

**ST. JAMES' CHURCH ALDERHOLT**  
**ANNUAL REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR 2008**

**Duties of the Parochial Church Council**

The PCC is responsible, together with the Incumbent, for reviewing and moving forward the ministry of St. James'. It shares with the Incumbent responsibility for deciding the forms of worship to be used in Church. It is responsible for collecting and administering all monies connected with the Church. It arranges for the care and maintenance of the Churchyard and the Church Hall (largely through the Church Hall Action Team). In fulfilling its role the PCC should be a forum in which all considered viewpoints can be expressed and listened to courteously. At all times it needs to hold before it the challenge of the Gospel and to rely prayerfully on God.

**Membership of the PCC in the year 2008**

Rev'd Philip Martin	Incumbent	Chairman		
Rev'd David Dennis		Asst Curate	Peter Gowers	Elected Member
Jean Mortimer		Churchwarden	Mary Love	Elected Member
Rosemary Schofield		Churchwarden	Angie Larkins	Elected Member
		and Deanery Synod	Justin Tivey	Elected Member
Peter Hinton		Deanery Synod	Les Sacre	Elected Member
Ken Palmer		Deanery Synod	Susan Walker	Elected Member
Nigel Cooke		Treasurer	Katharine Puttick	Minutes Secretary

In addition to the Annual Parish Meeting the PCC met seven times during 2008.

Assisting the Vicar with Parish work were Revd David Dennis, Asst. Curate; Lay Pastoral Assistants, George Crouch and Mrs Linda Dennis. The ministry of our Church also benefits from the employment, two mornings each week, of a Parish Administrator, Mrs Katharine Puttick.

**Statistics for the Year 2008**

Members on the Church Electoral Roll 155

Attendance for services on a 'normal' Sunday is approximately 75 adults and 10 – 15 children under 16.

Figures recorded in the Register vary depending on the occasion, i.e. at Festivals or baptism.

Baptisms 21 Marriages 3 Funeral Services: at Church 16 at Crematorium 5

Two adults were confirmed at Salisbury Cathedral.

On 5 Sundays attendance was recorded for Diocesan Parish Share estimation.

Further specific attendance figures are noted on a 'Statistics for Mission' form which is used for future planning both within the Diocese and nationally.

**Services on Sundays and weekdays throughout the year**

*Holy Communion:* Sunday services 8.00am and 10.30am Parish Communion. 'Jim's Pilgrims' children and their Leaders come into Church part way through the service on three Sundays each month.

*First Sunday of the month;* 10.30 am First Sunday Worship (planned with a theme and occasional drama presentations. Our music group plays for this service and at 6.00pm Evensong, again with a theme. Services of Wholeness and Healing with prayer, meditation and anointing (if desired) were held.

*Holy Communion* is celebrated on Thursday mornings at 9.30am in the Village Hall and in Church at 7.15am on Fridays.

*Morning Prayer* is said daily in Church at set times.

*Festivals and other special services* are planned according to the occasion.

*Sharing Worship* with other Churches in the parish included Carols in the Village Hall, with the St. James' Music Group accompanying the singing; service of prayer and meditation for Christian Unity with members of Crendell Methodist Church and, to foster friendship and understanding between congregations, a small group, known as the 'Alderholt Family of Churches', met occasionally to plan shared services and social gatherings. We continue to hope that the Evangelical Congregational Chapel will wish to share in such joint activities in the future.

*A Pram Service* once a month on a Friday morning, in Church, continued for our Little Jims – a group for tiny ones; with their parents and carers - meeting each week in the Church Hall.

*The Ministry of Baptism* A small group of church members visit and maintain contact with all those who are baptized at our Church.

*Music for Sunday Services* with our Organist, Choir and the young people who form the Music Group (playing regularly on the First Sunday) continued to be an important part of our Worship. Performances in Church by the Wimborne Music Society, Parry Quintet, Wessex Singers and the Millstream Orchestra have been warmly welcomed. The choir attended the Diocesan Choral Festival in June.

