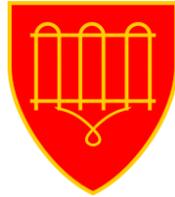


**The Parish of Ludlow  
St Laurence with St John**



**Annual Parish Meetings**

**11.30am Sunday 17 April 2016  
St Laurence's Church, Ludlow**

**The Annual Meeting of Parishioners**

**and**

**Annual Parochial Church Meeting  
Charity Number 1132703**

**Please remember to bring this Annual Report with you to the AGM**



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# Annual Meeting of Parishioners

## A G E N D A

1. Opening Prayers
2. Apologies for Absence
3. Minutes of Annual Meeting of Parishioners 2015
4. Vote of thanks to Churchwardens from previous year
5. Election of Churchwardens
6. Election of Deputy Churchwardens

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING OF ST. LAURENCE WITH ST. JOHN  
SATURDAY 25th APRIL 2015 HELD IN ST. LAURENCE'S CHURCH**

**PRESENT:** The Ven. Colin Williams (Team Rector Designate), Jane Robinson and James Hooper, Churchwardens, Brian Gardner, Sheila French and Brian Childs Deputy Churchwardens, and 52 parishioners.

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Terry Curthoys, Treasurer, Shaun Ward, Sue Bremner

The Meeting began with prayer led by the Team Rector. Ven. Williams then explained who can attend the Annual Parish meeting.

**APOLOGIES:** Mr. & Mrs. B. Forrester, Lady Day, Revd. & Mrs. Andrew Body, Peter Corston, Revd. John Burley, Pat Perry, Barbara Penson, Canon Jeffry & Mrs. Claire Wilcox, Peggy James, Tony Mahalski.

**MINUTES OF ANNUAL PARISH MEETING** held 27th April 2014. Mr. Bill Lloyd-Kitchen proposed, seconded by Mr. John French that the Minutes be accepted as a true record and signed. Carried unanimously.

**VOTE OF THANKS TO CHURCHWARDENS** The Rector gave warm thanks to Jane Robinson and Jim Hooper for all they had done on behalf of the church and in their work as churchwardens. He thanked the deputy churchwardens, Maureen Stinton, Brian Gardner, Sheila French and Brian Childs saying that it had again not been an easy year for Mrs. French and Dr. Childs and that we were greatly in their debt for their commitment and hard work. The meeting accepted his vote of thanks and showed their appreciation.

**ELECTION OF CHURCHWARDENS**

Proposed by Mrs. Diana Corston, seconded by Mrs. Alma Fisher that Dr. Jane Robinson be elected as Churchwarden.

Proposed by Mrs. Carrie Spencer, seconded by Mrs. Antonia O'Kennedy that Mr. James Hooper be elected as Churchwarden.

As no other nominations had been received, the Rector declared Dr. Jane Robinson and Mr. James Hooper duly elected as Churchwardens.

**DEPUTY CHURCHWARDENS**

The election of Deputy Churchwardens for St. John's had already taken place at their Annual Meeting with Mrs. Sheila French and Dr. Brian Childs being duly elected.

Proposed by Mrs. Valerie Hardwick, seconded by Mr. Paul Harris that Mrs. Maureen Stinton be elected as a Deputy Churchwarden.

Proposed by Dr. Jane Robinson, seconded by Miss Jen Pollard that Mr. Brian Gardner be elected as a Deputy Churchwarden.

As no other nominations had been received, the Rector declared Mrs. Stinton and Mr. Gardner duly elected to serve as Deputy Churchwardens at St. Laurence's for the coming year.

The Rector declared the Meeting closed at 10.20 hrs.

Signed.....  
**CHAIRMAN**

Date.....

# Annual Parochial Church Meeting

## A G E N D A

- 1. Minutes of AGM 2015**
- 2. Matters Arising from Minutes of AGM 2015**
- 3. Acting Rector's Report**
- 4. Officers' Reports**
  - a. Churchwardens
  - b. PCC Secretary
  - c. Electoral Roll Report
- 5. Annual Report on activities of St. John's Church**
- 6. Mission**
  - Worship
  - Chaplaincy Team Report
  - Pastoral Group Report
  - Children and Young People's Group Report 2015/16
  - Fairtrade Report 2015/16
  - Langwasser Link Report
  - Life & Learning @ Ludlow
  - Ludlow Team Ministry Mothers' Union Annual Report
  - Outward Concern Group Report 2015/16
  - Spirituality Group Report 2015/16
  - Arts @ St Laurence's Report
  - Stewarding at St Laurence's 2015 /16
  - Tours at St Laurence's

## **7. Fabric**

- a. Fabric Committee Report
- b. Friends of St. Leonard's Churchyard Report

## **8. The Vision for St. Laurence's**

## **9. Finance**

- a. 2015 Accounts (attached, as part of The PCC Report & Accounts for the year 2015)
- b. Appointment of Independent Examiners for 2016/17
- c. Shop Report

## **10. Deanery Synod Report**

## **11. Election of Lay Members of PCC**

## **12. Open Forum**

## **13. Closing Prayer**

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PAROCHIAL MEETING OF ST. LAURENCE WITH ST. JOHN  
Held Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> April 2015 in St. Laurence's Church, Ludlow**

**PRESENT:** The Ven. Colin Williams, Team Rector Designate, Dr. Jane Robinson and Mr. Jim Hooper, Churchwardens, Brian Gardner, Sheila French and Brian Childs, Deputy Churchwardens. Mrs. Valerie Hardwick, Secretary, 12 members of the PCC, and 53 Parishioners

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Terry Curthoys, Treasurer, Shaun Ward Director Vision Project and Mrs. Sue Bremner, Administrator

**APOLOGIES:** Mr. & Mrs. B. Forrester, Lady Day, Revd. & Mrs. Andrew Body, Peter Corston, Revd. John Burley, Pat Perry, Barbara Penson, Canon Jeffrey & Mrs. Claire Wilcox, Peggy James, Tony Mackulski.

The Rector requested the meeting's agreement to a change in the Agenda order, No. 14 being taken before item 13. All in agreement.

**MINUTES OF AGM held 27th April 2014**

The Minutes were reviewed with the following amendments being made:

Fifth line of Rector's Report, delete "conscience" and insert "conscious".

Add "s" to end of Mrs. Annette Childs name on Deanery Synod report and "s" to Mr. Dick Franks name on Election of Lay members of the PCC. Under Open Forum amend name to read Mrs. Pat Perry wished to thank.....

There being no further amendments, the Rector asked if he may sign the Minutes.

**Proposed by Mr. Don Millington, seconded by Mrs. Helen Blyth that the Minutes be accepted as a true record and signed. Carried unanimously.**

**MATTERS ARISING:** None.

**RECTOR'S REPORT**

The Rector spoke to his report urging confidence in the many good things happening at St. Laurence's which are not always acknowledged, e.g. increased attendance at services. The statistics calculated that 21 adults and children have joined our congregation.

He gave warm thanks to the army of retired clergy to whom we owe so much and who work so hard presiding around the team churches.

He wished everyone to note that the building is in better condition with the six year programme of essential conservation and repairs, and new heating and lighting. He said we must not hold on to the old habits of doing ourselves down and the need to get away from the carping and holding fault, wearing ourselves out doing each other down. There are good people trying to do their best which must be respected.

He referred to the basic dilemma that we were not an ordinary parish church but had to manage the increased care and maintenance without adequate official resources.

He informed the meeting of the proposal for St. John's to partition from St. Laurence's saying the proposal would include St. Giles where the three churches in Ludlow find a way to work together to take the Kingdom of God further in the town. He said that he had tried to bring St. Laurence and St. John together and improve the relationship for there was fault on both sides. The practical implications are being reviewed by a group who will report to the PCC at their next meeting when Bishop Alistair will be present.

