

Saint Nicolas Annual District Church Meeting 2019

Monday 18 March 2019, at 7:15pm in St Nicolas' Church.

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Election of TWO DCC members to serve until 2021
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 - 8.4 Appointment of Church-in-Abingdon representative(s)
 - 8.5 Approve the nominations of stewards
9. Other matters of parochial or general church interest (Chairman's discretion)
10. The Team Vicar's Address.

E Hallas. Acting Hon. Sec.

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Saint Nicolas Annual District Church Meeting 2018
Saint Nicolas Church
Minutes of the Annual district Church Meeting held
on Monday March 9 April 2018 in St Nicolas Church.

Present: Dr A Birks, Mrs E Coker, Mr A Coker, Dr A Colborne, Mrs E Currey, Mr T G Currey, Mrs E. Hallas, Mrs E Hancox, Mr D Howard, Mrs P Lay, Ms D Lowe, Mrs H Mafabi, Miss P Randles, Mr P Rast-Lindsell, Mrs L Richmond, Mr J A Richmond, Mrs A Smith, Dr J Smith, Dr J Smith, Mr R Smith.

1. **Welcome.** In the unavoidable absence of the Team Vicar, the meeting was chaired by Mr P Rast-Lindsall, who welcomed all to the meeting.
The opening prayers were based on those for the Annunciation.
2. **Apologies for absence** were received from the Revd Paul Smith, Mrs J Bishop, Dr H Bishop, Mr N Hallas, Mrs S Henderson, Mrs J Hicks, Mrs P Howard, Mrs J Lawrence, Mrs B Randles.
3. The **Minutes of the 2017** Meeting were approved, with no amendments,
Proposed: Mr D Howard, seconded Dr A Colborne, passed nem con.
4. There were no matters arising not covered elsewhere.
5. The **Team Vicar's Report** was noted.
In response members present noted the need for increasing vigilance for those Stewarding the church, and that other organisations in Abingdon had also had issues with vulnerable adults needing support which they were untrained to provide.
6. **Electoral Roll.** The St Nicolas section of the Parish Electoral Roll was presented. The roll stood at 71; during 2017/18 5 names had been added and 4 removed (two moved away, 2 deceased) – a net increase of 1.
7. **Financial Report.** The Hon. Treasurer, Dr A. Birks, presented the accounts for the year ending December 2017 – with reference to a summary sheet distributed in advance. Copies of the full accounts for the year, approved by the DCC in March, were available.

Dr Birks started his report by noting that as a charity St Nicolas' used charity accounting, accounting separately for:

- un-restricted / general funds available for the general purposes of the Church.
- restricted funds eg Blacknall which may only be spent in accordance with the donors' wishes. This also includes funds raised for a specific purpose, identified at the time of fundraising.
- designated funds which the Church / DCC has allocated for specific purposes, not available for day-to-day running without prior consideration, but which the DCC could redesignate / release at need.
- endowment funds where the church had the benefit of the income generated, but could not touch the capital sums.

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His report would concentrate on the church's General Funds as it is these over which there was most flexibility and which were currently in deficit.

Dr Birks reminded those present that the 2017 agreed budget had allowed for a deficit of £10,700. In the event the actual unrestricted deficit on the year was for £3,699, before investment gains. (2016 showed a deficit of £3,700).

The better than budgeted outcome was due to a combination of a deanery share rebate, a successful stewardship campaign, and a reduction in costs due to the lack of a permanent Organist / Director of Music.

There was an overall general fund deficit of £2,300, but unrealised investment gains of £3,900, gave resulted in a year end increase in general funds of £200.

Commenting on the Stewardship Campaign, Dr Birks noted that although there had been a small annual increase (plus one off donations) some members had had to stop or reduce regular giving.

Although the DCC had agreed a deficit budget for 2018, this was unsustainable and there was a need to increase income, ideally through an increase in donor base.

In response to questions Dr Birks noted that the church had two Endowment accounts – where St Nicolas' had use of the income only:

the Altar Linen Fund

and the Church Lands Fund, which dates back to the early C16th, the income from which was used for works to the fabric of the church.