**The work of the Church in 2008** continued to blend traditional ministry with new initiatives, to encourage adults, families and children to learn about the Gospel through shared worship, prayer and teaching and to reach out into the community to foster cohesion and harmony. For a small rural parish we have many committed volunteers who, with the Incumbent and Church Officers, work prayerfully, quietly, and effectively to create and maintain the day to day life of our Parish Church.

As each year ends plans, already made, carry on with renewed vigour after the busy Christmas season. Three small study groups, meeting in members' homes on weekday mornings and evenings, have used varying courses. Lifebuilder Bible Study Guides have focussed discussion on 'Christian Beliefs', 'Evangelism', 'Meeting Jesus'. A York Course on 'The Lord's Prayer', 'What Is' questions, 'Women of the Old Testament' and the Parables have all encouraged the exchange of opinions, widened understanding and increased friendship.

An Emmaus Course for 'Enquirers' - a journey of faith for adults – begun in 2007, continued with meetings in the Church Hall. Two of those adults were confirmed in Salisbury Cathedral in April. A series of Films during Lent - presented as 'Jesus at the Movies' - gave food for reflection on the question 'Who is Jesus?' Opinions varied and the films prompted immediate reaction! They were The Passion of the Christ, The Life of Brian, Jesus of Montreal and Mary. Using film made it necessary to invest in up-to-date equipment. This has proved to be an asset, especially for powerpoint presentations on many different occasions. A small group attended Salisbury Cathedral for the Sarum Lectures – 'Rethinking Christianity' - given by Professor Keith Ward. The excellent series tested concentration, extended our knowledge and increased the desire to learn more. In the autumn four people began a Lay Pastoral Assistants Course. This will continue into 2009.

Learning and lively discussion is not only for adults. Our Jim's Pilgrims, the young people of Vestry Group, and Little Jims continued to thrive. Their enthusiastic and dedicated Leaders maintained a varied programme of teaching, craft, drama, music and imaginative activities. The Resurrection Bus, the title for three mornings of Workshops held at St. James' First School during Holy Week, celebrated the Easter message with some 100 children from the village attending. Our close and happy association with the school continued, at every level. Well attended Easter and Christingle services were also held there. Various classes enjoyed visits to the Church during the year. A new group of young people, aged 14+ known as 'The Squash', crowded regularly into a member's sitting room for an evening meal and lively discussion. Two other groups the 'Lads and Dads' and the 'Georgeous Girls' enjoyed fellowship and leisure time. Vestry Group members and their Leaders enjoyed an action packed week-end camping at Cheltenham for the Greenbelt Christian Festival.

Eight 'Lads', led by the Vicar, took time out for a pilgrimage to the mountain top monastery at Montserrat, near Barcelona.

This year has been marked with celebrations. Many breakfasts, lunches, suppers, have all been enjoyed in our church hall for Festivals, for fund raising, for the return of our friend Marianne from walking 500 miles across northern Spain on her pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela. To celebrate the 750<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Salisbury Cathedral we joined hundreds of others, together with the Bishops and their wives, from the Sudan, to walk on pilgrimage from Old Sarum to the Cathedral, ending with the service of celebration and picnic in the Close. The work and witness of Christians in the Sudan was described vividly by Bishop Peter Munde Yacoub, when he visited our parish with his wife, Margaret. Other local anniversaries have been shared with the Tabernacle and Crendell Methodist Church. Our own Patronal Festival in July, based on the theme 'The Open Door', brought together all sections of the community. Financially successful, a proportion of the profit was donated to several village organizations. Other donations to charities included the Trussell Trust, Church Urban Fund, Alabaré, U.S.P.G. (£1,180) and The Children's Society (£1,672).