The Ludlow Team Ministry future is under discussion with the proposal to make three separate Benefices, viz: Ludlow Town, Ashford Group and Culmington Group with a covenant between the three to work together. The Ashford group is piloting the transfer of administration to the Group from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2015. The Culmington Group are losing Revd. Maree Wilson and her post cannot be advertised until the future of the Group is resolved. The Rector thanked the Churchwardens and Deputy Churchwardens, employed staff and PCC members for their hard work and support during the year. Also he thanked the many volunteers who do so much, to those who have served St. Laurence's in previous years and who are no longer with us.

Jen Pollard saw no evidence of the Pastoral Committee mentioned in the AGM Minutes and wished for clarification of the Committee's future.

The Rector thanked Jen Pollard for all she had done pastorally in past years and driving people to church services. He referred to a small group of lay volunteers who visited the sick, Residential homes and to the Ministry for those Homes.

He thanked those who put a great deal of thought into preparation of the Intercessions in services.

## **OFFICERS' REPORTS**

Jim Hooper spoke to the Churchwardens' Report thanking everyone for their support. It had been a busy year and he was grateful for the superb team of clergy, the warm and beautifully lit church and to everyone for their contributions.

The meeting was assured that the Assistant Director of Music was a salaried position paid on a freelance basis to run the junior choir and engage in school work. Some staff are paid by alternative sources e.g. The Parish Secretary part salary is paid by the Ludlow Team Ministry.

The Rector thanked the Churchwardens for their report.

**PCC Secretary's** report was accepted.

**Electoral Roll** Officer's report was challenged by St. John's as they had not reported their up-to-date figures. John French was invited to view the electoral roll spreadsheet with Mrs. Bremner as it was important to get the figures right. Mrs. Bremner thanked Elizabeth Nixon for her work on the electoral roll last year and advised that a new officer would take up the role in the near future.

**Annual Report of St. Johns.** John French advised an omission from the report on the loss of Joan Toop and he wished to apologise to the family for this omission.

**Committee Reports.** The remaining reports from committees were accepted. It was noted that Rosie Marsh would take over from Judith Hamer in organising the Chaplain rota. Several points were raised under the heading Worship at St. Laurences' viz:

- Music and words to be in larger print in the printed order of service
- Disappointment expressed at the new communion rails and movement of other precious items such as the eagle lectern
- Messy Church is a Church not a children's club.

**Fabric Committee Report** was accepted and grateful thanks extended to the Friends of St. Leonard's Churchyard for their work and maintenance of the churchyard.

## **VISION PROJECT**

Reordering of St. Laurence's interior, a process ongoing since 1079, is progressing. Shaun Ward reported that we are required to experiment with options for re-ordering before a final application for funding is made. The changes proposed to the rear of the church have been agreed, but more thought has to be given to the centre nave. The communion rails as seen are not the final design, but prototypes. We now have comfortable heating but this is an interim solution as we are looking at a further heating system involving biomass. A new carpet will be fitted within six months. The lectern was moved to the Chancel to give more space to see the chapels. The key word is consultation. Several spoke for and against the proposals for re-ordering but they were reminded of a survey taken last year where all on the electoral roll and attendant congregation were asked their opinions. 97% were in favour of the proposals. There was strong enthusiasm for the proposals overall with only two negative responses. The meeting was reminded of the considerable work and increase in community activities in the church over the last 7 – 8 years.

Shaun Ward was asked for information on the churchyard walls and the recordings of the sensors in the tower. He advised that two electronic sensors placed on the north wall of the transept had recorded some movement and this information had been passed to the Structural Engineer in London.

The position on the fallen churchyard wall was clear – an Oxford Barrister has declared that repair of the wall is the responsibility of the local authority. There will be a meeting with Shropshire Council in early June. There is to be a radar survey soon.

## **FINANCE**

**Shop Report.** The PCC Treasurer, Terry Curthoys reported that the Shop was a story of endeavour and success thanks to Di Corston and Helen Forrester. Di Corston paid tribute to Terry Curthoys for his guidance and help during the year. She wished to thank all the volunteers who work in the shop.

**Trustees Report & Financial Statement** Terry Curthoys reported a £60,000 shortfall in the year 2014. The Vision project whilst raising considerable money had not always included the on costs of some projects. This had not been fully appreciated by the officers. Giving donations by congregations and visitors was less than hoped for in 2014 compared with previous years, probably due to the overall economy, and optimistic budgeting had not

been realised. He advised that in his opinion the financial role model of the C of E is broken – a view shared by many in the Deanery and Diocese.

In 2013 the accounts had to be audited due to a large turnover but whilst an audit was not required in 2014 the PCC had agreed to continue having the accounts audited to identify the problems. The result was that with regret the PCC decided that in 2015 it would not be able to pay its Parish Share. With the benefit of increased income from heating and cuts in expenditure it was hoped to recommence paying the Parish Share in 2016/17. This year's audit was on time, with good decisions and no hidden surprises – our systems are now in good health. Because of the shop's profit we are not bankrupt.

Terry Curthoys explained to a query that giving to Outward Concern had reluctantly been reduced to 2.5% and Jane Robinson reminded the meeting that in previous years we had given more than was actually available based on planned giving. She wished to encourage the Outward Giving Committee to consider part of the giving not in material terms because of the vast efforts by the congregation to give in many other ways e.g. NILS, Food Bank, Exhibitions, Activities – all volunteer activities. We had given £2.5k to appeals in retiring collections, nine in all. She wished to thank Terry Curthoys for the control of the financial situation over the past 12 months leaving us with a clear idea of our current situation. She reminded the meeting that we have to manage on the income of an average parish church – this is a problem suffered by all Greater Churches who do not have cathedral status in financial terms.

Some expressed anxiety at the ramifications of not paying the Parish Share but the Rector explained the background of meetings with Diocesan officers. Others wished for greater cuts in expenditure and no further changes. Terry Curthoys reminded the meeting that most of the recent projects, heating and lighting, had been funded by private donations and that no work can be undertaken unless the funding is in place. He stressed rather than rely on gifted amateurs the need to employ professionals would result in greater savings. Jim Hooper confirmed that the new donation boxes, which display the daily cost of running the church building, were proving successful with donations up by 57%. Terry Curthoys confirmed that the loan from St. Giles' PCC was included in the 2015 budget and would be paid and that Parish Share payments would re-commence in 2016. Further concerns were expressed on expenditure and what was being done with Terry Curthoys listing the efforts to bring finances into an acceptable figure for 2015.

The Rector said the accounts had been approved by the PCC. He would take the points raised to the next PCC meeting and he thanked Terry Curthoys for his presentation and explanations.

**Appointment of Auditors** Terry Curthoys recommended Whittingham Riddell be appointed as Auditors for the coming year for the sake of continuity.

**Proposed by Eddie Perks, seconded by Jim Hooper that Whittingham Riddell be appointed as auditors for 2015/16. Voting unanimous.**

Terry Curthoys then announced his resignation as PCC Treasurer saying that he was leaving the finances in a better state than a year ago. No one had been fully aware of all the problems and that the position demanded greater commitment than he had anticipated or wanted. He thanked all who had helped him during his term of office. The Rector said we were greatly in his debt.

The Rector advised that a proposal for a successor would be considered at the next PCC meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> May.

**DEANERY SYNOD** The report gave information on achieving a clear and fair formula for Parish Share for all churches, but especially for St. Laurence's.

Colin Hamer suggested it would be advantageous for someone to become a member of the Diocesan Synod when elections take place in the near future.