St Nicolas' was fortunate in having the Church Lands Fund, and the Blacknall income (restricted to certain works on the fabric and fittings of the church) to help with fabric related expenditure.

It was noted that the annual deficit was running down St Nicolas' general reserves, but that the church was still solvent having reserves of

£39,000 in general funds

£35,000 in designated funds – mainly allocated for re-ordering works

£ in the Blacknall Account – only available for fabric / fittings works

The generous Enoch bequest had helped with general expenditure over the years, but had gradually been spent.

It was again noted that keeping St Nicolas open, as a sign of Christian presence in the town, was a cost to St Nicolas. Should this be partly funded by the PCC? Or supported by the Church in Abingdon?

The Town Council has grant funding available, might any of this be applied for?

Dr Birks was thanked for his work as Treasurer, and the Accounts were accepted – Proposed Mr R Smith, Seconded Mr A Coker, passed nem con.

7 Other Reports.

7.1 Statistics 2017

Funerals: 1

Memorial Services: 0

Weddings: 2 (*not 1 as reported in Annual Report*)

Baptisms: 1 / Thanksgiving Service: 0

7.2 The Church Wardens' Report was noted, and the Wardens thanked for all their work.

7.3 Young Peoples Activities Report was noted.

7.4 The Fabric Report was noted

West end stonework, removing the stone for replacement had shown up additional areas of concern, the stonemasons and architect were agreeing the best way forward. Some repairs would also be made to the stonework of the south porch as part of the programme.

Plans for radiator based *heating* were progressing.

It was hoped that the *clock* (a Town Council responsibility) would be repaired later in the month.

7.5 The Donations Committee Report was noted (with a correction to the date 2107 to 2017).

7.6 The Report on the Choir and Music was noted.

Dr Colborne noted that Dr Richard Jones had retired as Director of Music in September 2015, some two and a half years ago and, as it said in the annual report, no replacement has been found. In the meantime others have done a great job in keeping the music going from week to week for which thanks were due.

However, the situation is far from ideal, for example, the choir has dwindled to only four or five regular members, and who often can't all be present.

He suggested that rather than letting things drift on indefinitely, other possibilities should be explored to try and resolve this problem one way or another, especially as music plays such an important role in our worship?

He asked:

Is the old role of Director of Music still relevant to the present-day constitution and activities of our church? Perhaps the job description (if there is one) needs revising or the terms and conditions need modifying to make the post more attractive.

What actually has been done, or is still being done, to try to recruit someone? I'm sure that many people here have little idea about this, myself included. Should the net be widened somehow?

Is there an innovative approach we could take to try and break the deadlock?

Perhaps we need to set up an ad-hoc committee or focus group of interested parties to chart a way forward on this issue.

Thoughts from congregation members, to Dr Colborne or DCC members were invited, and the DCC asked to give the matter some thought.

7.7 The Report Ministry of Welcome was noted.

7.8 The Report on the Flowers was noted.

Members presented noted how lovely the church had looked over Easter.

Anyone interested in providing flowers (in vases or an arrangement) for a week or two was encouraged to sign the list on the North noticeboard.

7.9 The Report on the Churchyard Garden was noted

AC reported that the Town Council had informally recognised their responsibility towards the upkeep of the garden. It was hoped that this would be placed on a formal basis, with the TC then contributing an annual sum towards the costs of maintenance.

7.10 The Bellringing Report was noted

With the plans coming forward for the top two floors of the TSB block to be converted to residential flats, AC had written to the developers noting that the bells of St Nicolas rang regularly for Sunday services, occasional services, civic events and practices, and that this would be continuing.

The church and ringers were happy for soundproofing to be installed for practice ringing, but would be looking for a contribution from the developers.

7.11 The Report on Extravaganza was noted

A small group had met to start planning for the 2018 Extravaganza with the aim of increasing awareness and fundraising. There would be children's entertainment between the close of the main events and the fireworks, and an emphasis on 'pocket money presents'. Signage would be improved.

Cards for Good Causes would be returning in 2018, but with a changed presence which would be less intrusive and not require as much St Nicolas' support as in previous years.

