

*Holy Trinity Headington Quarry*  
**REPORTS ON CHURCH ACTIVITIES**  
**January – December 2019**



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## Introduction

The many reports contained in this booklet offer a snapshot of church life at Holy Trinity Headington Quarry in 2019, in all its diversity. I was delighted to arrive as your new vicar in June, and I would also like to thank those who worked so hard to keep things running in the first half of the year—especially the churchwardens, Joan Walding, Rob Gilbert, and all the retired clergy. I am also extremely grateful to Richard Stoneman for stepping into the role of treasurer this year, and to Dave Smith who began his first year as Churchwarden.

Some highlights of the half-year for me include: the warm welcome I received at my induction service; the animal blessing service (which even included a few unicorns); and the Advent and Christmas services we shared together. I have enjoyed getting to know the wider parish community through joining the Friends of Quarry and through pastoral services and festivals, and I am also learning a lot about our connection with C.S. Lewis by observing the wonderful tours that Adrian Wood and Roy Kerry offer to our visitors.

Owing to the Covid-19 pandemic, our original annual church meeting was postponed to October 2020. It seems strange to reflect on activities that took place last year, but it is also helpful to remember those times when we could all gather together as a church community, and although it may be some time yet before this is possible, we can still remember the past with gratitude, and allow that sense of gratitude to carry us forwards, confident that Christ is always with us (Matthew 28.20).

Revd Dr Laura Biron-Scott

# Overall Governance

## PCC

2019 was an important year for the PCC as we were extremely fortunate to welcome Rev. Laura Biron-Scott as our new Vicar in June.

The Churchwardens were responsible for the running of the church during the Vacancy, and the PCC is hugely grateful to Janet Masters and Peter Garside for the fantastic work they did to keep everything going so well. Janet stood down as Warden at the completion of her six-year term at the APCM in April and was warmly thanked by the PCC for all she had done during her tenure. Dave Smith was elected as Warden in her place.

Andrew Colleran resigned as Treasurer at the APCM, and the PCC is very grateful indeed for all the work he put into the church over two years on many fronts. After some difficulty in finding a replacement for Andrew, the PCC was delighted to be able to co-opt Richard Stoneman onto the PCC to be our new Treasurer. At the same time, the PCC began to employ Sally Thompson at SPX to do our accounting and bookkeeping; and two members of the congregation took over the work of counting and banking the weekly collections. All these new arrangements have settled in well during the remainder of 2019.

The PCC met five times in 2019, in March, May, July, October and December, as usual. A close eye was kept on the church's finances and it was agreed that we should modernise our methods of giving in the light of a slow decline in our income. The PCC passed a resolution in July to sign up to the Parish Giving Scheme as an additional way of giving; at the same time, it was agreed that a free

trial of a contactless device should take place. This trial having proved successful, in October the PCC approved the purchase of our own contactless device. A finance sub-committee was set up in October, with Richard as Chair, and this now reports to the PCC.

The PCC also scrutinised the fundraising for our building project and was delighted that the initial target of £200,000 in donations and pledges has been met. Three different committees were set up by resolution of the PCC: (i) a committee to organise fundraising events; (ii) a group to work on obtaining external grants for the building project; and (iii) a committee to manage the building project itself. Unfortunately, we were not able to apply for renewal of our planning permission during 2019 because our bat survey, done in 2016, is now out of date and cannot be repeated until the bats awake from hibernation in spring 2020.

Finally, the membership of the PCC underwent extensive changes in 2019. At the APCM on 10<sup>th</sup> April, three members, Janet Foot, Hilary Rollin and Andrew Wilson, stood down, having served their six years of office. Further vacancies occurred because Dave Smith became a Warden and therefore an *Ex officio* member of the PCC, and Hesper Bunch and Andrew Colleran resigned. Monika Blackwell, Helen Day, Jan McLeod, Nicholas Rollin, Sue Saville and Mike Wooldridge were elected in their place; and Derek Taylor was re-elected for an additional three-year term. Richard Stoneman was co-opted at the first PCC meeting after the APCM. We were thus able to welcome our new Vicar with a complete PCC.

