

The Parochial Church Council's Report

For the Year Ended 31 December 2010

1. Administrative Information

The parish church is right in the centre of Combe St Nicholas, Somerset. It is part of the Church of England Diocese of Bath and Wells. Correspondence may be addressed to Revd Valerie Hoare, Associate Priest, The Vicarage, Combe St Nicholas, Chard TA20 3LT.

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is a Charity exempt from registration with the Charity Commission.

PCC members who have served from 1 January to 31 December 2010 are either ex-officio or elected by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) in accordance with the Church of England Representation Rules. All those who attend church services are encouraged to register on the Electoral Role and stand for election to the PCC.

Priest-In-Charge The Revd Sue Tucker From 24 Feb 2010

Associate Priest The Revd John Tyler From 29 Mar 2009

To 31 Oct 2010

Curate The Revd Val Hoare To 14 Nov 2010

Associate Priest From 15 Nov 2010

Reader Mr Greg Hoare

Churchwardens Mrs Diana Griffith (Vice Chairman)

Mrs Pat Poole

Representatives on the Deanery Synod - Elected for 2 years

Dr Tony Burkhardt Elected Apr 09

Miss Margaret Miller Elected Apr 09

Elected Members – 3 years

Mr David London Elected Apr 09 Treasurer

Mrs Joan Salter Elected Apr 09

Mr Stephen Yarrow Elected Apr 09 Covenant Secretary

Mrs Celia Liney Elected Apr 10

Mrs Carol London Elected Apr 10

Mrs Jo Vernon Elected Apr 10

Elected Members – 2 years

Mrs Lesley Griffiths Elected Apr 09

Mrs Mary Tucker Elected Apr 09 Secretary

Methodist Church representative

Mrs Pam Hodge

The PCC met on 8 occasions. All full PCC meetings were open, non-voting members of the parish being welcome as observers.

At the April 2010 APCM meeting Mr S Trayford was appointed Independent Examiner of the Financial Statement for the year.

At the April 2010 PCC meeting following the APCM Mr Stephen Yarrow was appointed Covenant Secretary, Mr David London Treasurer, and Mrs Mary Tucker Secretary.

The Standing Committee, which meets approximately 2 weeks prior to PCC meetings and has authority to transact the business of the PCC between its meetings, subject to directions given by the PCC, consists of the Incumbent, two Churchwardens, Treasurer and Secretary, who may co-opt any other member for particular tasks or advice.

Under the terms of the Pastoral Measure 1983, proposals for the union of the Benefices of (1) Chard, St Mary, (2) Combe St Nicholas with Ham, Wambrook and (3) Whitestaunton with the Cloverleaf parishes came into effect on 1 August 2010.

2. Objectives and Activities

The PCC accepts responsibility for co-operating with the Incumbent in promoting the mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical, within the ecclesiastical parish of Combe St Nicholas.

3. Church Attendance

As at 31 December 2010 there were 61 parishioners on the roll, compared to 62 at 31

December 2009.

In accordance with the Parish Survey, which is part of the Diocesan routine for establishing the Common Fund, the Churchwardens arranged for the attendance at services in February and October 2010 to be counted.

Numbers attending at major services over the past 5 years are shown below.

	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	5 yr average
Easter Day	86	80	85	104	118	94
Remembrance	71	86	70	88	70	77
Christingle	223	287	249	340	373	294
Midnight	25*	47*	40	90	73	55
Christmas Day	44*	32*	37	51	55	44

- Snow and ice.

The practice of sharing services with Combe St Nicholas Methodist Church continues in line with our joint covenant signed on 15 March 20

4. Clergy Report: Review of 2010 by Revd Val Hoare

The last year has seen more changes at Combe church. Revd Sue Tucker was licensed as Vicar of Chard St Marys and Priest in Charge of the Cloverleaf parishes in February 2010. Revd John Tyler gave pastoral oversight until the end of October. In August we officially became a benefice with Revd Sue Tucker as Rector and I was licensed as Associate Vicar with responsibility for the Cloverleaf parishes in November 2010. After all the uncertainties of the last couple of years we look forward to a more settled time as a benefice. Links across the parishes have continued to be established and include regular meetings of all churchwardens and clergy, and joint services throughout the year.

