

The Reporter

Welcome to the **Annual Report 2007**. This report and the Annual Meeting gives an opportunity for us to reflect on the last year in our Church life. Churches depend on human commitment and God's grace. The great commitment and love of many (too many to name) for St Peter's continues to move me deeply. God's grace is less tangible, perhaps, except to say that St Peter's is very much more than the sum of its parts – which I put down to the work of God among us. There is something welcoming, peace-giving, holy around the Church which complements and enriches a constructive and very interesting village life. In commending this report to you, I want to add my thanks for every sign of engagement and support, however small, which when added to what everyone else does – attends – gives, enables us not only to continue but enjoy being what we are called to be in this place, disciples of Jesus learning his compassion and love for all whom we are here to serve.

The Annual Church Meeting was on 27th April 2008, after the 10.30am Morning Service. Thank you for all

In Church

St Peter's Church Bell Ringers

In 2007: Membership: There are currently 14 persons in the band (members of the Winchester and Portsmouth Guild of Ringers).

Activity: St. Peter's band rang a number of quarter peals and date touches. On 8/09/07 the band held their annual tower outing to the Thames valley (from Cookham to Henley). Attendance on this was good and the weather was dry. During the year the band rang twice on most Sundays and provided celebratory ringing at numerous weddings.

Other churches in the benefice: Brian, Pauline and Eve in particular have continued to support Hurstbourne Priors bell practice nights. Occasional quarter peals have been rung at Longparish.

Conclusion: The band would like to express their appreciation of the continued support shown to them by the Martin, Dodie, the church wardens and any other part of the church management team. The relationship between the band and the church is not always as good as this in some other places, and we greatly value it.

Roger Thomas, Tower Captain

Church Flowers

A huge thank you to everyone who arranged flowers in the Church this year. They were beautiful. It is so lovely seeing

the Church full of flowers.

We always welcome new offers to share the Flower Arranging in the Church. If you know anyone (especially any new people) in the parish who would like to join the Flower Rota – the more the merrier – do give me a ring.

Vee Oxfield ☎01264 738302

Intercessors leading prayers in morning or evening services
Response from the congregation has always been favourable: to my knowledge, no adverse comments have been made. The experience has been pleasurable, and the much needed help has been available from Martin. In putting together the prayers the principal difficulty is the avoidance of repetition of subject, matter and expressions. As this has been a worthwhile innovation, now might be the time to introduce a few new intercessors, further to add variety and texture to our services.

Jenny Skilton

Music in Church

Another year has passed in the musical life of the church and there have been, I'm very pleased to report, some high points. At the beginning of July we put together a Jazz Evensong which proved to be most enjoyable not only to perform but to rehearse as well. We included a setting by Duke Ellington as the centrepiece which was well received. Duke Ellington in fact composed a large body of religious music

and we may dip into it again in the future.

Christmas is always a high point and 2007 was, in my opinion, one of the most rewarding we have achieved for some time. The music was deliberately diverse in order to give as wide a range as possible and the Carol Service was enthusiastically received. It is always good to present new repertoire and in this case it paid off.

More recently the choir performed selected movements from the Stainer 'Crucifixion' on Good Friday and achieved a most satisfying result. This combined with a very good rendition of a new setting of 'This Joyful Eastertide'. The unaccompanied singing has progressively become more secure and all credit to the choir for achieving high standards throughout the year. The organ has had a few minor problems which have been rectified however there was a major defect with the blower motor which silenced the instrument for three services, the problem seems now to have been solved but it needs careful watching in the future!

My thanks to all who go to help with the music and accepting challenges from the man at the keyboard!

Nigel Dickinson

Scramblers

Scramblers has been running for 22 years and this year with the playgroup no longer in the village, with other playgroups offering afternoon places, with

the Mothers' and toddlers' group so successful on a Thursday morning, we are re-thinking what we do....However it is THE ONLY EVENT for the Under Fives in SMB (other than M&T's – the majority of whom live outside the village). It is a lovely introduction to church life – it is a safe place – a haven for very young children and their carers to learn about the Christian faith in an informal atmosphere.