The organisers had also agreed to promote the Extravaganza and the St Nicolas' Christmas Services.

7.12 The Report on the proceedings of the DCC was noted, and thanks expressed to those standing down this meeting.

7.13 The report on the proceedings of the **Abingdon-on-Thames Parochial Church Council** was noted.

7.14 The report of the proceedings of **Abingdon Deanery Synod** was noted.

7.15 The Report of the **Proceedings of the Church-in-Abingdon** was noted.

8 Nominations, Elections and Appointments.

8.1 Church Wardens:

Mr Andrew Coker – proposed Mrs E Hancox, seconded Mrs A Smith

Mr Paul Rast-Lindsell – proposed Miss P Randles, seconded Mr A Coker

These names would go forward for election at the Abingdon-on-Thames APCM.

8.2 DCC Members to serve until 2021:

There was one nominations in advance:

Ms D Lowe proposed Mr A Richmond, seconded Miss P Randles
Two vacancies remain

8.3 PCC Representatives:

No nominations, two vacancies remain, although the two Wardens and both Deanery Synod Representatives are ex-Officio members of the PCC.

8.4 Deanery Synod Representatives – no vacancies

8.5 Church-in-Abingdon Representative.

Mrs Julia Bishop – proposed Mr A Coker, seconded Mr D Howard

8.6

8.00am: Mr E Blanks, Mrs J Hobbs, Mrs J Lawrence and Mr B Tonks

11.15am: Mrs E Coker, Mr A Coker, Dr A Colborne, Ms D Lowe, Mr D Dawswell, Miss K Doney, Mrs J Fishpool, Mrs E Currey, Mr G Currey, Mrs E Hallas, Mr I Hallas, Mr N Hallas, Mrs E Hancox, Mr D Howard, Mrs H Hyde, Mr A Joinson, Mr P Rast-Lindsell, Mrs L Richmond

Proposed Mr A Coker, seconded Mrs A Smith

9. Other matters of Parochial or General Interest. *None taken*

8. The Team Vicar's Address. In his address, read out in his absence (and later made available in church), the Team Vicar outlined the priority area for the coming year as 'growth' looking in particular at three areas:

Personal spiritual growth, fed by word and sacrament week by week;

Growth as a congregation within the Parish, developing the St Nicolas' identity within the wider parish;

and thirdly Numerical growth.

He invited all those present to ponder these things in order that, as a congregation, we might begin to develop a strategy for growth together, and see our valued community grow and flourish.

His report finished with thanks to the Wardens – Paul and Andrew – and to all present for their support of St Nic's week by week.

The meeting closed with prayer at 9:05pm

M E Hallas, May 2018

Reports to the 2019 Annual Meeting of St Nicolas Church

4 Team Vicar's Report

Although I was doing a limited amount of work during the first part of the year between surgery, it was a joy to return to full-time ministry on Ascension Day at the Corporate Communion which is now held at St Nic's on an annual basis. We enjoyed the preaching of the Revd Paul Cowan, the Bishop of Oxford's Chaplain, followed by the fellowship among a good number of people in the parish.

I want to express my thanks to all my clergy colleagues who throughout the year support the ministry of the parish: with myself and the Team Rector, Charles Miller. We owe a debt of gratitude to our Associate Priest, Mary Williamson, for the times she provides service cover and for the assistance she provides in our two Care Homes when we make regular visits once a month for the Service of Extended Communion. Thanks go also to our Honorary Clergy, John Barton, David Bevington, Roger Williams, Keith Ward, and Emma Percy (our Bowles Lecturer). They provide a richness and variety which not every parish is privileged to receive. So, many thanks to you all.

Worship

I want to pay tribute to all members of our congregation who make contributions to our worship on a weekly basis, in whatever way, both those who participate 'up-front', and those whose hard work is largely hidden. I am grateful to you all.

We have continued with our well established service pattern but I think it is important in this report to highlight two acts of worship in particular.

Firstly, Mattins which is celebrated on the First Sunday of each month. I made some small changes in September to bring the service in line with the order of the Book of Common Prayer. This involved putting the Psalm in the correct position, but introducing another Canticle. I have received various feedback, for which many thanks, and I am aware that we are behind in making changes from the draft format. However, I do intend to see that this happens so that we can have a completed format and order.