Anne Tarassenko  
Secretary to the PCC

## **Church Wardens**

2019 was a very good year as we welcomed our new vicar Rev Dr Laura Biron-Scott to Holy Trinity. The main duties of wardens are to support the vicar and maintain the fabric of the church and churchyard. We are both in regular communication with Laura and we see it as a privilege to support her both in practical terms and with prayer in her ministry with us. We both very much enjoy working with her and look forward to what God has planned for the church in the future. We are thankful to the Lord that He has brought her to us.

We have been working hard with Laura and the team managing the church and churchyard in the COVID-19 pandemic. Opening the church for private prayer and then for worship with COVID-19 restrictions was a major challenge as is keeping up to date with Public Health, NHS and Church of England Guidance which changes on a weekly basis.

There have been many maintenance issues which had to be addressed. Repairs were carried out to the lightning conductors and have now passed inspection, the church passed the Electrical Inspection with no repairs required and following a Fire Risk Assessment notices have been posted and a bright light purchased for emergency use when dark. Fire extinguishers were serviced. A heating system survey was carried out and following this the boiler has had repairs so that its previous problem of intermittent failure to fire up has now been rectified. Pipes in the boiler room have been lagged with the aid of a Diocese Grant.

The churchyard has been well managed with the input of our gardener and the Churchyard Committee group(which was temporarily ceased during the lockdown but reinstated after a risk assessment including COVID-19 guidance recently) and the annual check of safety of memorials has been done with no unsafe areas

found. We are most grateful to the Churchyard working group for their excellent management of the churchyard.

Security around the vicarage and Coach House has been tightened with installation of lights, a new gate to the path, a camera with CCTV monitoring warning signs.

The War Memorial is in need of a clean. This must be done professionally by stone masons (a brillo pad will not do!) and this requires Faculty Approval from the Diocese which has been applied for with DAC approval awaited.

Plans are also underway to decorate the Lady Chapel but again this requires Diocese Approval. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and workload this has been put on hold.

Ecclesiastical Insurance who insure the church requested details of our Health and Safety Policy, Working at Heights Policy and Lone Workers Policy as well as Fire Risk and Electrical Inspections. These were sent to Ecclesiastical who are happy with our policies.

Finally we would like to thank all those who helped us to look after the fabric of the church during this year, particularly Adrian Wood, Derek Taylor, Helen Day and Kevin Masters.

Peter Garside and Dave Smith

## **Children and youth**

### **Children and Families**

We said goodbye to Chris Matthewman in February 2019, having benefited from the enthusiasm, energy and time he brought to the role of Children and Families worker. Our children's activities (HT4U, Pram Service, Sunday Club, Whole Church Service) continued throughout the year, with some extra flourishes at the end of the year— including a noisy animal blessing service, a 'pop-



up' nativity service in Advent, and the joy once again of two packed Christingle Services on Christmas Eve.

## **HT4U**

We describe HT4U as a fun, informal, family-friendly church service run by Holy Trinity Headington Quarry. As part of the morning there are songs, a story, a chance to think about an idea, chat, or ask questions and things to do, make, and create. HT4U has a great team, (including a great band) a committed collection of attendees, (including a good number that have begun to attend having initially come to the Pram Service), and we have had some very warm feedback from both children and adults. HT4U continued monthly during the year, and overlapped with the main harvest service in church in October, which was very well attended.

## **Sunday Club**

Sunday Club is the name for our Sunday morning activities for children at Holy Trinity Headington Quarry, whilst the main 10am service meets. One of the real challenges continues to be that you have no real idea how many children of what ages might turn up from week to week. Dave and Andrea do a fabulous job of responding flexibly to whoever might arrive, and we have welcomed some new helpers to the team this year. We are keen to look to the needs of the older children who come, and especially those making the transition to secondary school.

## **Whole Church Family Service**

This service has grown and developed since Rob started it during the vacancy. It is a short, all-age Eucharist with a more child-friendly approach to the sermon and prayers. The service took

place monthly throughout the year, and having all ages together in church has been a real source of joy. It has been particularly good to form a link between this service and our baptism ministry.