Dodie Marsden

Sidesmen and Readers

Richard Sutcliffe constructs the bi-monthly rota of Bible readers and sidesmen. It is good that so many are prepared to undertake these important roles. Arguably there is nothing more important in Services than the reading of scripture, clearly and with preparation and sincerity. A welcome at the door is greatly valued, both by regular worshippers as well as those visiting for the first time. Our thanks to all who have acted as sidesman or reader. If you are not on the list and would like to be, contact the churchwardens or Richard on 01264 738288.

Cleaning and Polishing

Who wants to sit in a dusty, bat-dropped church? Our brass-work is shiny, and aisle swept, and at the times when bats are active, there is care to try to minimize the signs of their presence. The work is divided up into areas which people downen they can in the week. You will be kind to add your

name to the list of cleaners or polishers if you can spare the time once a month. Just tell the Churchwardens.

And finally ... for those who enjoy such things ... some **Statistics** for 2007 (comparing

2006 in brackets)
Average Sunday attendance during 2007 (for ordinary Sundays) was 75 adults (63) and 17 children (15). Attendance was significantly

higher at Easter, with a total attendance of 190 (199) and Christmas 384 (428). There were 15 (18) Baptisms, 8 (8) Marriages, 20 (8) Funerals including Cremations. The

Electoral Roll (Church members' list) stands at 130, of whom 20 do not reside in the parish.

Outside Church

Women's Fellowship

The Women's Fellowship continues to meet regularly on the first Thursday of the month. A variety of activities have been much enjoyed. They are light hearted meetings giving a chance to catch up on news of friends, as well as being a time for a little quiet reflection, followed by a talk, or a sharing of things of interest, listening to music, looking at slides or possibly a beetle drive! . The Christmas lunch at the George Inn was a great success. This year as our annual service was the same week as the Women's World Day of Prayer which was to be in St Peter's we joined in with that service which made it very special and were able to provide the refreshments afterwards. We have been delighted to welcome several new members this year.

Eve Lind-Smith

SUNDAY CLUB

A rota of eight regular helpers, plus invaluable help from Martin and Dodie, ensures that Sunday Club continues, usually on the middle two Sundays of the month.

As ever, attendance is variable; with as many as twenty or two coming along; although the 'usual' seems to be between five to eight children. Ages range from five to nine years. 2007 saw another varied and innovative programme. This year the focus has been the Bible in relation to Jesus the man and St Paul. Again, the emphasis has been on presenting the stories and responding to them in a creative, practical and fun way, while ensuring that the children 'make the link' into what they mean in their own lives.

During the Spring Term, we looked at the life of Jesus and his friends – the fishermen, children and his Disciples, including Simon Peter.

In the Summer Term we looked at 'What happened next.....?' –

Easter, Ascension and Pentecost.

While the Autumn Term saw us turning our attention to Paul, looking at who he was and what he did. We looked at key moments in his life – and how he must have felt – from his conversion on the road to Damascus to his letter-writing. Finally, 2007 saw another of Dodie's legendary Nativities. This time it involved crowd participation and a hazardous journey for all, following the star from the sanctuary of the church (or Nazareth) to a 'lowly' stable (in Bethlehem) at the top of Baptist Hill. With all the usual angels, shepherds, wise men, animals and of course Mary, Joseph and baby Jesus in attendance.

2008 sees us taking 'Donkeys' as our theme, culminating with Jesus' ride into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. While after Easter we shall turn our attention to St Peter's and its rich history and symbolism.

Thanks to all within the church community who have kept us in their thoughts and prayers during the last year.

Sandra Butler, on behalf of the Sunday Club Team.

Youth

Pioneers

This term we began with a new group and in September we had our first meeting in the church. We tried our hand at hand bell ringing, we filled out a Pioneer form that would tell everyone all about who we were and what we like doing.... And hardest of all, to qualify as a Pioneer we had to blow a bubble with bubble gum!

In October we filled shoe boxes with all kinds of goodies for Christmas. At the end of October we had a Light and Dark Disco. We had a go at eating an apple in a bowl of water, having a 'bad hair evening' and dancing....other events were 'A walk in the dark' and a meal the White Hart in Stoke 2008 began with the Ultimate Challenge! We made

our own O's and X's + a board and then we had to play people on our table and worst of all we had to play Dodie. In February we 'Rocked around the clock' and learnt how to rock and roll.... It was fantastic fun and we all had a go....

