were learning experiences: the May lecture held in the church by Dr Ayla Lepine on “William Butterfield and Hitchin's Hidden Gem” drew an audience of 86 who were treated to an authoritative lecture backed up by an immense fund of related knowledge (not forgetting a wonderful tea afterwards!).

Dr Lepine's lecture has proved seminal: it was delivered with such enthusiasm that several of the committee joined the Victorian Society and subsequently set off to look at or research other Butterfield buildings. Her mention of related topics encouraged the Committee to further research the Alleluia altar frontal, which enabled the church to launch a successful appeal for funds for its conservation: at the time of writing it is about to depart for the conservation studio next week. The Friends were pleased to contribute £1,000 to that appeal.

The Friends provided a rolling TV-based display about the church for visitors when the Church was open for the annual Bike 'n Hike day in September.

Our guest at the October AGM was Cllr Judi Billing, the Ward Member for Hitchin Bearton (the ward in which Holy Saviour sits) who talked about her work as a councillor and in several unrelated fields. The latter shed interesting light on local politics and gave useful pointers to the work of the Committee.

In November the Friends organised a coach trip to see the National Portrait Gallery exhibition “Anarchy & Beauty” on the work and legacy of William Morris. Sadly, two members of the trip were unable to join us at the last minute, but kindly declined the refund of their tickets, which enabled the trip to break even.

A Committee sub-group collaborated on a Friends tree submission to the Christmas Tree Festival, which marked the beginning of the 150th Anniversary Year by pointing up other events or people sharing that anniversary, such as [Alice in Wonderland](#), published that year and the Brahms [German Requiem](#), begun in 1865.

The Committee intends to maintain a schedule of talks on issues related to the Church and its design: the next lecture will be on May 10th by Richard Taylor, who presented a TV programme on “Pugin, God's Architect” and will be speaking about Holy Saviour and “How to Read a Church”, the title of his recent book and also his TV series.

Also in hand is a new guide to the church, which aims not only to name, describe and illustrate the parts of the church and their significance, but also to set it into the social context of the town in 1865. Why is it here? Why does it look the way it is? What was Hitchin like at the time? What else did Gainsford do? It is hoped to publish this in time for Ascension Day.

The Committee intends to organise another external visit, not necessarily about Holy Saviour Church, and will continue to research the history of the church and to raise funds to support it. Newsletters are sent approx quarterly to keep members informed. Do consider joining if you have not yet done so, and it remains our aim to increase membership beyond regular church members, so tell your friends!

Alan Fleck, Hon Sec. March 2015