**RESIZING OF PCC.** Jane Robinson spoke to the proposal in the report for a lean and effective PCC with each member carrying some responsibility for some part of church life. This was in line with the trend of other organisations to reduce the decision making to a responsible few. The Rector proposed:

From the Annual Meeting of 2016, a maximum of 6 representatives of the laity, rather than the number of 15 prescribed under the national regulations, be elected by the Annual Meeting to serve on the PCC ( a reduction of 4 from the current position). The meeting was invited to agree to the following provisions

- That those elected this year be elected for a period of twelve months only, rather than the three years which would normally be the case were the decisions of previous Annual Meetings to be followed
- That the term of office of all those who will remain on the PCC beyond this year's Annual Meeting be foreshortened so as to come to an end at the 2016 Annual Meeting
- That in 2016 all six lay members be elected, with lots then drawn so as to establish which two would serve for three years, which two would serve for two years and which two would serve for one year. That would then enable us to return by the conclusion of the Annual Meeting of 2018 to a rhythm of all members having been elected for a three year term.

The proposal is that this arrangement would stand even if St. John's were to be in a position to form its own PCC. It is intended to utilise a system by which we clearly identify and make known the qualities which are sought in a member of the PCC.

The proposal was opened for discussion but no comment was received.

**Proposed by Ewart Carson, seconded by Jane Robinson that the above be adopted. Voting 27 For 2 Against 4 Abstentions. The resolution was carried.**

#### **ELECTION TO THE PCC FOR 12 months ONLY.**

Nominations had been received for

Mrs. Valerie Hardwick, proposed by Mrs. Diana Corston and seconded by Mrs. Judy Hamer

Mrs. Roger Gosbee-Harper, proposed by Mrs. Rosie Marsh, seconded by Dr. Jane Robinson

Dr. Lesley Gosbee-Harper, proposed by Mrs. Rosie Marsh, seconded by Mr. James Hooper  
Mr. Brian Gardner proposed by Dr. Jane Robinson, seconded by Mrs. Valerie Hardwick  
There being only four nominations for five vacancies, the above were duly elected to serve  
on the PCC for 12 months.

**OPEN FORUM**

- Dr. Ewart Carson spoke about the perception of the church not saving money as it should have done. The use of service sheets had been costed against the option of hymn books and found to be cheaper than the books. We now had sponsorship for the service sheets which paid for the production of the sheets.
- There was funding for music in the church which had a net effect on employment costs of the Assistant Director plus the promotion of the summer arts festival which would bring in an income.
- Mrs. Elizabeth Gardner expressed thanks to those who donated towards the flowers which incurred no cost to the church. She and her team were thanked.
- Chris Jeffery was saddened and ashamed that the church was not paying its quota and wanted payment made as soon as possible. He wanted reassurance that Revd. Maree Wilson was being replaced and criticised the management of Vision Project and said the reduction in giving income could have been anticipated. He thought more could be done to cut down costs.
- Terry Curthoys said the decision not to pay the Parish Share had been taken with great reluctance and the PCC and new Treasurer would be under pressure to pay the Share as soon as possible.
- Dr. Ewart Carson said we needed to conserve and repair the church building and if not done the net consequence would be greater expenditure. There had been a number of needs identified and the repair and conservation work had been put in place so that we now have a watertight, warm, well-lit building which is in a fit state to start expanding its mission. Very careful thought had been given on spending to create a building fit for mission.
- The Rector said that in 2010 – 2013 planned giving had increased but during 2014 had dropped considerably. He then referred to the Notice of Presentation of Benefice of St. Laurence with St. John being suspended for three years and explained that during the next two years he would continue not to have the legal status of Rector. This enabled freedom to look at the structure of the team.
- Mrs Elizabeth Gardner reminded the meeting that on Friday mornings the church is full of children, parents and visitors with people saying what a wonderful atmosphere and how welcoming, which is what a church should be. The Rector said we must celebrate all the good things that are happening in the church.
- Jane Robinson paid tribute to the Rector saying he had led us nobly and calmly through a very difficult 12 months.

The Meeting ended with the Grace at 12.15 pm.

Signed.....

Date: .....

## **REVD. KELVIN PRICE, ACTING RECTOR'S REPORT 2015-16**

When we were at our AGM's last year who would have ever thought we would encounter the year we now reflect on. Being part of a Team Ministry means all parishes and groups are affected when staffing or central administration changes happen. Furthermore, when our Diocese informs us of something such as a Bishop's Visitation we all feel the pressures that it undoubtedly brings even if we are not at its centre.

We were all aware that Maree Wilson was departing in the late spring 2015. However, it came as a huge surprise that Colin Williams would soon be leaving as well. Before his departure in July the Diocese instructed us all of the impending Bishop's Visitation. In order to address this issue we changed the way in which the LTM would operate during two interregnums. The main implementations were Canon Jeffrey Wilcox would oversee St Laurence's as their Chaplain, Bishop Michael Bourke would become a point of reference for management advice, and I would handle anything that affected the entire LTM in its entirety.

It was obvious from the start that there was no clear strategy for using our valued retired clergy and readers, our centralized administration system for the LTM was at breaking point and our LTM finances were not transparent or healthy. It was these areas that I decided I would focus my energies while Acting Team Rector. Looking back we have completed a huge amount, since we have addressed and changed all three areas.

Firstly, the retired clergy and readers are now all assigned a particular parish where they are to be the regular face during, and hopefully after, the current interregnum. This has been a good thing for providing continuity, especially while there are no stipendiary priests for each group, and it also allows those ministers to feel more valued in their supporting ministries.

Secondly, we have devolved the old central parish office to a new system of individual group offices. The Ashfords Group office started in July and is now running fully functionally with no problems at all. In November the Culmington Group started their group office. Due to the Vicarage in Bromfield being rented they could not setup this new office from there. Therefore, it is currently operating from Middleton Court in Middleton. The hope is once a new group priest/incumbent arrives later this year the office will move as well. This office is now fully functional and running well. Both of these groups are due to review the proportions that each parish pays in order to help the financial spread to operate on an agreed and fair system.

Finally, the office in Ludlow for the town parishes has reduced its operating costs, reordered its use of the building and re-clarified individual roles. Again this new system is working well, however, due to operating on a much larger scale than the rural group offices it is a much more complex setup, and therefore, has had many more issues to address. Of the main three areas of focus the huge issue was the LTM finances. Through this process it was immediately apparent that the LTM finances are approximately £24,000 in debt to the Diocese for owed past fees. This is something that will be resolved through an ongoing discussion with the Diocese Board of Finance. An update will be sent out in due course. The Bishop's Visitation was a new and testing experience for all involved. With hindsight it is

clear that there was much anxiety caused due to the process being unclear in its terms of reference, and for the fact it added individual financial focus at the point when we thought it would finish. Nevertheless, it was a process that has been helpful for us moving forward, especially towards clarity regarding where strengths and weaknesses exist both inside and outside church life in and around Ludlow.

With there being an unprecedented time on the horizon of all groups being within an interregnum it seems an obvious opportunity to address the LTM groups becoming three separate Benefices. This will enable each new Benefice to have their own Rector/Incumbent, and therefore, a more manageable and clear working practice. Already within this plan a motion has been passed to make St John's a separate parish later in 2016. We hope that not long after this the new Benefice plans will take shape as well. Along with all this there have been many other smaller issues addressed and rectified that have at times taken up much time. Also some high points like our team confirmation service, the gathering at Harper Adams, the Deanery Service and meeting Prince Harry! Throughout all that has occurred in the last twelve months I sincerely believe that we are now in a place where there is more clarity, transparency, clear operating strategy and optimism for all churches going forward into the future.