Pathfinders

Last year we were Pioneers – we are now Pathfinders. In September we had a Treasure Hunt. In October we had planned to go to Youthquake but it was the final of the World Rugby and we HAD to find out if England would win (which they didn't) but it was very exciting. Even Dodie watched it and she was in Uganda at the time. In November we had a 'Guy Fawkes Bonfire' and in December we had to sing for our supper. We walked down the main road and sang carols at different houses and then when we got to the Coronation we had a really great supper. 2008 dramatically....with an evening full of drama.....In February, March and April there have been Mad Events. We have tried our hand at becoming campanologists, collecting food for the Andover Food bank, we' faced some tough questions on friendship, family, growing up and learning....In the middle of that we are wall climbing in Southampton.

CYFA 1

We have become a small select band of 5! We went to Macdonalds up on the A34 and we wanted to make up Christmas boxes for Eastern Europe too. So we did that. In the Spring term we have had discussions on home – what it means to be adopted-fostered and how it changes your perspective...

CYFA 2

We are off to Africa in July and we have met to discuss fund raising.... We had a quiz we sent off with Christmas cards for people to have a go at over the holidays. And we packed bags in Waitrose just before

Christmas and before Easter. There's been a children concert and an adult on and there's a clay pigeon shoot coming up in May as well as a bike ride....We go out on 8th July and return a fortnight later...

TGI Sunday

Once a month, on the 4th Sunday we meet from 6.30pm – 8.00pm in the church (fortified by chocolate & lots of it). Each month's meeting is different and we work on the principle that we are not there to brain wash or indoctrinate but to create an environment where our young people can think, ask questions and respond without feeling alienated, self-conscious or humiliated. Our first TGI in 2008 was on ecological issues and we used these ideas at the February Family Services. Each TGI takes a different theme....candles are lit, discussions, drama, activities all point us to look beyond ourselves, to ask for forgiveness, to pray for others as well as ourselves and to think about the world, who we are and what we can do to make a difference.

Dodie Marsden

Study Courses now run on a series basis. There has been a considerable variety. The *Lent Course 2007* was based around the moving and beautiful film, Pasolini's *The Gospel according to St Matthew*. The Alpha Course group decided to continue as a discussion group looking at inspiring stories of faith. There were ventures into a *Rough Guide for Fathers*, run by Dodie at the George Inn. The Benefice Advent Course took us out of our village comfort zones to visit three Christian initiatives in neighbouring Andover: The Andover Food Bank, Alabaré Youth Support at The Junction and Dene Court, Two Saints. For those prepared to explore, this has been an interesting year.

Martin Coppen

Churchyard

Work has continued in improving the churchyard but slowly as this seems the most effective way. There has been some major tree work in taking out the top of a fir tree which was dangerously close to our Churchwardens house, also a sycamore whose branches were touching the church roof has had its crown severely reduced.

There have been some sheep in the enclosure, 14 at first and then 3/4 were left for some time as they could not be caught. They really reduced the overgrown and tussocky grass so much that there was no feed left at the end.

The Memorial Garden has been a great success and is beginning to look really good and peaceful.

Several of the older graves have been planted with herbaceous geraniums kindly donated by Elizabeth Maclay which are now spreading and will give some colour at the far end.

This year it is hoped to finish removing the Ivy, nettles in the enclosure and wire the Memorial wall for the climbing roses. Also straighten the leaning gravestones which could become dangerous in time.

Peter St Quintin

Our link with **Mityana Diocese, Uganda**

Financial Help: we are very aware that *accountability* is the by-word for all our support in

Mityana. There are a few basic principles which we have used in the last three or four years.

Schools: We try to take a selection of games, footballs etc, gifts for staff as well as a treat for the children: about two weeks supply of maize flour and sugar for their lunch. Each new school we visit is given £100 for repairs to buildings. Upon completion, further money is made available.

Personal gifts: We will support all the clergy with a gift of £15 – knowing that they do not have a salary. There would be no personal gifts to individuals (although occasionally there have been one or two exceptions to this where individuals have given a lot of time to support our visit.

Income Generating Projects:

Money would be provided for these after group approval (ie those who have raised funds). In 2007 we gave money to a piglet project at one school and to *Afinnet*, to help finish an accommodation block.