Secondly, following the departure of Jane Baun during the summer we had to look at ways at working with the Third Sunday Service. I am delighted that a group meets with me regularly to plan our series and the themes we explore and I want to thank all those who form part of that group both leading and preparing Orders of Service. We have now covered a wide-range of themes over the years, but I hope that should people feel there is teaching they would like to hear you will speak you would let me know.

Mission and Ministry

Last summer there was a well-received PCC Away Day at St Mary's Convent, Wantage, the house of the Community of St Mary the Virgin. This was the first of its kind in many years and was well-attended.

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There was much energy and excitement as to what the PCC could be doing in the future and much common ground was covered by the three congregations. Such matters of Pastoral Care, for example, were highlighted as to be vitally shared by congregations under the guidance and supervision of their respective clergy. We have discussed the area of Pastoral Visiting on the DCC and I want us to move forward with this, as I am with St Michael's, so that people can be formally trained to assist in this pivotal ministry in the life of their congregation. Our Parish Development Advisor, the Revd Charles Chadwick, has written a course for the training of potential Pastoral Visitors, which is something I will be studying to see how it might serve both of my churches. As we move into a new year, the work of the Parish Communications Group, and a new group for Christian Teaching and Spiritual Growth (set up following the Away Day) should become an important part of our parish life.

I want to say thank you to all DCC members for their work over the past year. Special thanks must go to those who are leaving us, and a warm welcome to those who may join us. It is important to know that this is not simply about joining a Committee, or attending more meetings. The flourishing of the DCC depends on all its members having a keen interest to see the ongoing mission and ministry of the congregation take place. There is business to be done, yes; but there is also the need for considering how the DCC can both help the existing community grow and deepen in faith and love, and find ways of growing our congregation, under my leadership.

Numerical growth is a matter that the DCC has raised during the year, and is something that we all share. There is a view – indeed it is shared by Bishop Michael Beasley of Hertford, formerly Director of Mission in the diocese, resident in Abingdon and a visitor to our church - that if a congregation can increase its numbers by 10% each year it is doing well. We have shown signs of this already which is a cause for celebration and we need to first pray, and then work together, on keeping up this trend. We gather together every week to worship to the glory of God, (Hebrews 10.23-25a). We are called to work together in love and unity, that as we go out into the world, we might attract others to the Risen Christ.

A Final Thank You

I should like to conclude by offering my thanks to Paul Rast-Lindsell and Andrew Coker for exercising their work as Wardens throughout the past year. There has been a lot to do and much has been achieved. You can read elsewhere in this Annual Report about the Fabric works. I do want to draw attention to the most significant, which is the installation of the new heating system which was achieved in record time and ready for Christmas. Thank you to Andrew for that.

I am grateful to you all for your generosity and commitment to our common life. Please pray for me as I do for you.

Your friend and pastor,

Fr Paul Smith, Team Vicar, 25 February 2019

Other Reports

7.1 Statistics 2018

Baptisms: 4
Funerals: 2
Memorial Services: 0
Weddings: 1

7.2 Church Wardens' Report

Paul Rast-Lindsell

This has been my third year serving as a St Nicolas' Churchwarden; the second alongside fellow Warden Andrew Coker whom I would like to thank for all his hard work during 2018.

Services:

Our Sunday Service pattern has continued much the same as last year. An 8.00am Parish Holy Communion is held every odd month, with St Helen's church hosting the even months.

Our main morning service is at 11.15am offering a range of worship types - Morning Prayer (Matins) on the first Sunday, Holy Communion on the second and fourth Sundays, and a less-formal service on the third Sunday during which the sermon is replaced by a study and discussion on topics from the bible followed by an opportunity for fellowship with a coffee afterwards. This service has become quite popular over the year with more people taking on the role of leading it. If there is a fifth Sunday in the month, the service is a 'lighter', more modern, Family Communion.