### **Quarry School**

We value our links with the school, and were especially pleased to welcome parents and children to the church building for their harvest celebrations and nativity plays. The school continue to use the Vicarage Wood for forest school, which provides another important source of connection between school and church.

### **Creche**

There are challenges here, that spring from irregular numbers and working within the space that we have, but we should continue to monitor this and improve the situation and facilities, as we can.

### **Volunteers**

We are blessed with an amazing group of volunteers that are involved in so many aspects of our work with children and families. We thank all of them for their dedication.

### **The Future**

We continue to pray for God's direction as we look to develop our work with children and families in the future.

Laura Biron-Scott

## **Pram Service**

‘We are a cheerful team of clergy and helpers who run this informal family service with holy communion on Tuesday mornings. Until Rev. Laura arrived, Rob Gilbert, David Knight with Elizabeth, and Jane Hedges have led the services. Assisting are Roy Kerry, Nell Slocock, and more

Recently Maureen Cooper and Charlotte Drake. Elizabeth keeps in touch with our congregation by email and organizes suppers for parents (without their children) and Carers, who are important regular attenders. It is wonderful to see the children gain their confidence in church, and interact with each other. We thrive on routines of candle lighting (and blowing out) and sharing the Peace. They know about Jesus through stories, and it is obvious that they feel loved.’

Nell Slocock

## **Music, worship, spirituality**

### **Music**

2019 was an exciting year as we welcomed our new vicar, Laura, in mid-June. The choir sang at this special occasion, which felt emblematic of Laura’s subsequent close interest in the church’s musical life.

The Music Group continued to provide a repertoire of songs as introits and during communion and support the singing of less familiar hymns for these services. I assist with the planning and

rehearsal of the Music Group as required, particularly supporting and conducting their contribution to the Carol Service.

I continued to challenge the choir with difficult but rewarding repertoire that enhances our services. They still sing almost every week, only taking a week's break after Easter and Christmas, plus a summer vacation. The music they provide continues to provide variety in both period and style, which our congregation appreciates.

Choral and congregational Evensong remains ever-popular, being some of our best-attended evening services. It is clear that traditional service formats are still very much in demand in addition to newer ones.

I took one month off in November when I had my second child, and am hugely grateful to David Knight (with assistance from Dominic Scott) for their generosity in sharing their skills to cover my absence. This included Advent Carols, a highlight in the church choral calendar, and I wish to thank everyone who worked so hard to ensure that it ran smoothly and sounded beautiful while I was away. I returned in time for Carol Service rehearsals and was able to finish the year on a high as we celebrated in fine voice Laura's first Christmas with us. The commitment of our singers and musicians at Holy Trinity is a blessing and it is a joy to work with them.

Rosie Tweddle  
Musical Director

## **Servers**

One member of our team of servers commented recently that serving in church is a great honour and feels very special. It does indeed and we are a happy team. Flora (Alexander), herself a regular server until Easter 2019, organises the rota with great skill and each of us serves on average once a month. We are always keen to welcome new members and offer informal, friendly training. No special skills are required, just the ability to arrive by 10 minutes before the start of the service and to be able to carry things. In 2019 we were joined by two enthusiastic new members, Carrie Barron and Helen Dancer, while three very loyal, longstanding members of the team, Flora Alexander, Nell Slocock, and Briony Wood, retired. Happily Flora continues to co-ordinate the rota behind the scenes!

Please do get in touch with any of us if you would like to learn more or get involved.

Janet Foot

## **Julian Group**

In 2019 we continued the tradition of having two Julian meetings every month. The first meets in the evening of the first Tuesday of each month at my house, 3 Barton Road, at 7.45 p.m. to meditate on a prayer, poem or Bible passage and then discuss it over tea or coffee. The second meeting is held in the evening of the third Friday of the month at 109 Bulan Road, at 7.45 p.m. the home of Rhonda Riachi and Rikky Rooksby.

There is a core of members coming from HTHQ but I'm pleased to say that we are attracting people from other churches as well. We

take it in turns to provide the item for meditation, choosing something that has encouraged or challenged us in our spiritual lives. If you have not experienced a “shared silence” in this way you are invited to join us and realise how powerful it is. Following the silence we have wide ranging discussions sparked off by the passage and these are often very illuminating.