The Water Tank Project continues providing clean water for schools and clinics – harvesting the water of the roof into 10,000 litre tanks. This year we'll send money for another 5, four in primary schools and one in a medical clinic.

We also said farewell to the Revd Michael Lubowa who had been on a Deanery placement in 2006 who completed his course and returned to his work in Uganda in November.

Dodie Marsden

For the Church

Church Wardens' Report

Fabric The full Quinquennial Report came in May of last year and contained no surprises. The recommendations are being worked through and most of them now completed. There have been a number of relatively small items to be dealt with this year. The central heating requires a new boiler which will be installed once spring has come. A new pump has already been put in to tide us over the winter months. The organ has also had pump problems. The porch tiles have been relayed for us by Peter St Quintin. A remarkable piece of work. Drains have been cleared and a knocked down wall rebuilt. The various annual maintenance checks have been carried out. The support for the Advent Clean this year was superb enabling us to complete various small jobs as well as clean.

Pastoral During the year there have been several wonderful occasions. The Clergy have provided us with a wealth of different types of services including the traditional ones. Family Services have gone from strength to strength. St Peter's Day, our Patronal Festival week end, was a really festive one. Children's Theatre Workshops and wonderful floral

displays being created to culminate in a wonderful Family Service in the morning when the Church was not only filled with flowers but also potato plants potted up on Mothering Sunday followed by a lively Jazz Evensong. Bishop Michael came to St Peter's in June to officiate at a very moving Confirmation Service. Musical evenings have continued to be a highlight. One of these this year being given by some of our very gifted youngsters. The Deanery Walk in Highclere Castle grounds was well attended despite the weather. This was followed by tea and Evensong. Another moving occasion was the Vigil for the Fire of 2007. We were privileged to have The Women's' World Day of Prayer held here in St Peter's this year.

Most important of all is the use to which the church is put by so many and varied people. A place of tranquillity and peace. This atmosphere would not exist if it were not for every one who participates and helps. Those who clean, polish, read, provide intercession ~ sidesmen, sing in the choir, play the organ or piano, ring, work in the church yard, make coffee and help with a myriad of other odd jobs Thank you all. Our greatest thanks go to Martin ,Dodie and Nona for their unstinting efforts on our behalf. We are truly an exceptionally blessed parish to

have such a team. Sadly we will be saying au revoir to Nona shortly but we thank her for sharing her deep commitment in her ministry among us and wish her and Roy every happiness and fulfillment in the future.

The PCC of St Mary Bourne (Parochial Church Council)

At the APCM in April 2007 there were three members who ended their three-year term of office but were prepared to stand for another three years and there was one vacancy on the PCC which was filled by Peter St Quintin. This meant that the PCC would be operating at optimum strength. The PCC met six times during the year and among other things great and small, mundane or highly important, the topic of 'A Vision for St Peter's' was discussed at length. This involved much thought and discussion on how we see ourselves and how others might perceive us. A questionnaire had been circulated to members of the congregation for feedback and this together with pertinent results from the recent Parish Plan provided a starter for the discussions and plans implemented during the year. The PCC voted donations toward airfare for Michael Lubowa and family and toward Dodie's projects in Mityana. They also provided and served a meal for the Harvest Lunch

and mince pies and refreshments at the Advent concert and helped with the St Peter's Day collection and the Christmas bazaar both of which excelled the previous year's monetary totals.

Everyone in the PCC works hard to support both Martin and Dodie and the churchwardens wherever they can, using their own particular strengths and abilities.

Valerie Kennett, Hon Secretary

Finance

I probably don't need to go through our income and expenditure, but suffice to say, we got, in our three revenue accounts, a total of £71,300 last year. The major expenditure was the Parish Share (as always) – coming in at £39,100. This, together with the other three Parishes in our Benefice amounted to a total of £74,050 paid to the Diocese. This paid for Martin's stipend and so on - and Nona's rectory. It also paid an extra 30% to the Diocese for their staff, other mission needs etc. In all, the Parishes pay a total of 87% of the Diocese' income.