I have far too many people to thank individually. All churchwardens have been terrific in their commitment to their churches, as have many PCC members. Also, none of this would have been possible without the ongoing commitment from our retired clergy, readers and lay leaders. Personally I would like to thank the Ashford Group Church Wardens, PCC's and congregations, as they understood the pressures that were present in the other groups, and helped me to work with the wider aspects of the LTM knowing they would lose much personal interest from my time towards their parishes. Also, I must not forget the support given by Canon Jeffrey Wilcox, Bishop Michael Bourke, Rural Dean Ashley Buck and Deanery Lay-Co Chair Henry Chance. These individuals have all worked either in front of or behind the scenes tirelessly throughout the last 9+ months.

Thank you to all who have supported my ministry during what has been a very demanding year.

God bless you all,

***Kelvin.***

## **CHURCH OFFICERS' REPORTS**

### **Churchwardens' Report**

This has been a challenging year dominated by the departure of our Rector, Ven. Colin Williams and an Episcopal Visitation.

No-one could have predicted a year ago how the year would unfold. A wonderful job opportunity arose for Colin in May as an Archdeacon in the Diocese of Europe and after prayerful consideration he took the post. When Colin left us he had been our Rector for five years.

We make no apology for again paying tribute to Colin's kindness, dedication and enthusiasm as our Rector. During his time here the church reconnected with the town and its institutions. When walking through Ludlow with Colin it was amazing how many people spoke to him. This was Colin's gift. He reached out beyond the church building to people wherever they were. At the same time, he had a passion for excellence in the worship of God, whether through music, word or St Laurence's church and its treasures. Colin is missed but typically he keeps in touch through social media, such is his enthusiasm for life and people.

Before Colin left Bishop Richard announced his intention to conduct an Episcopal Visitation. This and an associated Visitation regarding finances took place in the autumn and the confidential findings of the visitation reports were presented to the Bishops of Hereford and Ludlow immediately before Christmas. The two Bishops met the full PCC on 14 February 2016 and shared with it the reports' findings having made verbal statements simultaneously to the two church congregations of St Laurence's and St John's earlier that day. Our acting Rector Kelvin Price sets out in his report more about the visitation process and what happens next.

Before Colin left the wardens discussed with him how the vacancy could be best managed. It was decided that a vacancy management group (VMG) be formed that would handle the day to day administration of the church and also work closely with the Acting Rector, Kelvin Price, and the retired clergy on pastoral matters and church services. The VMG met regularly and reported to both the Finance and Standing Committee and the full PCC. The group consisted of the two St. Laurence's wardens, treasurer, administrator, clerk of works, vacancy chaplain and chair of fabric. Its work was purely connected with St. Laurence's matters and not St John's.

Recognising that staff costs play a large role in the budget and that this needed to be better managed a strategic staffing review was undertaken. This led to a reduction in staff costs of around 10%, full details are in the vacancy newsletters. It was also recognised that without a rector it was vital to communicate to the church and the wider community as much and as quickly as possible. This led to regular vacancy newsletters that gave details of matters going to the PCC for consideration, staffing changes etc. The churchwardens and staff also agreed to hold coffee mornings on one Saturday a month in church so that people could come and talk about matters with the team informally. As the winter approached it became apparent to the VMG that there could be a perception that it was fulfilling a role better suited to various sub-committees of the PCC. The VMG therefore disbanded and much of its

work went to the relevant PCC sub-committees and the Standing Committee (SC) was strengthened. The SC meets 12 times a year and reports directly to the full PCC, which meets bi-monthly but often with additional special meetings in between.

The wardens meet with the treasurer and other staff members on Mondays informally to keep in touch with things going on and ensure forthcoming events, services and so on have been properly planned. The treasurer also gives a progress report on finance at these get-togethers. No decisions are taken but things are flagged up that need to be taken to the various PCC sub-committees or the full PCC for discussion or a decision.

The numbers of people regularly attending the three services on Sundays is very encouraging – a typical Sunday sees around 135 people. Remembrance Sunday saw a record 720 attend and Christingle 656 including 383 children.

The church finances continue to take up a lot of PCC time. We are immensely grateful for the sterling work that Michael Hunt our treasurer has put in over the last 12 months, also Lyddia Pearson our book-keeper. Thanks to their efforts the PCC has a much better understanding of how the finances work than has been the case for many years. A lot of progress has been made in balancing the books and we are delighted to report that the £25,000 loan from St. Giles' church was fully repaid during the year and the Parish Share for 2016 is being paid in regular monthly instalments. We hope to be in a position to pay the balance of Parish share for 2014 later this year.

Many events have taken place in the church over the year, mentioned in various editions of the Tower magazine. To give a broad idea, two art exhibitions (one hosted by Ludlow Arts Society and the other the regular Young at Art exhibition held in the autumn), regular concerts by Ludlow Choral Society, Bodenham's Fashion Show, the annual festival of music and the arts held in June including a gala dinner in the chancel, medieval bazaar and much more.

We continue to have two toddler groups meeting in church, on Wednesday and Friday mornings. Messy Church has also been held in church on a Sunday afternoon on several occasions.

Life and Learning courses organised by Barry Forrester continue to attract good numbers and we are grateful to Barry for organising these. Barry also organises guided tours of the church during the tourist season and again we thank him and the guides for their commitment to this.

Vision and Fabric Committees continue to work very hard behind the scenes and we are very grateful to all who support the church in this way. Reports from both Committees are contained elsewhere in this report.

The church has a mission to the wider world too, and the umbrella for this is the Outward Concern Group. Much excellent work is undertaken by the Group and we record our

immense thanks to all involved. A full report of the Group's work is contained elsewhere in this report.

There are more thanks to record than usual due to everyone having more work than previously, such is the nature of a long rector vacancy. Two people, however, deserve our very special thanks, Canon Jeffrey Wilcox and Bishop Michael Bourke. Jeffrey has stepped in as Vacancy Chaplain, which meant he has conducted a lot more church services – he has also been chaplain to the Town Council (a role undertaken previously by Colin) and of course has dealt with pastoral issues as these have arisen and as Chairman of the Pastoral Committee. Bishop Michael has acted as a mentor to the churchwardens, a wise critical friend. His kindly manner and approachability was invaluable during the protracted visitation process. Bishop Michael has also taken services and preached for which we thank him. Both will, we hope, continue to work with us over the remaining months of the vacancy.

We thank Shaun Ward and Gemma King for all their work not just with the choir that everyone sees on Sundays but also the five to eight-year old singers that come along on Thursday nights. We thank the parents of the young people too because it is a big commitment bringing their children along every week. We thank those members of the Children's Committee who have provided tea and coffee for the young choir families on Thursday nights. Thanks also go to Roger Judd, our organist, and Robert Green, Richard Walker, Jonathon Nicholls and others standing in when the need has arisen. We thank our sacristan and servers who work tirelessly on our behalf all year round to ensure services run smoothly. We thank the choir for all their efforts, it is a huge commitment for them (and also their partners). It is amazing that in such a small town the choir sings at 9.30 Eucharist and with Matins or Evensong on more than 40 Sundays a year and many additional extra services too.

We are fortunate to have an excellent team of bell ringers and we really appreciate all their work. The sheer joy of hearing the bells at Christmas and Easter and the muffled bells on more solemn occasions is wonderful. We appreciate our hand bell ringing team. Grateful thanks go to those on the Children's committee for their work with our young people. We thank John Burley for his excellent work with the Towers magazine and his editorial team.