Sheila Allcock

## **Church Library**

The Church Library is bursting at the seams, so until we have more shelf space it is a question of one book in, one out. Many thanks to the people who donate books. Please let me know what you have donated so that I can keep the catalogue up to date. I do also buy books for the Library, but funds are limited. There is a small group of people who borrow books regularly. I think that if more people stopped to look at the shelves and they would also find books which interest them.

Sheila Allcock

# **Communications**

## **Parish Magazine**

The parish magazine continues to be printed six times a year and the circulation remains at approximately 200 copies per month. Local advertising in the magazine has not brought in any revenue this year as we don't have the capacity to administer payments. This needs to be addressed in 2020. The magazine continues to be available on the church website (in colour!)

A huge 'thank you' to everyone who has contributed to the magazine over the last year – really appreciated and for all the positive comments, too.

Felicity and Karl Wallendszus

## **The church building**

### **Flower arrangers**

The flower team led by Margaret Woodcock and aided and abetted by her team, Doreen Jarvis, Sylvia Martineau, Alison Stockford and Helen Nowicki come into Church every Friday morning except during Lent and Advent, to make up the arrangements you see in church each week.

The team take it in turns to buy the flowers on a Thursday and take them into church to cut the ends and put in buckets

Much of the greenery is provided by our sixth member of the team, Susan Houlton from the churchyard and her garden and the rest we mostly provide from our gardens

As you are aware, we rely on donations from the congregation and also from weddings. Although at the present time with the ongoing Corona virus we have no way of knowing if any of the weddings will be able to take place. Following a recent dip in funds an appeal was made and the congregation were very generous in their response. Usually we make up 3 main arrangements and a small one in the chapel. We do of course do much more for feast days such as Christmas and Easter and also for weddings. For special occasions we conscript other kind volunteers to help us.

We are delighted to do these arrangements for people to remember their loved ones but also to commemorate birthdays,

anniversaries and other occasions. We will also try to incorporate requested colour schemes and favourite flowers but may have to adapt as sadly some flowers do not survive in arrangements. We hope you enjoy our efforts as much as we enjoy doing them and we hope that they are able to enhance your worship and prayer at Holy Trinity.

Helen Nowicki

## **Church Cleaning**

Our Church building is important to us all and we want to see it well cared for. It is not a miracle this happens, it is cleaned every week by volunteers who give up their time to keep it that way in the best way we can. Each team cleans once every 5/6 weeks. Many visitors come from far and wide and comment on how welcoming the church looks and it is all credit to these people. There was the Annual Spring clean in March and all the cobwebs were dealt with and everything was polished, washed and thoroughly cleaned.

Lots of behind the scenes work was undertaken by these volunteers which helps to keep our "little Church" special for future generations.

My thanks go to all those who have been part of this cleaning team.

Margaret Taylor

## **"Visitors and C S Lewis Group"**

During 2019 once again the church had many, many visitors – literally from all over the world. It is impossible to estimate numbers as we try to ensure the church is open on the vast majority of days throughout the year. The idea is that it is to be



used by local folk as well as by visitors. As in the previous four years the extended opening hours have resulted in greater sales of church souvenirs.

In late July 2019 we warmly welcomed the annual visit from the Student Leadership University when almost 400 people (students and their leaders) from USA visited. Fortunately, the weather was kind and the morning was a great success. I am pleased to report that the SLU will be returning again to Holy Trinity in the summer of 2020. I am very grateful to the SLU for the very generous financial donation they always make to Holy Trinity.

The best-selling items in the C S Lewis corner in 2019 were once again the old favourites - the China Mugs depicting the church and "The Kilns", and the Narnia tea towels. Income from the "corner" remains a valuable source of revenue for Holy Trinity. At the time of writing I am awaiting the stock for 2020 that should arrive in time for Easter.

Over 2019 we again worked very closely with the C S Lewis Foundation. The Kilns has a lot of visiting groups and, if possible, we always offer these groups the opportunity to visit Holy Trinity.