Turning to ourselves, our three funds all ended up in credit. The General Fund did all right when taking into account the interest earned from deposits as did the Churchyard Fund – it's main outgoing being gardening. The Fabric Fund did very well with a record collection of close to £5,000 for the St Peters Day

Appeal (thanks to Eve).
 Your will notice that we have some pretty impressive figures on page 1 (and elsewhere) where we show what our church is worth – however, that is a NOMINAL figure showing what we might have had if we had cashed in all our holdings on the 31st of December last year. No funds are worth anything until they are cashed. The other point to note is that the Fabric Fund is restricted, that is to say that we can only spend the restricted money on the Church Building. Indeed, some of that money is further restricted in that it can only be spent on the Organ or the Church roof. The Churchyard Fund is similarly protected. The problem with unrestricted money is that, if really necessary, the Diocese might require some of that money to make up a shortfall. Indeed, in 2007, we felt that there might be a need to support another Parish – although this did not turn out to be necessary. Certainly, we are lucky to have had so many people in the past who have left money to our church – and I think that they left it in the knowledge that that money was for St Peters, not elsewhere – as I said, we are very lucky.

Overall, 2007 was a good year but the Parish Share keeps on rising with a total of £41,045 required by the Diocese this year in 2008 – and the Diocese is becoming increasingly demanding.

Thanks are due to Rod who looks after the Church collections and who pays the bills. They are also due to Jenny Little who looks after Gift Aid, no mean task and a never ending one. Also Graeme Thorne who signs off the accounts. Lastly we could not do without Gillian Barrett – from Abbots Ann - who monitors all our accounts, lets us know when they are not being done properly but, most importantly, who prepares our annual accounts – all nine sheets worth.

Final thanks go to all those fund raisers and all those who give so generously with their standing orders, their collection money and their time. Without all these people, our church would be the poorer – indeed it could not continue to function financially.

Chris Strong, Acting Treasurer

Planned Giving 2007

The 62 stalwarts who maintained their planned programmes during 2007

achieved an overall contribution to PCC funds of £18,550, including tax refunded on the GiftAid element in those donations.

A loss of 5 planned programmes during the year was mitigated by a welcome gain of 3 new donors., plus the increased generosity of some of the 'old-timers'. Thank you all for your valuable and continued support.

Newcomers to the team are always very welcome. Anyone who has not yet 'signed-up', for fear that their offering might be thought inadequate, need not worry – annual commitments currently range from £10 up to four-figures. Every donation – however big, however small – is very much appreciated by the PCC. Do please give it some thought (and then some action!).

GiftAid

A new annual record of just over £6,560 was recovered by the PCC in tax-back from the Revenue, resulting from GiftAid donations, whether planned or spontaneous. GiftAided pew envelopes in the church collection bag continue in popularity and value – a painless source of extra income for the PCC. (But please don't

get your small children to fill in the envelope details – they don't always write as clearly as you proudly imagine! If we can't decipher the details, we can't reclaim the tax!!)

A Look Ahead: – after 5th April 2008, the standard rate of income tax reduced to 20%, however it was announced that tax reclaimable by the PCC will be held at a transitional rate of 22%. If applied to the 2007 figures, had there been no transitional relief, this would have represented a loss of almost £750 in tax-back – OUCH!

Jenny Little

Whitchurch Deanery Synod

reminds us that we are part of something larger, the Church of England in this area. Meeting with our neighbours is important, as the problems we face are often similar. Topics addressed in 2007 were Mission Audit, Mityana, concerns about pastoral reorganisation in the Deanery. There are signs that the Synod is to be given an important role in the future Parish Share allocation process, and therefore it is important that we are represented there.

A warm thank you also to all those very loyal makers of refreshments after morning Services, and for Christine who does the rota. Some have made the coffee for 20 years!

Vicar's PS

After months of rumours, in July 2007 becoming the parish priest of a proposed with the four parishes of our northerly our own benefice still relatively young (it questions in my mind about the nature of heart-searching I declined the Bishop's in some form or other – though not until I support of those who knew what was going always your prayers.

Martin Coppen



Bishop Trevor invited me to consider eight parish benefice combining our four neighbours, Hurstbourne Tarrant etc. With began on 1st January 2000), and persisting rural ordained ministry, after prayer and offer. No doubt the question will come back have left. I valued very greatly the personal on during what was a difficult time, and