A big thank you to Ann Barge who works tirelessly, often unobtrusively behind the scenes, also Christine Brewster and Andrew Body who have taken many services in the church during the vacancy. We also thank all the retired clergy team and readers who have taken services across the whole Ludlow Team Ministry, quite a feat of organisation when many of the churches are far flung and often hold services simultaneously. We thank Pastor Brigitte Malik for all her work, due to clergy vacancies elsewhere much of her time is now spent at St Giles.

We thank all who arrange flowers, clean the church, wash the linen, polish brass and many other jobs, which make the church look so well cared for. Matthew our custodian does a magnificent job and we are grateful to him for all his efforts. The church was given a big spring clean on 27 February and we thank all who took part (over 20 people).

Behind the scenes Shaun, Chris Deaves and John Barrett continue to dig out nuggets from records going back centuries. Grateful thanks go to them for all that they do on the Archives.

Partly as a result of restructuring the role of parish administrator, and partly due to her wish to spend more time with her husband (who has an aircraft that he exhibits all round the world), we said goodbye to Sue Bremner at Christmas. We record our heartfelt thanks for all Sue's work for the PCC and wish her well. The winding-up of the Ludlow Team Ministry also led to changes in what we needed from our Parish Secretary. Julia Hall decided to leave us at Christmas and again we thank her for all her work with us and wish her well. Maureen Stinton and Val Hardwick have taken on Julia's role on a temporary basis and we thank them very much for doing this. We have welcomed Sally Newman-Kidd into the office team. Her role is rather different to that undertaken by Sue Bremner, details of her role are in Vacancy Newsletters. Sally has settled in well and we are very grateful for all her hard work and enthusiasm.

Shaun also has a new role that reflects better the work that the PCC needs him to do. Full details of his role are contained in Vacancy Newsletters. As always Shaun has thrown himself wholeheartedly into the new role and we are very grateful to him for the dedication and knowledge that he brings to the job.

Val Hardwick continues to work tirelessly as PCC Secretary and we are very grateful to her for doing this. Maureen Stinton looks after pew sheets and again we owe her a great debt of gratitude. We have welcomed Lesley Harling as minute taker for the Standing Committee. Lesley's knowledge of committee work as well as her minute taking have been invaluable and we thank her.

We thank all PCC members for their commitment during a difficult year and we thank especially our two deputy wardens, Maureen Stinton and Brian Gardner who regularly serve at Parish Eucharist, festival services, and fill the necessary slots during holidays stepping in when needed to give us a break.

Volunteers working as welcoming stewards and in the shop deserve special thanks. Thanks to them the church is open seven hours daily throughout the year. Our enormous thanks as always go to Di Corston who continues to do sterling work managing the shop and we thank Helen Forrester for all her commitment to the shop over a number of years – she stepped down from her role at the end of 2015. We thank the team of money counters who put in several hours counting the money each week. Fay Carson does excellent work sorting out rotas for stewarding, ably assisted by Rosie Marsh, thank you both.

We thank the chaplaincy team, intercessors, people reading at various services throughout the year and those that work out rotas for them. We thank the front of house team who do a lot of work in many different ways when events are held in the church and also for major church services. We thank the team that puts up and takes down the staging for events - their efficiency is incredible. Jen Davis has worked tirelessly over many years to make the

church environs attractive with bulbs and wild flowers and we thank her for all her work achieving this.

We thank Kelvin Price our acting Team Rector who already has a great deal to do looking after the southern group of parishes in the old LTM and keeping an eye on things in the northern group where there has been a vacancy since May 2015. Kelvin took a wonderful Ludlow School (11 – 16 year-olds) Carol Service in church in December. The comments overheard by worldly-wise 14 year-old boys were very gratifying! The Christingle Service that Kelvin took on 24 December was also a very special occasion. We are very grateful for all Kelvin's help during the vacancy and particularly concerning some aspects of the visitations.

As always there are bound to be organisations or individuals that we have neglected in this report to thank. Please accept our profound apologies for such omissions.

Finally, some words from a well-known hymn, "God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform... His purposes will ripen fast unfolding every hour.... God is His own interpreter and He will make it plain". God does move in ways that we do not readily have the power to understand but good things are done at St Laurence's to promote God's kingdom and we can all achieve even more over the coming years.

God bless you all.

***Jim Hooper & Jane Robinson March 2015***

### **Secretary's Report on the Parochial Church Council**

The PCC held eleven meetings during 2015, six ordinary and five extraordinary, in various venues. The average attendance was 14. Matters considered by the PCC ranged from the Vision Project, Finance, a Vacancy Strategy to cover the day to day administration during the vacancy. This has been an especially difficult and challenging year where the PCC had to make difficult decisions regarding the Parish Share, and agreeing strategies to balance the accounts. The Episcopal Visitation left the PCC bewildered and frustrated with the lack of terms of reference and with deep hurt and dismay at the criticisms which prompted the Visitation. The PCC will endeavour to promote reconciliation as suggested by Bishop Richard. The reorganisation of the committees ensured the PCC are kept informed of events, proposals and matters discussed on a broad range of issues.

Four new members of the PCC were appointed at the AGM for one year only. This was to comply with the resolution to reduce the number of laity to the PCC which was carried and to be implemented at this meeting. Deanery Synod representatives remained the same.

***Valerie Hardwick PCC Secretary***

### **Report of the Electoral Roll Officer**

On the 3 April 2016 the total number of parishioners on the Church Electoral Roll for the combined churches was 223, a slight increase on 2015 figure. Of the total 165 normally worship at St Laurence's and 66 at St John's. The remainder worship at both.

***Dick Franks, Electoral Roll Officer***

## **ANNUAL REPORT ON ACTIVITIES OF ST. JOHN'S CHURCH**

### **Main achievements during the year**

Below are listed the main achievements of St John's during 2015 set in the context of a nave which remains closed because of the risk of falling plaster, although this risk has only become a reality twice since closure was decreed in December 2013.

- 1. Progress towards Achieving Independent Parish Status.** Following the presentation of the Mission Action Plan to the PCC in December 2014 it became apparent that the existing governance structure was not realistically capable of simultaneously managing two major development plans, and acting on the advice and with the support of the Bishop of Ludlow proposals were developed to abolish the existing Parish of Ludlow and replace it with two independent parishes, Ludlow St Laurence and Ludlow St John. Although not universally supported in the existing Parish (though almost unanimously so in St John's) this proposal was narrowly approved by the PCC and has now completed the first round of consultation, being at the time of writing with the Church Commissioners. It is expected the process will be completed in 2016, although this cannot be regarded as guaranteed. Whilst this process has been ongoing St John's, again acting on the advice of the Bishop of Ludlow, has not attempted to pursue its plans to raise funds for developing the building though one substantial grant (9.2k) has been obtained to help fund the appointment of an architect to draw up plans to repair and re-order St John's Church, once St John's has achieved independent status, and the ability to take its own decisions.
- 2. The continuation of discussion with Living Waters Christian Fellowship.** Both St John's and Living Waters were greatly encouraged by their initial discussions and the Diocesan authorities have likewise provided active encouragement and support which has been greatly appreciated by both communities. Whilst discussions are paused at the moment, the achievement of independent parish status will allow the resumption and acceleration of progress towards achieving a shared mission strategy, and a building much better suited to support it.
- 3. The continuation of existing pastoral activities:** Existing contributions to pastoral work across the parish include marriage and baptism preparation. These continued and in June 2016 St John's will host its first wedding for some years whilst some smaller funerals have been able to be accommodated where mourners in attendance have not been expected to be more than about 50. There were no baptisms during the period unfortunately. The coffee mornings for the recently bereaved have continued either in private homes or in the Church on some occasions. Members continue to take Holy Communion on a monthly basis to residential homes. Another member maintains his involvement with ACTS and with colleagues from across the group, regularly prepares and conducts worship in local schools.
- 4. The continuation of outreach to children and young families, involvement with the Parents and Toddlers groups and support of whole parish activities:** The Parent and Toddlers Group, initiated by Sue Thomas, and its successful spin off second group, have continued to meet in St Laurence's with Sue continuing to lead the activities, assisted by Sandi Burley of St Laurence's and a number of other helpers from other churches or from none.