Rogation was especially good this year with people enjoying a walk from St Marys, to Ham via Wambrook, Whitestaunton and Combe. We enjoyed prayers and food along the way.

The new extension to the churchyard into Sunday School Wood was consecrated on 24 April 2010 by Bishop Richard Third who also dedicated the new clock mechanism. Everyone who contributed to the clock repairs was invited to the celebration service.

We are grateful to Steve Yarrow who is continuing to re establish our Zambia Link through the diocese. The new PA system is a great asset to our services, and with the plans for the new servery, we continue to move forward in our vision for Combe church to be used more by the community, and also to continue reach out into the parish.

Members of the congregation regularly contribute to the Lord's Larder project based in Chard, to serve the surrounding area. We are grateful to John White for his regular collections of goods.

We are continuing to establish good relationships with staff and parents at Combe School. The children regularly use the church for worship services and some of them joined us for our St Nicholas Day service in December.

Our covenant relationship with the Methodist church continues to bring us good fellowship and worship; we intend that this will continue to develop in the coming year.

Thank you to all who contribute to the smooth running of our church services by doing all the practical jobs, as well as those who read and lead prayers. Thank you to our organists, and to the choir for leading our singing, and to the music group led by Jonathan and Maria for family services and to Carol for her input at these services. Thank you to Pam and the ladies who arrange flowers month by month, and the band of cleaners. Also Tony and Brian for unlocking and locking the church and Lesley for editing the church magazine and diary, and those who distribute it. We are grateful to John Tyler and the Readers and visiting clergy who have taken services throughout the year.

We also thank Pat and Diana our churchwardens who have worked hard over the year, Mary our secretary, David our treasurer and all members of the PCC. As always it is impossible to mention everyone by name, but thank you to each one of you, we are all important in building up the body of Christ here in Combe and enabling the church building to continue to be used by the community as quiet place for prayer and reflection.

Looking ahead to 2011 – in January we enjoyed a good joint PCC meeting with the Methodists and other Cloverleaf parishes, where we looked at the things we wanted to keep and the things we could change. This was an encouraging start to the year and I look forward to reporting progress next year. As always we must all continue to pray about how the church at Combe can continue to grow and develop and also how we can reach out to a needy world with the love of Christ.

I look forward to serving God with you in the future, God bless you all.

5. Financial Report

The Financial Statements of the PCC have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 using the Accruals basis.

As detailed in the financial statements, total receipts for the year, excluding the bank balance brought forward and transfers between funds, were £32,433. Payments, excluding transfers totalled £35,929, exceeding receipts by £3,495.

The balance of funds carried forward in the Deposit Account at 31 December 2010 fell by £5,023. to £17,104, compared to £22,127 in 2009. The balance of the current account carried forward was £2,683, a increase of £1,034, on the previous year, and the petty

cash held decreased by £15, to £6.

Restricted funds brought forward at the beginning of January, including the newly created CBF Charity Fund and monies held for the Combe Hand Bell ringers totalled £12,019, while the current account and deposit balances for unrestricted funds totalled £18,340.

The Diocesan Common Fund, which is largely to pay clergy stipends and for parsonage houses, is apportioned to parishes on the basis of a self-assessed ability to pay, on a grading A to D, and upon Church attendance. The PCC considered Combe St Nicholas to be a category C. parish with an average attendance of 54 in 2010 (49 in 2009). This results in a Parish Share of £21,392 for 2010, compared with £21,961 for 2009.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Joan Salter and Steve Yarrow for all the work they do in sorting and banking the Church monies.