Adrian Wood

### **Caretaker / Verger report**

The role has continued to develop over 2019. I am responsible for checking that the building is open for visitors / private prayer if possible every day, and then locked in late afternoon before darkness falls. Also that it is left in a tidy and presentable condition. My thanks go out to the small but valuable team that has assisted me in this work, in particular Zig Nowiki and Rosemary / Jeremy

Herklots. I am very grateful for their assistance. I check the building, and any maintenance issues are reported to the churchwardens. Once again, the boiler has been misbehaving, occasionally cutting out, and it has needed some work to be carried out. I always try to ensure the church is a warm and welcoming place. This has been appreciated by both regular attendees and also by one-off visitors.

I prepare the building for the various services and ensure that candles and microphones are in position, also that the relevant orders of service are available. At weddings and funerals I do the preparation and clearing up enabling the priest to concentrate on the actual service. My working relationship with the various clergy is an excellent one and I am thoroughly enjoying this varied role.

Adrian Wood

### **Friends of Holy Trinity**

During 2019 the committee of the Friends of Holy Trinity met on three occasions, including an AGM on the 19th July 2019. On the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019, the records show that the Friends had a net profit for the year of £152.74 with a balance of £30,026.40. Funds raised in 2019 were achieved through the Friends subscription and interest. We remain extremely grateful for this loyal support during 2019. During the past year, no projects have been supported. As the church redevelopment programme begins to take shape the Friends will consider funding opportunities where they can be most effective. An example in the months ahead will be to support the professional cleaning of the War memorial for which a Faculty application has been submitted by the PCC.

Mike Hill (Chair)

## Churchyard Group

The Churchyard Group continues its care of the churchyard, with 5 volunteer work parties in 2019 with Terry Wood as Chairperson.

Our work in the churchyard last year included:

- Maintaining the flower beds alongside the church which are most visible to and appreciated by passers-by and members of HTHQ.
- Keeping highly visible yet untended graves neat, tidy and flower bearing
- Encouraging pollen and nectar-bearing flowers in marginal areas to increase biodiversity
  - removal of (probably) hundreds of tree seedlings. This continues.
  - creation of a leaf mould pile under the large yew tree
  - continuing to “adopt” untended graves and fill them with plants and tidying the shed!

Large quantities of plastic waste are still deposited on graves, in contravention to Diocese regulations; this has to be carted away by members of the group to join their domestic waste.

We strive to maintain the beauty and atmosphere of a village church in an urban setting, which is the hallmark of HTHQ.

We will continue to enhance the churchyard biodiversity under guidance from “The Nature of God’s Acre”.

We are a small group who would very much welcome new and younger people to join us.

Susan Houlton

# Community and outreach

## Pastoral Care Team

The core activity of the pastoral care team is to support those in need of help. We offer a listening ear in complete confidence. We also bring Holy Communion to the homes of those who can no longer get to church.

During 2019 we continued to hold Grave Talk meetings. Four meetings were held, two in Risinghurst and one in Headington Quarry during the daytime, and one in Headington Quarry in the evening. We regard this as a tremendously important part of our work. Every one of us faces or will face illness and death, our own or that of somebody we love. We are trying to establish a place of safety and comfort where these difficult issues can be talked about, over coffee or tea and home-made cake, and in confidence.

In addition to Grave Talk, the pastoral care team also hosted several social events, including trips to the garden centres at Notcutts and Waterperry. We also provided refreshments for church events such as the Christmas Carol Service; and helped to host a tea-party for newcomers to church at the Vicarage in November. An evening Sunday Service was held on 10<sup>th</sup> October on the theme of loneliness.

It is of course very important that pastoral care team members undertake the diocesan training in safeguarding, since we are often in contact with vulnerable people. Five of the team were able to attend the required safeguarding course at Church House in October 2019, and there will be further training opportunities in 2020.