**5. Maintaining social fund raising through use of charity market stall, coffee mornings and other events.** The unavailability of the nave has continued to restrict the range of fund-raising events such as concerts or exhibitions that can be mounted, but a considerable amount has still been achieved. Once again thanks go to Carla Phelps who continues to operate a charity market stall on behalf of the church. The number of coffee mornings held in private homes remains roughly the same as for last year and attendance remains buoyant. A very successful Bingo evening was held at Ludlow Bowling Club and there are plans to repeat this event. Once again we are pleased to acknowledge the generosity of other congregations in Ludlow who remain unstintingly generous in our support. This is not something we can claim to have achieved but we are profoundly grateful for the Christian love and support shown to us and wish to acknowledge it publicly.

**6. Continued support of CTAL inspired projects:** Members of the congregation remain enthusiastic in their support of the food bank which is organised through the Baptist Church. Preliminary discussions have taken place about the establishment of a Ludlow Good Neighbour scheme to be based at St John's when the building is back in full action. The bible study group, run by John Robson, continues with other members from the ecumenical community.

**7. Meeting pastoral needs within the congregation:** Members of the congregation have continued to visit those who through infirmity are unable to come to church. As need arises, lifts to hospital or for shopping are given, and in some cases, financial advice. This is carried out informally and people check periodically with each other so that those in need do not 'fall through the net'.

***Brian Childs: March 2016***

## **MISSION**

### **Worship**

2015-16 has been another successful year in the worshipping life of St Laurence's. Our regular patterns of worship, both weekday and weekend are very well attended, with an average of 150 in church across the three Sunday services. We continue to welcome many visitors both from the UK and abroad. Christmas and Easter were very busy with nearly 700 at the Christingle, and nearly 350 at the Easter Day services. Other highlights have included the All Souls Eucharist and the recent High Sheriff Service. Messy Church continues to grow in success and we are always open to hosting and developing additional and complementary forms of worship. During the course of the year we have also welcomed a number of visiting choirs, including Gonville & Caius College, the Derby Singers and Lucton School.

We are grateful to our team of excellent and dedicated musicians, Shaun, Gemma and Roger, for all that they do to encourage music in the parish, and for all those adults, children and parents who take part in our worshipping life in the parish choirs. Our continued commitment to nurturing young talent has paid dividends and we see many creative and successful young musicians passing through our ranks. Week by week we welcome around 20 children through our training choir Little Trebs and the ranks of the treble line of our main choir. The choir has also welcomed two new sopranos, Bev and Junia. Considerable effort goes into the major liturgical seasons including Christmas and Easter; we are rightly proud of all that the choir achieves on our behalf. The choir excelled themselves in the summer with a spirited performance of Purcell's Dido & Aeneas as part of our growing Summer Arts Festival.

We are extremely proud of Patrick Dunachie, our first choral scholar, who has been appointed to the King Singers, as well as Jonathan Nicholls, our first Organ Scholar who has been appointed to posts at Moor Park and Bedstone Schools. 'Their sound has gone out into all lands'.

As already mentioned by the churchwardens, the commitment and standard of the bell ringers increases year by year in the eight years since the restoration of the bells; there are regular positive comments on our twitter account from visitors and residents. The bells have received a quinquennial service by Whitechapel Foundry and are now considered one of the finest peals in the diocese. We are very grateful for their superb ringing throughout the year and the leadership of Tony Gretorex, Tower Captain. There has been some notable ringing this year, including the rarely-heard Dorian mode on Remembrance Sunday and the fully-muffled ringing on Good Friday.

Our team of servers continues to work hard and provide support to officiating clergy. This year they have welcomed a new member, Tim Hughes. Particular thanks go to Antonia as sacristan who works tirelessly behind the scenes.

Mention must also be made of Liz Gardener and the flower team, who have provided stunning displays throughout the year, and particularly at Christmas and Easter.

Vacancies can be challenging and with this in mind we are committed to not making any

significant changes to our worshipping life without an incumbent in post. That said, I'm grateful to my colleagues Andrew Body and Christine Brewster who have joined the Liturgy and Music Committee. Between us we have reviewed the way in which funerals and weddings are both promoted, booked and supported. We are also hoping to provide training and support to readers and intercessors in the near future. We are particularly grateful to Preb. Ann Barge who continues to organise the clergy rotas for the town churches.

**Canon Jeffrey Wilcox**

### **Chaplaincy Team Report**

The Chaplaincy Team endeavours to:

- say prayers on the hour
- provide a listening ear for people in the church who need someone with whom to talk and/or pray.

To support each other, we meet every three months, to:

- exchange experiences, without identifying the people concerned
- identify training needs
- broadcast training opportunities
- report on training received
- update our rota

At the moment, we are constrained by the number of chaplains we have available.

Although one member is joining the team, we are still only able to cover one two-hour period four [soon to be five] days a week.

It is our earnest desire to be able to cover all the hours the church is open to the public. To this end, we would request that church members consider the possibility of joining the team training will be provided.

***Rosie Marsh, coordinator of Chaplains***

### **Pastoral Group Report 2015**

The Pastoral Group is a combination of the Pastoral Committee and the Link Group, and was reconstituted in September, 2015. Since then, we have met three times.

The Pastoral Group endeavours to ensure:

- all members of the Ludlow churches feel cared for, whether they are regular or occasional attenders, or are no longer able to attend.
- new members are made to feel welcome, and are continued to be made welcome
- nobody ceases to attend without their absence being followed up
- communion is taken to the homes of those people who wish to take communion but can no longer attend church.

To keep abreast of parishioners' changing circumstances and to support each other, we meet every three months, to:

- exchange information about those for whom we have a concern
- identify people who might be able, and be willing, to assist in keeping in touch with those for whom we have a concern

- identify training needs
- broadcast training opportunities
- report on training received.

Our on-going concern is that our congregations are aging: hence there are more people needing our support and fewer of us to give that support.

***Rosie Marsh, on behalf of the Pastoral Group***

## **Children and Young People Group Report 2015/16**

*(Previously The Children's Committee)*

The Children's Group has met several times throughout the year as necessary.

**Terms of Reference (Draft):** The following were agreed provisionally on 7 March 2016 with a change of title to include young people:

Normally chaired by the incumbent or a PCC Vice-Chair, the purpose of the Children's and Young People's Group of the parish of St Laurence with St Johns, Ludlow is:

- to exchange information and ideas for the development of children's and young people's activities in our community;
- to encourage children and young people, whether church attenders or not, to feel welcomed and comfortable in church where access to its activities are theirs by right;
- to ensure that safeguarding provisions are fully met by the Safeguarding officer; to ensure that appropriate insurance conditions are in place;
- to submit an annual report on the Group's activities to the PCC Secretary for inclusion in the Parish Annual Report.

### **Junior Choir**

On Thursdays in term time Little Trebles (the under 8s) and the Training Choir meet before the main choir practice. (See the choir report).

### **Sunday Worship and Teaching**

In term time there is teaching for children and young people during the 9.30 Sunday service which serves the choir and any other children who might want to join in. They are following a programme called 'Searchlights' which ties in with the weekly lectionary readings. There is occasionally an addition or change to the programme to fit in with special events or seasons. The results of these sessions are usually displayed on the notice board in the Children's Corner. There are three regular leaders who work on a rota system.