The PCC Treasurer's Financial Statement is attached to this report.

6. Stewardship Campaign

In the autumn, a stewardship campaign was initiated with the dual aim of encouraging members of the congregation to offer their time and talents, as well as to increase their financial contributions towards the upkeep of our church. The successful outcome has been that a number of extra volunteers have come forward, and provisional calculations suggest that approximately £3,000 annually has been added to our planned and gift-aided income. Thanks are due to everyone who took the time and trouble to respond so generously to our appeal.

7. Fabric

Thanks to all those who give freely of their time to keep the Church in good order – no mean feat, given the size of our Church and Churchyard. The cleaners, brass polishers and flower arrangers on the inside, and David Lamb and his crew who look after Sunday School wood. Thanks also to Julian Clapp for cutting the Churchyard grass.

In the Graveyard, there continues to be a problem with Christmas wreaths left on graves, as well as dead flowers and plants. We would respectfully ask that Christmas wreaths are cleared away at the beginning of January, and that dead flowers and plants are removed regularly throughout the year and disposed of at home, as there is no council collection of green waste.

The next Quinquennial Survey will be conducted in 2012 by our (new) Diocesan Architect – Ms Jo Hibbert. (Michael Howarth having retired.)

The repairs to the stonework, which were delayed in 2009 because of the wet weather, were completed in 2010. There is still a section of the lath plaster in the ceiling awaiting repair - this work will be carried out this year. Once this has been done, all the defects identified in the 2007 Survey will have been addressed.

A new sound system has been installed in the Church, greatly improving the acoustics of

the building.

The purple Altar Hangings have been replaced. Some of the altar linens are in a poor condition and will be replaced.

The electrical installation will be tested in 2011 by Edward Grabham.

Following a meeting with Jo Hibbert, new plans have been drawn up for a servery/kitchen to be sited in the north-west corner of the Church. We will now be actively seeking to bring these plans to fruition.

Some of the pew supports have become unstable and will be repaired.

8. Deanery Synod Representative's Report 2010

There were two Deanery Synod Meetings in 2010. Both were chaired by the Rural Dean, Revd Andrew Tatham. The first was held at Thorncombe Village Hall on 2 June 2010. The main topics discussed were the Wadham School Chaplaincy Project; Rob Walrond reviewed his Rural Affairs work within the Deanery, and Richard Delderfield gave a valuable talk on fundraising. The second meeting was held at Horton Village Hall on 9 November 2010. The main topics were a very interesting and varied talk given by Gillian Alexander on fundraising for Christian Aid and where our money goes. We were advised that a vote will need to be taken in June 2011 on Women in the Episcopate and also, after further consultations, a vote on dividing the Deanery into two areas. All in all things seem to be very positive.

9. Charities

The charities to be supported for the year are selected annually, and for 2010 were Combe Pre-School, Chard Blind Club, Tear Fund, Diocesan Clergy Stipend Fund (Easter Offering), Christian Aid, Local Stroke Club, Local Memory Clinic, Childrens' Hospice, Barnstaple, Merlin, Zambia Link, Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal, The Children's Society (normally at the Christingle Service).

In January 2010 it was agreed that the Church would donate £100 to the Haiti Disaster Fund. A total sum of £200 was forwarded, the balance consisting of parishioners donations, and

at a United benefice service £480 was donated and sent to the Pakistan Appeal.

Each month a charity receives the collection from one of the services, usually the second or fourth Sunday service, with a minimum of £100 being sent.

10. Zambia Link

This year, attempts have been made to re-establish our links with the Monze parish in the Lusaka Diocese, with some success. Letters have been exchanged with Father Sanford Busiku, the priest-in-charge at St Martin's church, and a card of snow-covered Combe church was subsequently sent to convey our Christmas greetings. It is hoped that further correspondence, perhaps involving the schools in both parishes, might be forthcoming.