The team were delighted to be joined halfway through the year by Laura. We have also established a small group of people who are willing to undertake a few pastoral visits each year. All who have offered help in this way have obtained DBS clearance and we are very grateful to them for expanding the help we can realistically offer. We have worked to encourage a culture of looking after one another. Holy Trinity has a great many wonderful people in its congregation who extend friendship and support to neighbours and friends; the pastoral care team is there to fill in the gaps and to offer support where it is most needed. For that, we rely on members of the congregation to let us know where we might help.

Anne Tarassenko

### **Summer Fete and Christmas Event**

We had a good Summer Fete and Christmas Event in 2019 with takings hitting totals that the fete committee were pleased with. Given the space we have available we do very well.

The Summer Fete £2708.42 (Gift Aid on donated goods: £175) The Christmas Event £2020.70 (Gift Aid: £300).

On both days we had a good turnout. Numbers at the fete were slightly down on 2018 but this wasn't reflected in what people spent. The Christmas Event had a slower start but picked up and the sale on Sunday was quite busy for the hour that it runs.

Our greatest concern given that we all try to reduce the amount of waste we throw away is that both events end with some donations of substandard goods. It can feel like we are a dumping ground. For 2020 we will be thinking about how we can reduce this waste and that may mean we change some of the stalls we run.

We still have the same team running the event and we all have our specific jobs. Getting help is always a problem and many of our older regulars are now too frail to help and younger people don't seem to like to commit, so this is an ongoing issue, but we seem to be able to pull it together each year. Long may it last.

Lisa Hill

### **The Gatehouse**

Holy Trinity continues to support The Gatehouse in Oxford. It is open six days a week between 5 and 7 p.m. and provides food and support in a non-judgemental way to anyone in need. We are responsible for the 4th Tuesday in the month for which 11 members of the congregation provide 8 loaves of sandwiches and 3 cakes.

### **Lifts to church**

Several members of the congregation provide lifts to church for the Sunday 10 O'clock service. Two cars are available every week, the drivers working on a monthly rota. We are always in need of more helpers for this valuable service.

Joan Walding

### **Thursday Lunch Club (TLC)**

This is a joint venture between Holy Trinity and Corpus Christi, the Roman Catholic church in St. Margaret Road. Lunch is provided in their hall on the first and third Thursdays of each month for a small cost. Guests are given a freshly cooked lunch and an opportunity to socialise. Transport is available if required.

TLC continued to be greatly enjoyed by all who attended. We continue to have about 25 people on the books of the club, of whom about 20 come regularly. Amongst these are 4 people who joined the club in the last year and who have been very enthusiastic about the quality of the lunches, the companionship and friendliness of the club. Pip and Katya distributed a 'satisfaction survey' in September and the replies indicated that the guests were more than happy with TLC. Birthday presents and cards are much enjoyed and I have continued to send birthday cards during lockdown.

I continue to be very grateful to the whole team for the support they provide in arranging lunches. Every part of the operation is essential. In addition to our excellent cooks, those who put up the tables and lay them, greeting and serving the guests, washing up and clearing up the hall, providing flowers, birthday presents and driving is all much appreciated. The lunches wouldn't happen without all of this.

We continue to be very grateful for all financial support to TLC. The Jackson Trust at Holy Trinity Church gave us a grant towards disabled taxis and this was being used for taxis provided by Kit Mobility Taxis in Wood Farm for Pat Walsh. We also got a grant from Christ Church Governing Body and also received support from Waitrose. Their community support is an important part of our finances and enables us to provide a free Christmas lunch for everyone. The guests also give us a generous gift which allows the helpers to enjoy a Fish and Chip supper. I am also very grateful to David Kiggell for being Treasurer and keeping an eye on our finances.

We are most grateful to Canon Mervyn Tower, and the parish of Corpus Christi for the continuing use of the hall. Peter Selwood

retired as parish administrator and has been replaced by Leticia Da Cruz Gomes. We are very grateful to her for her continued help and support.

For the time being everyone is happy to continue in the positions that they are in at present i.e. David Kiggell as Treasurer, Anne Tarassenko as Secretary, James Larminie as Assistant Coordinator and Katya Drummond as Coordinator.