### **Children's Corner**

The Children's Corner has continued to be used widely by visitors during the week and more occasionally by children attending Sunday Worship. Its position near the door has advantages and disadvantages but in general it is working well. We are grateful to the Ludlow Mascall Centre for the loan of posters at Christmas and Easter, supplementing our own posters which we use during the year.

### **Happy Bags and Activity Packs**

There are three Happy Bags (for infants) and three Family Packs (for older children) which can be used by families in the pews during a service.

### **The Christingle Service**

Members of the Children's Committee, together with a number of helpers, prepared about 300 Christingles on Christmas Eve morning. This is always a highly organized but enjoyable activity. The Christingle Service was much enjoyed by all who came (about 700) and £300 was raised for The Children's Society.

### **Other Regular Events**

Two separate Parent and Toddler groups meet in St Laurence's throughout the year; on Fridays there are about 25-30 toddlers and parents, and on Wednesdays there are 15-20.

Roughly quarterly Messy Church meets in St Laurence's and has an attendance of about 70 (this includes children, their families, leaders and helpers).

### **Occasional Events**

There are one-off visits from schools, some of which are programmed by the schools themselves and some planned in conjunction with input from the church.

The annual 'Young at Art' exhibition has become popular with art work from various schools and other young people's groups.

The annual 'Easter Experience,' which involves Junior School visits to three churches in the town centre, this year was booked by 11 different schools (two of which brought two groups each) so St Laurence Church was visited by about 350 children during three days (March 8, 9, and 10) and the Easter Experience was taken to another independent school on 22 March.

Three members of our congregation are foundation governors at Ludlow CE School.

### **Young at Art - 23 – 26 October 2015**

The third annual (CTAL supported) Young at Art exhibition was held in St Laurence's church at the October Half Term weekend. Submissions were received from the following schools and organisations: Ludlow Infants, Ludlow Juniors, Ludlow C of E (Middle), Onny, & Clee Hill schools; Ludlow College; 'Working Together'; 'Splodge'; Ludlow Foyer for young homeless people; and Ludlow Youth Club. The exhibition was mounted and curated by Planning Group members, and representatives of CTAL and of Ludlow Arts Society. A buffet provided by Ludlow Foyer was enjoyed by visiting children and their families on the first and second days of the exhibition. Once again the creativity and vibrancy of the work was judged by the many visitors to have been a great success. A copy of their comments written in the Visitors' Book is available.

***Jane Robinson, chair, planning group***

## St Laurence Fairtrade Report 2015 for APCM 2016

Ludlow is a Fairtrade Town and St Laurence has been a Fairtrade Church now since 2010. More than 7,500 churches from a range of denominations have also worked to have their support of Fairtrade officially recognised by achieving Fairtrade Church status. We are encouraging more Churches in and around Ludlow to join this number.

St Laurence has made a commitment to use Fairtrade tea, coffee and sugar for all meetings and events. Other Fairtrade products are used where possible. Paterion Fairtrade Communion Wine has been used by all the churches in the Ludlow Team though since the end of 2015, most of the parishes are ordering their own.

The Fairtrade Mark is 21 years old and Fairtrade now reaches over 1.5 million farmers and workers across the globe. However, with around 795 million people around the world undernourished, many in farming communities, there is still a long way to go. In 2015 The Fairtrade Foundation campaign theme was 'Stock Products that Change Lives'.

The 2016 Fairtrade Fortnight 'Big Breakfast' theme highlights the severe lack of food security around the world. Sheena Biju from Manarcadu Social Service Society (MASS) has been invited to Ludlow, to tell the story of the difference Fairtrade has made to producers in her cooperative in Kerala.

St Laurence Shop sells a variety of Fairly traded products mainly gifts and crafts from various suppliers though not from Traidcraft.

**Traidcraft's mission** is to fight poverty through trade and is the UK's leading fair trade organisation. It's work with producers and international development relies very much on Churches. To this end we have continued to hold a variety of stalls over the year and draw attention to current campaigns.

### Total Traidcraft Sales Jan-Dec 2015

<b>£647.35</b>	Mini stalls	After 09.30 Eucharist - on 1 <sup>st</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> Sundays of month
<b>£300.00</b>	Artisan Craft Fayre	12 Sept 2015
<b>£375.64</b>	Mediaeval Fayre	28 Nov 2015
<b>£527.11</b>	St Laurence Shop	
<b>£1,850.10</b>	<b>TOTAL SALES</b>	
	Included in above	
£338.43	Fairtrade Fortnight Stall	23 Feb-8 March 2015
£283.54	Harvest Stall	30 Sept -7 Oct 2015

Just over 5% of sales has been returned to St Laurence in the form of Traidcraft sugar and tea.

### **Penelope A Bridstrup**

St Laurence Outward Concern Group Ludlow Fairtrade Town Group, Traidcraft Fairtrader

### **Ludlow Langwasser Link Report for St Laurence APCM 2016**

The personal friendship of our late Avril Norton and German friends during the 1950s and sixties, motivated by the desire for 'Reconciliation' led to a connection with the Paul Gerhardt Church in a New Town called Langwasser near Nuremberg. The meadowland on which the town was built on had been used as a camping ground for the NAZI Rallies and later as a Russian PoW camp, then a camp for German refugees from the Eastern Territories. The town was built as a sign of hope, renewal and reconciliation. The Lutheran Church built a Church of the Passion, and three named after Lutheran Martyrs including Paul Gerhardt, our link church. The link soon grew into a Diocesan Link with Kirchenkreis Nuremberg. Theological discourse followed, more parish links blossomed. There are exchanges of Curates, placements of clergy including Brigitte Malik (she belongs to a different part of the Bavarian Lutheran Church). Cooperation and sharing of Theology are thriving. In the middle of this the Ludlow Langwasser Link is suffering from link fatigue, largely because both parishes have vacancies, Langwasser is now filled, Pfarrer Joerg Gunsenheimer is their new Incumbent. Here in Ludlow we are now waiting for a new Incumbent in due course. Incumbent's support is so very important for successes of the link. That is my experience in more than 25 years of Euro Links. We have a number of keen people who want to take the work forward.

***Juergen Bridstrup (priest, retired) March 2016***

### **LIFE & LEARNING @ LUDLOW**

Life & Learning @ Ludlow, or LLL for short, is the name of our adult learning programme which seeks to broaden understanding and initiate debate on theology, social issues and the arts. It was inaugurated in October 2012. The aim for the programme is to stimulate the interest of people of faith who want to reflect deeply on how their faith impacts on their engagement with the world around them, and also appeal to those with no faith commitment who are interested in exploring the Christian perspective on contemporary issues. Events are open to all people from the town and beyond regardless of religious affiliation.

The 2015/16 programme comprised:

- a study day entitled 'Sorrowful but always rejoicing: The Theology of Vincent van Gogh' led by the Revd Iain Lane
- a lecture entitled 'Real Bible Study' by the Very Revd Dr Jeffrey John
- a lecture entitled 'Putting Jesus in His (Rightful) Place: The Gospels in the light of recent research' given by the Revd Dr Chris Moore
- a series of four talks exploring the theme 'Pilgrimage' both spiritual and physical as viewed by the three Abrahamic faiths given by Dr Dee Dyas (York University), Dr Haifaa Jawad (Birmingham University), Rabbi Dr Norman Solomon (Oxford University) and the Very Revd Michael Tavinor (Dean of Hereford)
- the 'Bishop's Ludlow Lecture' given by the Right Revd Richard Frith, Bishop of Hereford

The response to these learning opportunities has been most encouraging with an average attendance of 43 (up from 41 in 2014/15) over the course of the 8 sessions. The majority of attendees are members of the Anglican churches in Ludlow. However there are a number from the Ludlow Methodist Church and also some Ludlow Quakers. We also attract people living further afield - Leominster, Church Stretton, Clun, Presteigne and Knighton.