Meanwhile, Steve Yarrow is hoping to represent the Chard Benefice at a linking conference entitled 'Zambia – The Real Africa' to be held at Wells on 21/22 May 2011.

11. Ham Church: Report by Marion Edwards

As the Mission Church of St Barnabas, Ham, has no electricity, services are only held in the summer. Services commence in April and are held on the first and third Sundays of each month, finishing on the third Sunday of September with Harvest Thanksgiving. Services are at 6 pm and are Evensongs, except the first Sunday in April and the Sunday nearest to St Barnabas Day, (11 June), when Holy Communion is celebrated. Refreshments follow after services in the adjoining house, through the generosity of the Edwards family.

Although the average attendance for the twelve summer services in 2010 was down, ie 27 compared to 29 in 2009, Ham continues to be a significant place of worship.

The Rogation Sunday Benefice walk finished at Ham, when Holy Communion was celebrated with nearly 50 communicants. This was followed by 'hot dogs' and trimmings kindly provided by Revd John Tyler.

Harvest proceeds for the Somerset Hospice amounted to £146.30p.

12. Choir: Report by Mr Colin Bray

'Bless the Lord all people on earth, sing his praises and exalt him for ever (CW – Benedicite, shorter version, verse 4.

'Craftsman's art and music's measure, For thy pleasure all combine' (AMR246)

The weather during 2010 was frustrating, as several practices and seasonal services had to be cancelled, owing to severe wintry conditions. Thanks to the loyalty of our organists and singers, the services which were able to take place warmed our hearts before trekking homewards through the 'snow on snow'. The choir did, however, sing an Anthem at the Easter Day and Advent services.

In my early years as a Reader, while looking after a church during an interregnum, it fell to my lot to arrange a Diocesan Centenary weekend. I chose as our theme words from AMR 246. We called it 'Craftsman's Art and Music Measure'. I took the words from a hymn I had always enjoyed singing as a boy treble. It proved a happy selection – we had good weather and many visitors.

In arranging events perhaps we can learn something from the 'X Factor. Many come forward to have a bite at the apple, a few taste success and are well received, a good number have a middling reception and a few realise it was not really for them. Most of us would probably fall somewhere between the two extremes. We hope the congregation appreciate the choir's commitment to serve the Lord by singing and we welcome anyone who would like to join us.

In his book 'The Story of Christian Music', A Wilson-Dickson ends with these words: AMR246, verse 4: In thy house, great God we offer of thine own to thee, and for thine

acceptance proffer all unworthily hearts and minds and hands and voices in thy choicest psalmody.

13. Bellringers: Report by Lynne Smith, Tower Captain

Practice night continues every Thursday. We now have 11 band members, but regularly attract ringers from further afield who join us for our practices.

We rang 6 quarter peals during the year, mostly for local events such as Easter, to celebrate the refurbishment of the clock, and for the Street Fair. We also rang for one of our member's mother on the day of her funeral, and were proud to be able to ring a quarter peal for the induction of Val Hoare as our vicar.

We had two bands of visitors during the year – from Devon and from Herefordshire.

Combe Tower is affiliated to the Crewkerne Branch of the Bath and Wells Diocesan Association of Change Ringers, and in April's 6 Bell Striking Competition were proud winners of the Novice Cup.

The bells are due a general maintenance check, by Nicholson Engineering. I am currently awaiting to hear when this can be done.

14. Combe St Nicholas Womens Fellowship: Report by Margaret Bray, Chairperson

The Fellowship met 11 times during 2010, with some interesting speakers. Kim Prowse gave a talk on Age Concern, followed the next month by Rosalie Palmer on Dried Flowers. We again welcomed back Revd Cresswell Whitton, followed by Revd John Tyler who spoke on his experiences 'Long distance running'. We are always grateful to Revd Marilyn Tricker, who gives us a lot of support.

A small group of members visited the Children's Hospice at Barnstaple. Following that, at our next meeting, we welcomed Revd Marian Field, Chaplain to St Margaret's Hospice.