Katya Drummond, coordinator

### **Lent Lunches**

The Sunday lunches held during Lent in 2019 at 12 noon helped raise in total £2,000 + Gift Aid for the following charities. PCDC, ACDI and Archway. All of the charities really appreciated the support given to them both on the day and by those who generously donated but who were unable to attend.

**'Practical Compassion for Destitute Children' (P.C.D.C)** which is one of the charities our church supports. It is a small charity doing wonderful work in Israel/Palestine, supporting children regardless of race or faith but in great need.

**Action Chretienne pour le Developpement Integral (ACDI)** which is a small charity working locally in and around war-torn Beni, Eastern Congo. Support is focused on orphans and widows.

**Archway** an Oxford based charity helping those hurt by loneliness. Loneliness damages our whole being. A number of Holy Trinity members are involved week by week with Archway

Helen Day



## **Bournemouth seaside trip**

Due to our regular driver retiring our booking got past onto a new coach company and the Rebound Coaches LTD based at Bampton the total cost of the coach was £595.00

We had a full coach with 35 seats being £12.50 each and 13 seats subsidised by the church for Wood Farm families and had a great day out with good weather. We will continue to book this popular trip each year.

Frances Farrar

## **The wider world**

### **Deanery Synod**

There are definite advantages about being a Deanery synod representative. We get to visit a number of Churches dating from the medieval to the 1950's, and meet a number of people all of whom are pleasant and welcoming. We begin to understand the problems that some Churches face. One or two still have no running water, and although their congregations are enthusiastic lack of money in a poor area certainly holds them back.

Listening to the incumbents from the Cowley Deanery, talking about their Churches and their plans for the future, and noting their energy and faith gives me confidence that our Cowley Deanery is in very good and diverse hands.

Margaret Woodcock

## **Parish Charities**

### **Archway**

Archway is a local Oxford and Abingdon charity helping those who feel hurt by loneliness. It runs regular social events, a call-in café in the city centre, and a befriending service for the isolated and housebound and occasional outings. It also liaises with other groups helping the lonely.

Holy Trinity's Christmas gift of £1000 pounds to Archway enables them to continue to respond to the flow of enquiries, and to help recruit and train the much needed volunteers to support the social groups, transport and one to one befriending. Holy Trinity has six regular volunteers with Archway and I'm a trustee as well.

Sue Saville

### **PCDC**

'A Lent Lunch is held annually to raise funds for this small charity run by trustees in Palestine, working with destitute children. Please see their website, P.C.D.C., for reports, for donations and sponsoring. I put these reports up at the back of church.

Malcolm Jones, the administrator, has just rung me to say that they have the Corona Virus there, and the situation is not good. Schools are all closed and medical facilities in Palestine are poor; they cannot get into Israel for better facilities now. Food prices are extremely high with the exchange rate not in their favour, but care for about 300 children continues. Prayers are needed as much as financial support, and sponsoring a child is a real act of love. Our Lord is reported, in both the Gospels of Matthew and Luke as saying 'Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to such as these.'

Nell Slocock.

## Eco Church

This has been a year of consolidation, rather than major new initiatives. The Eco Church Group has remained the same size, with the same members, liaising with individuals and groups in Holy Trinity and beyond. Throughout, our emphasis has been Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, and we have approached this in a variety of ways. Creationtide was chosen as a time of heightened activity and a range of consciousness-raising events, the largest being the Whole Family Eucharist on September 22<sup>nd</sup>, with hymns, readings and prayers on an environmental theme. The Eco Church Group had been liaising on eco matters with the Sunday Club for some time, and at this service the children excelled themselves, inviting members of the congregation to write a pledge about being more environmentally-friendly, with particular reference to single-use plastic. Far from using post-its, we were invited to write on leaves, consisting of paper in the whole range of autumnal colours. As a reminder, the following Sunday a decorative pledge tree was displayed for us all to view over coffee in the Coach House, and was subsequently suspended from the pulpit when Fiona Tavner of Friends of the Earth addressed us all on 'Get Drastic with Plastic'. It finally took up residence at the back of the church.