As is the Church's custom, we of course hold various specific services according to the time of year such as Easter, Harvest Thanksgiving, our Patronal Festival in early December and the Christmas services which include a Crib service for children; a Carol service and two Communion services. These major feast days are always well-attended. Other Services include lunch time prayers for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, Ascension Day when St Nicolas' hosts the parish Communion.

The Wednesday evening Nourishment in Christ (N.I.C.) service stopped during 2018. It was decided that it had 'run its course' and we are considering what might replace it during 2019.

Activities:

During the year, St Nicolas has remained open for a few hours on most weekdays – enabling visitors and locals to enjoy a time of quiet reflection, or a chat and refreshment if preferred. The church still attracts many visitors, mainly during the Summer months and we receive a considerable number of people from both the UK and abroad; many of whom express their delight in finding the building accessible. Our Verger, Jim, is the mainstay of this outreach and he is supported by several members of our congregation.

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St Nicolas has also continued to be used as a venue Sunday afternoon concerts. In addition, the very popular weekly 'market' of home-grown fruit, flowers and crafts is continuing to run on Friday mornings.

Members of the congregations from St Nicolas and St Helen's, together with others, make up a house-group which meets up on a fortnightly basis to read and discuss various chapters or books in the bible.

There are other varied and irregular activities throughout the year when St Nicolas plays host to a variety of events, for example, Art exhibitions, various talks and film screenings. We once more offered our space to 'Cards for Good Causes', who were tremendously pleased to be able to use St Nicolas again during November and December.

A highlight this year was an exhibition to mark the 100th anniversary of the end of World War I. Genuine recruitment and other posters from the war years were put on display in the church by the Abingdon Museum. St Nicolas added to this by having a cascade of knitted and crocheted poppies hanging from the ceiling.

The year always closes with our participation in the annual Abingdon Extravaganza. However, 2018 saw a departure from our usual stall set-up. This time we concentrated on the children by providing 'pocket-money' gifts for them to buy and offering cartoons and popcorn. The adults were not left out with mulled cider being available.

Inventory:

As per the Archdeacon's request (a regular occurrence, not a special event), Andrew undertook to review the church's inventory, finding everything as it should be.

Meetings

The Church Council (DCC) held several meetings during the year to consider the normal business of the church, special projects and events. A main topic of discussion was the improvement of the heating system, the work for which was completed during December. The proposed changes to the toilet block were put back until this renovation had been done. The financial position of St Nicolas remained of concern, although the year did find us better off than the budget set. The accounts continue to be monitored.

The Standing Committee (The Vicar, Churchwardens and the Treasurer) met on a few occasions to review various elements of church business, consider the budget and set DCC agendas.

The Vicar, Churchwardens and Treasurer all attended Parochial Church Council (PCC) meetings to represent St Nicolas views on wider Parish matters.

This year members of the PCC attended an 'away-day' in Wantage to have a more informal discussion about the Parish and what was of importance. This proved to be very beneficial as the group was freely able to 'bounce around' ideas and 'think outside the box'. The list of thoughts included items such as worship, outreach, communications and social activities.

7.3 Fabric

Andrew Coker

2018 was a year of achievements for St Nicolas' fabric.

The most visible and important was the work carried out on the stonework to the Norman arch west door. It was in a poor state and crumbling, however it is now much more complete and is weathering in well. Some repairs were also made to south porch.

The reordered west end of church continued to be well used and much appreciated. The new chairs have been well used at major Services. We thank Abingdon Town Council and the Vale District Council for their grant support for the purchase. There is now a good balance of pews and moveable chairs which can be either used informally or in rows for services and they blend well together.

Work on the Blacknall aisle is currently not being dealt with. During 2019 a full plan will be drawn up and presented to the DCC. In consultation with the town council, now owners of the memorial glass taken out of the church in 1880, it has been agreed in principle that the glass can be restored to the windows. A full proposal will be drawn up in 2019 for both in time for the 400 anniversary of the death of John Blacknall and his family in 1625.