The Fellowship meets every third Wednesday in the month at the Methodist Church rooms, and are always pleased to see new faces.

Members of the Fellowship serve coffee after the 10 am Communion in the Methodist Church.

The Women's World Day of Prayer was held in the Methodist Church on 5 March 2010, when the theme was 'The Cameroons'. The speaker was Revd Sandra Tebbut from the Bible Society. There was a good attendance, which included five children from the school taking part. £118.70p was taken in the collection.

15. Combe C of E VA School: Report by Revd Val Hoare

We continue to build up links and work together with the school. They have held services and whole school assemblies in church throughout the year, including special

services for Ash Wednesday, Easter, Harvest and Christmas.

Pat and Joan, with helpers, have provided refreshments at 9am for services which has been much appreciated by the parents.

School children contributed to our St Nicolas Day service and we hope this involvement with family services will continue at intervals in the coming year.

I have attended governor meetings, RE lessons and taken collective worship. This has become more regular since my appointment to the post in Cloverleaf. I hope to expand into worship with the Pre School this year.

16. Village Hall Report: Report by Betty Cloke, Secretary

Since the last Annual Parochial Church Council meeting the Village Hall Committee held its AGM in May and committee meetings in July, October and January.

The Hall is now almost fully subscribed during the week and has benefited from some new regular hirers.

In addition to the usual general maintenance items, a new boiler was installed just before Christmas 2009; the old one had failed and fortunately it was possible to get a new one installed urgently, just before the very bad weather. A few months later the water heater in the kitchen also failed and was replaced, and at the beginning of 2011 the water heater in the Ladies' toilet was also replaced. Work is in hand to make good at the bottom of the wall on the outside front of the hall.

The main item of discussion this year has been the possibility of a new hall. Following a meeting with an adviser from the Community Council for Somerset it was decided to send out a questionnaire to all households in the parish. This was enclosed with the August/September edition of Cloverleaf. Its purpose was to gain information on interest in and support for a new hall project. It was important to carry this out urgently as we had been advised that funding would become available in the autumn. The results were discussed at the Committee meeting in October and it was agreed not to proceed further at this time as there was insufficient interest and support for the project. Over 600 surveys were sent out, but only 87 returned and some of these were not in favour of a new village hall.

An extension to the hall has also been investigated but found to be both impractical and not cost-effective.

Attempts to clarify the complicated matter of ownership and any possible sale of the hall at any time in the future are ongoing with the Charity Commission.

It was agreed at the October committee meeting that although the limited size of the Hall itself and its site, as well as lack of car-parking are insurmountable, major improvement with a new kitchen is the way forward and the next step will be to seek funding to help with this project.

An increase in the hiring fee was agreed; this will become effective from 1 April 2011,

three years since the last increase.

17. Cloverleaf Magazine: Report by Lesley Cole

The circulation of Cloverleaf remains buoyant, with copies being delivered to all homes in the three Cloverleaf parishes.

The magazine also continues to be popular with local clubs and organisations, with a growing number of contributions being received for each issue. In the past year an increased amount of space has been allocated to Combe St Nicholas C of E VA Primary School to provide room for pupils' contributions. As in previous years, demand often threatens to outstrip supply, but during 2010 the magazine was able to include all the contributions received. However, in order to accommodate everyone, it was necessary to expand the December/January issue to a record 24 pages!

The demand for advertising space also continues to grow and Cloverleaf currently has a waiting list, despite additional advertising space being added during the year. For the first time advertising revenue will exceed £2,000, which will more than cover the increased print costs (there has been a significant rise in the cost of paper).

Once again thanks must go to Mrs Joan Hallam and her team of ladies, who enclose the occasional leaflets and ensure each 'round' has the right number of magazines.

Approved by the PCC on 16 March 2011.

Chairman (Signed) V M Hoare