Also in celebration of Creationtide six members of Holy Trinity attended a special Evensong at the cathedral, at which Bishop Steven preached on the theme of God's Creation and what churches are doing to care for the planet, after which he blessed the Eco Church Groups in our diocese. Other external events which Eco Church Group members have attended and participated in, and flagged to the congregation, include the 'Plastic Wastes' event at the Oxford Martin School in June, the Oxford Futures II Conference at the Town Hall in September, the Green Fair in the Town Hall in October, the Climate Change Eco Fair at St Michael and All Angels,

Summertown in November. Most regrettably, Oxford's wonderful information-gathering event, Big Green Day Out, held each June in Broad St. was cancelled due to the high winds (climate change at its worst?). One member of the Eco Church Group is involved in a diocesan planning group focused on environmental matters.

Initiatives to equip our community to make a difference have included publicising the Council's tours of the Food Waste Plant at Cassington, and the Energy Recovery Facility at Ardley, the former landfill site. Members of the congregation have spoken enthusiastically of these visits, and contributed articles in the Holy Trinity magazine, which has also included a range of articles, quizzes and a mini-eco-audit to remind us all of our need to respect God's Creation.

Following on from the talk in March 2019 by Maurice Herson, joint co-ordinator of Share Oxford, A Library of Things, the Eco Church Group floated the idea of launching a similar scheme within Holy Trinity. Conversations were held with members of the congregation as to whether they might be prepared to lend tools and equipment, thereby avoiding unnecessary consumption of equipment that only got used occasionally. Publicity was also given on several occasions to the free Repair Cafés; Makespace Oxford (Aristotle Lane), Rosehill Community Centre, and even closer, Bullingdon Community Centre's Bring and Fix it Café. Technically experienced teams apply their expertise and a little TLC to save items being condemned to landfill. Donations welcome.

Initiatives of past years from which we still benefit include the solar panels on the vicarage and 'curate's house in Binswood Avenue, which continue to provide the PCC with revenue of over £1,000 p.a., and reduced electricity bills for those living there. The Co-Wheels car in the Coach House car park continues to be an attractive asset, benefitting the community at large. It reduces pressure on parking, and reminds us that car clubs, public

transport, walking or cycling are alternatives to car ownership. Additional cycle racks were installed behind the church. The report on the Energy Efficiency Survey of December 2018 carried out by Inspired Efficiency was received, commending certain aspects of our energy use, and flagging the less good, such as the lack of lagging in the boiler room. This has since been remedied, paid for by the £150 grant received as a result of participating in the scheme, in which we were one of the three church premises invited by the diocese to participate in the scheme.

The major shortcoming highlighted was our use of gas. An Eco Group member with knowledge of such matters liaised with a plumber over the repair and servicing of the boiler. The automatic timing function was reinstated, thereby reducing consumption, costs and emissions. Another member of the Eco Church Group takes weekly readings of gas and electricity consumption and will be able to advise on the success of these measures. It is hoped that this will reduce the excessive costs incurred.

The Eco Church Group was asked by the PCC to work towards the Silver Award. We are almost there, but still fall short on Lifestyle and Buildings. In some areas response to awareness-raising was heartening, and liaison with the Church Garden Group and leaders of the Sunday Club was very constructive, but we need the enthusiasm and support of the majority of church members if we are genuinely to qualify for Silver. As regards Buildings, equipping the Coach House with glass tumblers instead of single-use plastic, changing the church light bulbs to LED when they fail - such measures all count but are minor in comparison with the weighting given to environmentally-sound levels of energy consumption/emissions and using a green tariff for energy supply. Once these measures have been taken, we hope to announce that we qualify for the Silver Award, after which, who knows? We might venture to consider the Gold Award. Hilary Rollin

## **Mothers' Union**

Although there is no Mothers' union branch in Headington there are a few members in all the Churches. We are called Diocesan members, and we attend meetings arranged for us and Diocesan events. Some of us have also joined together to form a Bible Study group, meeting monthly. Anyone is welcome to join us for friendly discussion and a cup of tea or coffee. We meet on Tuesday mornings once a month, the dates are advertised in the magazine and the pew news and it is open to everyone, you don't have to be a Mothers' Union member to come.

Jane Hedges