The heating system was in a perilous state. 3 of the gas fired radiators no longer worked and other 4 were emitting CO. They have all been removed and a water fed system installed occupying the same positions as the old heaters and therefore making very little visible impact. Among the various improvements is the removal of the fireguards which were very ugly. The flues which vented the heaters and their grills have also been removed from outside and the work was so good it was commented on very favourably by the DAC officer dealing with the faculty.

Land registry of the church and grounds has finally been granted enabling the church to apply for various grants. Now we need to start fundraising. When the kitchen block is finally sorted a post box will be incorporated to enable St Nicolas to have its own post code, which will greatly hasten the process of applying for things such as the internet, which will be installed in 2019.

The town council took a very long time to mend their clock on the west front, but all is now well. St Nicolas took the criticisms from many town's people for not fixing it sooner. Surprising that in this digital age an old fashioned clock is still valued so highly.

Repairs were carried out to various items such as the processional cross and woodworm protection of the high altar and finally the two under table boxes in the nave had shelves fitted.

7.4 Donations

Jenny Smith

The DCC allocated money from the 2018 budget for the St Nicolas donation to CiA for CiA sponsored projects and for the cost of the "It's Your Move" books for pupils at St Nicolas School.

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CiA supports Abingdon Bridge, 35 Ock Street, Abingdon Street Pastors, Back to 35, and work in schools as well as making a small donation to the Abingdon Passion Play.

In addition:

- Our Harvest Collection in 2018 was £75 and went to Christian Aid. Gifts of produce (where suitable) were given to the foodbank.
- Our Christmas 2018 Collection was £350 and went to the Children's Society.
- On Sundays 7th and 14th October special collections were made for World Homeless Week and we raised £112.10 that we shared between OWNS (Oxford Winter Night Shelter) and Homeless Oxfordshire.
- Foodbank support has continued.

We were also able to host fundraising events for three other charities during the year, taking advantage of our position on the Market Place:

- Cards for Good Causes. They make a donation to the church, but also raise funds for their own causes.
- Friends of Stowford House in July.
- Kennington Memory Club in September.

We host a Traidcraft stall once a month (the surplus is given as a donation back to Traidcraft).

We would like to hear from any other member of the congregation who may wish to help with donations and charities. Further input is always helpful with regard to suggesting speakers, poster displays in church, details of other local or overseas charities or suggestions for special collections during the year.

7.5 Choir and Music

Eluned Hallas

Music is an important part of our worship and we are still seeking a permanent Organist / Director of Music. However, we have been greatly blessed by the support of many musicians (local and not so local) who have played for us over the year, and we thank them all.

We also thank the many singers who have augmented our choir for special services throughout the year - particularly Easter, Ascension Day, St Nicolas' Day and Christmas. It has been especially good to have the generous support of the Directors of Music and choirs at our sister churches - St Helen's & St Michael's.

We would be delighted to see new members join us - either regularly or for special services.

7.6 Ministry of Welcome: Stewards and other Duties **Paul Rast-Lindsell**

At our services, there are several roles undertaken by members of the congregation. These comprise of Sacristan, Steward, Reader, Intercessor and Chalice Assistant.

In the past year, we have both added and lost to the number of volunteers who do these jobs but there are still over 20 people able to carry out these duties and we are very grateful for the time and effort they put into doing so.

On a weekly basis, it is occasionally difficult to find enough people to fill all the roles; we mainly need Intercessors and Chalice Assistants. Also, it would be beneficial to have an additional Sacristan - this job currently rests with only two. If you feel that you can help, please talk to Fr. Paul, the Churchwardens or Eluned Hallas.

7.7 Flowers

Emma Coker

Many thanks to our dedicated team of flower arrangers at St Nicolas who make sure the church is looking festive at Christmas, Easter and Harvest Festival. For the rest of the year we hope our efforts add to the warm welcome to everyone who comes into the building. Flower arranging can feel like another form of ministry as it encourages conversations with visitors and parishioners while being a therapeutic activity for those who participate. Church flower arrangements also enable those who wish to make a donation in memory of loved ones to contribute towards something that is enjoyed by the church community. We are always looking to expand our team and no experience is necessary as we all learn from each other.