Walks have taken us to Kingbarrow at Pentecost; cross country to Holt on St. James' Day for Holy Communion with the members of St. James' Church there (and well earned fish and chips); across footpaths to Fordingbridge and back with friends from the Alderholt Family of Churches; a sponsored cycle ride for the Dorset Historic Churches Trust; and a quiet and descriptive stroll around our own churchyard. John Hensel gave a detailed commentary about the plants, birds and creatures to be seen, with photographs shown afterwards. Thanks to the work of volunteer mowers, weeders and a careful maintenance programme, we received an award as Joint Runner-Up in the Best Managed category in the Living Churchyard Competition organized by Dorset Wildlife Trust. A new gravel path has been laid, new compost bins built and much 'end of year' tidying done during a working party in November. On that day a gift, with sincere thanks, was given to Dennis Jerrard who has retired from his work, after many years, as our 'strimmer'. A different kind of award went to our Church Quiz Team when they won the Village Quiz League Trophy!

The maintenance of the Church building is constant. The care taken by the small 'army' of cleaners, polishers, flower arrangers (3 of them enjoyed their part in the Cathedral Flower Festival), is appreciated by everyone. During a period of fine weather the essential re-pointing of the masonry, including the west wall and porch, was completed as well as roof repairs, following an attempt at lead theft.

Bishop Tim visited in June for a 'Pilgrims Pause' time of 'fellowship and reflection on where we are going' and the opportunities for the future work of our Church. Soon after we learnt he would leave our Diocese to be the Bishop of Truro. The 159<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the dedication of our Church, also in June, was a day of celebration including the pleasure of a party in the Vicarage garden to mark our Vicar's 50<sup>th</sup> birthday!

Following discussions at the 2007 Annual Meeting and many other consultations, a proposal was made that the PCC should apply for grant funding from the Aldhelm Mission Fund towards the cost of employing a Parish Community Worker for three years. Such a worker would concentrate on new areas of ministry, develop contacts and encourage and energise the existing work of the Church across the whole community. Our application was successful and £33,000 has been awarded for the project. In addition we have received a grant of £550 from Wimborne Minster and funds have also been allocated from our reserves. Further grant applications are being made in order to secure a sufficient amount to cover the estimated running costs.

2008 has seen the funerals of many dear friends and faithful members of our Church. We miss them amongst us as we give thanks for their lives, their example, their steadfastness, and courage when facing difficulties. We remember them with a smile and the happy times we have all shared over long years.

Thanks to the Parish News team of printers, collaters and deliverers, the magazine continued to gather together news and advertisements from all sections of the community. The use of the Church Hall for administration, and the wide variety of Church activities are all the more enjoyable thanks to the care taken in its management by the Church Hall Action Team. We give thanks for all the people and the many blessings we have received through the work of our Church of St. James and we continue to move forward prayerfully and with confidence into a new year.

### **Financial Review**

The attached accounts set out the financial position of the PCC as at 31 December 2008 and details the income and expenditure for the year ended on that date. The accounts are divided into various funds. Explanatory notes are appended describing what the funds are and how each of them may be used.

The year 2008 saw the regular income of the PCC falling slightly. Compared with 2007 we received no bequests and lesser donations were received for specific purposes. Our Parish Share (our contribution to the Diocese and Church generally), rose to some £38,500. Parish Share in 2009 is scheduled to amount to £43,479.

Overall the accounts show a deficit on General Fund of £3,070 for the year. This deficit is increased by £6,711 arising from losses on the valuation of investments that the PCC holds from previously accumulated funds.

Overall the church now has general funds amounting to £57,142. Of this sum £33,000 has been earmarked but not yet finally committed, to the funding of the Parish Community Worker post and project referred to earlier in this report.

### **Risk**

Risks can be financial, reputational, statutory and operational. The PCC manages risks that it has identified to which it might be exposed and which might have a significant impact upon its work, or the PCC's ability to perform its duties, through a combination of good practice and insurance as deemed appropriate.

### **Investment Policy**

When the PCC has surplus funds available it invests those funds that it considers will not be immediately required over the next few months in the CBF Church of England Deposit Fund. A proportion of those monies that the PCC believes will not be required for a period in excess of three years are invested in the CBF Church of England Equity Investment Fund and Fixed Interest Securities Fund.

Signed on behalf of the P C C

Rev'd Philip Martin,

Incumbent.