7.8 Churchyard garden

Andrew Coker

Abingdon Town Council has kindly agreed to take on responsibility for our closed church yard and are making a contribution of £500 a year for its maintenance. Redundant church yards are the responsibility of the local authority since the 1974 reorganisation of local government. The town did a thorough search of their archives and decided that it was for them to pay. The church yard will continue to be looked after by parishioners but now with financial support for bigger projects.

7.9 Bell ringing

Hugh Bishop

Ringling for Sunday service and special occasions has been well supported through the year. The highlight of the year was ringling for the centenary of the Armistice. The bells were rung for the Bun Throwing on the Saturday. On the Sunday, the actual anniversary, the bells were rung half-muffled for morning service, at 10.40 the tenor was tolled 128 times, once for each of the fallen from Abingdon and finally the bells were rung open at 12.30 as part of the national celebration, 'Ringers Remember'. The bells are generally in good order but a new set of ropes will be needed soon.

7.10 Extravaganza

Julia Bishop

There were several new items this year, notably the sale of mulled cider and the provision of children's carton film and popcorn after 4.00pm. These were both very popular with those who came into the church, but we felt that we needed to improve the publicity, to attract more people. We have several ideas as to how to do this. As usual the cakes and cookies were extremely popular and profitable, especially as Harriet Coker and friend sold them in the Market Place and Bath Street. We are going to try the idea of "Pocket-Money presents" again next year. The siting of the stage in the

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Market Place caused us some problems as it obscured views of the church, so we are going to discuss alternative siting nearer the National Westminster Bank with the Town Council. The total receipts came to £960, which is a record for this event. Many thanks are due to the committee who helped with all the arrangements: Hildegard Hyde, Andrew and Emma Coker and Eluned Hallas.

7.11 St Nicolas DCC

Eluned Hallas, Secretary

Membership:

Church Wardens

Andrew Coker
Paul Rast-Lindsell

Representatives on the Abingdon Deanery Synod

Andrew Birks Elected 2017 to serve until 2020
Eluned Hallas Elected 2017 to serve until 2020

Representatives on the Abingdon Parochial Church Council

Hugh Bishop Re-Elected 2017 to serve until 2020

Members of St. Nicolas' Church Council

Julia Bishop Elected 2016 to serve until 2019
Jenny Fishpool Elected 2016 to serve until 2019
Hilda Mafabi Elected 2016 to serve until 2019
Emma Coker Elected 2017 to serve until 2020
David Howard Re-Elected 2017 to serve until 2020
Hildegard Hyde Elected 2017 to serve until 2020
Dee Dee Lowe Elected 2018 to serve until 2021

Church in Abingdon Representatives: Julia Bishop

Appointments made by DCC:

Treasurer: Andrew Birks
Secretary: Eluned Hallas
Safeguarding: Jenny Fishpool
Health & Safety: Paul Rast-Lindsell

The DCC & Standing Committee met regularly throughout the year to discuss the maintenance and enhancement of the church fabric (reported elsewhere); church services and other events; inter-parish, inter-CiA and community co-operation; and finance (see separate report). Specific areas of concern during the last year have been issues around maintenance and enhancements to our historic building; congregation wellbeing and growth; and finances.

7.12 Abingdon-on-Thames PCC

Secretary to the PCC

The PCC of the Parish of Abingdon-on-Thames met six times during 2018-9.

The business of the PCC concerns those issues best approached on a Parish, rather than Church, basis. It is also a useful forum for communications throughout the Parish, including details of Parish and Church sponsored events, staff updates and feedback on Deanery and Diocesan issues.

The PCC continues to review and approve faculty applications across the Parish, and consideration of Safeguarding and the finances of the Parish remain regular items on the PCC and Standing Committee agendas.

At the first full meeting (May) the composition and procedures of the PCC were discussed, and it was agreed that ProWardens should not be ex-Officio members of the PCC (but could be elected as Church PCC representatives). PCC members discussed the Rector's draft 'Working Well Together' protocol, and an amended version was adopted by the PCC at a subsequent meeting, and individually by the DCCs. This document has proved a useful tool in Parish workings and has been further amended during the year.

Parish compliance to the General Data Protection Regulations (which came into force in May) has been discussed at each meeting, as the Parish seeks to meet legal requirements. A Parish Privacy Notice and Consent Form have been approved, and procedures agreed are being implemented across the Parish.

A very successful PCC Away Day in June enabled PCC members to get to know each other and the activities of the three Churches better.

7.13 Proceedings of the Abingdon Deanery Synod

Carol Worthington

Abingdon Deanery Synod meets four times a year and follow a similar pattern:

- Opening worship
- Presentation or Report on a topic of common interest
- Business, usually concerning items such as clergy changes in parishes and financial matters, particularly the Parish Share (every church's contribution to the communal 'pot' to pay for salaries of clergy and other church employees). The Abingdon Deanery also sets aside money for Mission Grants, which parishes can apply for to help with outreach to the local community.
- News from individual parishes is circulated, often about successes in particular outreach initiatives supporting the Deanery Mission Action Plan (MAP), to which all parishes contribute.
- Closing prayer.

Presentations in 2018 included: Generous Giving; work of General Synod; work of the Diocesan Science Missioner; report from Diocesan Synod.

If anyone wishes to know about the activities of the Deanery Synod in more depth, look on the website: www.abingdondeanery.org.uk.

7.14 Proceedings of the Church-in-Abingdon

Julia Bishop

Staff changes

Paul Goodliff left Abingdon Baptist Church and Jane Baun left St Helen's. Keith Dunnett became the incumbent of Christ Church. The Salvation Army is still being staffed, from Friday to Monday only, by retired clergy Ken and Wendy Clark.

Task groups and associated projects

The CiA continues to support community projects which concentrate on specific areas of co-operation:

- 35 Ock Street,
- The Abingdon Bridge,
- Abingdon Street Pastors,
- Christian Aid,
- Women's World Day of Prayer (to be renamed "World Day of Prayer"),
- Christian Forum (which will appear in Abingdon Round and About from March 2019),
- The Church Twinning Group,
- The Passion Play,
- Desire (which works in the three secondary schools and the Abingdon and Witney college),
- Experience Easter, (run by Trinity Learning),
- Various Alpha courses,
- Prayer spaces in schools,
- CiA News and Christian Focus magazine.

Finance

Finance The agreed policy on the General Fund is to limit the retained balance to a maximum of one year's expenditure, but maintain an amount that covers all agreed salaries and associated costs for the year ahead. The balance at 31 Dec 2018 was £5739. The expenditure for Community Projects is normally funded by church donations indicating that only a small balance in hand is necessary. It was agreed to keep the commitment unchanged at £6400, as detailed below, for the three years 2018-2020, although some projects had increased their funding requests. The only new project is Thrive.

- | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| • The Abingdon Bridge | £2000 a year for their work with disadvantaged young people |
| • DESIRE youth network | £1000 a year to help run schools weeks and larger events |
| • Abingdon Street Pastors | £1000 a year to fund their ongoing help for people out at night |

Saint Nicolas Annual District Church Meeting 2018

- Experience Easter £750 a year to help school children and their teachers explore the Easter story
- 35 Ock Street £500 a year to support their work as a meeting place for church and the community
- Back to 35 £150 a year for their work providing a place for retired people to meet
- Thrive South Abingdon £1000 a year for their work reaching out to young people alongside other youth organisations in the area

There was also a request for a one-off grant of £1000 in 2018 for the Passion Play 2019 production. It was agreed that this would be collected separately from the community grant monies and as an additional contribution from churches, as they felt appropriate.

8 Nominations, Elections and Appointments

8.5 Stewards

8.00am: Mr E Banks, Mrs J Hobbs, Mrs J Lawrence and Mr B Tonks

11.15am: Mrs E Coker, Mr A Coker, Dr A Colborne, Mr D Dawswell, Mrs J Fishpool, Mrs E Currey, Mr G Currey, Mrs E Hallas, Mr I Hallas, Mr N Hallas, Mrs E Hancox, Mrs H Hyde, Mr D Howard, Mr A Joinson, Mrs H Mafabi, Mr P Rast-Lindsell, Ms D Lowe, Mrs L Richmond