Planning for the next programme, expected to run from October 2016, is well in hand. We are also exploring the possibility of holding a Sixth Form Conference in St Laurence's based on the format of BBC Question Time.

Those wishing to register an interest in receiving a copy of the 2016/17 programme once it has been finalised are asked to email: [lifeandlearning@stlaurences.org.uk](mailto:lifeandlearning@stlaurences.org.uk) or phone: 01584 872073.

**Barry Forrester**

### **LUDLOW TEAM MINISTRY MOTHERS' UNION ANNUAL REPORT 2016**

Our programme this year has included talks on Hildegard of Bingen, The Lutheran Church, Iona and in Lent a Meditation.

For our outing we visited the Magnis Group Mothers' Union, touring some of the churches in the group and taking tea with their members.

In May we held a Coffee Morning in aid of MU Overseas Funds and in October we led Midday Prayers at the Cathedral.

Our AGM was in October, chaired by Rev'd Jeffrey Wilcox. Sadly none of our members felt able to take up the role of Branch Leader or Secretary and so reluctantly it was agreed that the branch would close at the end of the year.

Our Carol Service was in December followed by a service to close the branch.

Some members have become Diocesan Members, so will continue to be in touch with events in the Diocese.

We extend our thanks to all who have supported the branch throughout the years through prayer and contributions to our fund raising.

**Barbara Penson**

### **Outward Concern Group Annual Report 2015 – 2016**

**Terms of Reference**, in summary these are: To consider the ways in which the people of St Laurence's can identify issues of social justice, peace, and environmental concerns and make a contribution to their solution; to inform and enthuse St Laurence's church membership on the above issues, looking for ways and for support by which assistance might be given; to advise the PCC annually on local, national and international priorities for Outreach Giving, and to apply the PCC's policy in this respect.

1. **Meetings:** The Group met on three occasions, 07.07.15; 19.11.15; & 11.02.16.
2. **Membership:** Penelope Bridstrup, Dr Brian Childs, Dr Lesley Gosbee-Harper, Michael Hunt, Peter Pardoe, Rev. John Perry, John Polley, Dr Jane Robinson (chair).
  - 2.1 **Activities related to monetary giving** during the past 12 months have been considerably influenced by the financial situation in which St Laurence's has

found itself. A table showing all the donations made by St Laurence's congregations during 2015 may be found at the end of this report. This information is also published annually in the February issue of the Ludlow Towers magazine. At the end of 2015 an Outward Concern noticeboard was placed in the south porch which provides illustrations of outward giving for visitors.

**2.2 Activities in kind** that have been supported by members of the St Laurence's and St John's congregations during the year include: Tenbury No Interest Loan Scheme (NILS), Hereford Diocesan Ordinand's Training Appeal, CTAL Young at Art, Messy Church, CTAL Food Bank, Traidcraft & the Langwasser link. Outreach to visitors as part of the annual Mediaeval Fayre is also supported. The Outward Concern Group reports on these activities in its notes of meetings & individual reports can be found elsewhere in this annual report. Jane Robinson also attends the Ludlow Youth Partnership. This involves numerous voluntary and statutory organisations working for young people in South Shropshire.

**3. Notes of all meetings** have been circulated for distribution to the PCC.

### **Outward Concern 2015**

What could be given to other charities was limited in 2015 by St Laurence's financial situation. Nevertheless, with the approval of Michael Hunt, Hon Treasurer, the Outward Concern Group agreed unanimously to donate to the following charities:

- Us (new name for USPG) Rapid relief fund for refugees (international) £ 500
- Church Urban Fund for the relief of urban poverty (national) £ 500
- NILS, No Interest Loan Scheme (local) £ 500

**Total** **£1500**

A donation of £40 from the Jane Higginson Charity was also passed to the Ludlow Food Bank.

Letters of thanks have been received.

The following amounts were also received in retiring/special collections during 2015 and donated as shown:

- Christian Aid (Nepal earthquake) £ 212.00
- Mothers' Union (Mothering Sunday) £ 116.79
- Us Rapid relief fund for refugees £ 47.34
- UNICEF Vanuata Cyclone relief £ 290.19
- Ordinand Yohana Kiango (Tanzania) £ 264.26
- Royal British Legion £ 444.89
- The Children's Society £ 300.00

**Total** **£1675.47**

*Jane Robinson, Chair*

### **Tenbury NILS Feedback from Ludlow Trustee, John Polley**

NILS in Ludlow continues to offer loans to people on benefits, enabling them to purchase much-needed white goods, carpets and other essentials. NILS advances interest-free loans of up to £400, with repayments spread over up to two years. We are insistent that loans are spent on good quality commodities and acknowledge our gratitude to two local firms – **Ludlow Home Care** and **Capitol Carpets** – for organising discounts on purchases. Both companies were thanked during 2015. We are convinced that advancing money for quality products ensures the dignity of the scheme and encourages pride in possession.

Above all, NILS is grateful to public bodies and private individuals whose generous donations underwrite the loans we are able to advance. It is, for instance, one of the Mayor of Tenbury's official charities

The Ludlow office is located in Harvest House at the Foyer. Currently it opens every Tuesday and Thursday from 11.00 am – 2.00 pm. Four local volunteers operate a Tuesday rota: Ian Barge, Don Millington, Jim Hooper and John Polley. The office on Thursday is run by Lynne Shute.

From my experience, loans are repaid reliably and fully. Some prefer to make the repayments by standing order while a smaller number prefer to repay their loans in person and using cash. It is quite clear from the reception that the volunteers are given by our clients that our work and the tangible benefits that we are able to give people are fully appreciated.

As Ludlow's Trustee, I feel privileged to play a part, however small, in what NILS has to offer. I struggle to think of anyone whom we have turned away but I am happy to record that a small yet significant number of people have been genuinely assisted at really stressful moments in their lives.

***John Polley***

### **Christian Aid report**

The town's Christian Aid committee has three main money raising events a year, when we work cooperatively with all the churches in Ludlow to raise money for our brothers and sisters across the world, who are in great need e.g. the current drought in Zimbabwe and Ethiopia; helping to change attitudes and raise awareness of the needs of minority groups, in parts of Africa e.g. children with disabilities, who may be kept/hidden away at home and therefore miss out on education; or working to mitigate the worst effects and meet the immediate needs of displaced people e.g. those fleeing Syria and Afghanistan.

Two of the main events are locally determined - the street collection held the Saturday before Christmas, starting with carol singing at the Buttercross; and the Friday lunches held on six successive Fridays in Lent with each church hosting a particular Friday.

We also all enjoy the coffee morning held at the Feathers in August, when thanks to the hotel, who do not charge for the room or for the coffee, every penny is profit.

The committee is very grateful to all the willing volunteers within our midst who work so hard to ensure the success of these events. Without such commitment and generosity of time, the town would be unable to contribute to the church's Christian witness of helping our brothers and sisters across the world. These events raise about £2,500 between them.

The major money raising event is the nationally organised - Christian Aid Week. This raises about 75% of the money raised across the country. We may not enjoy knocking on strangers' doors, in fact some dread it (but a few enjoy it, yes, really! ) whilst acknowledging this, and that collecting in some streets is easier than in others. If we think of the needs of those who will benefit from our gifts, what price our feelings? If you offer for 10 doors rather than a street, we would be delighted. There are some streets we are unable to cover and the number of collectors reduces as stalwarts get older. If you have collected before, thank you, you will hear from your area organiser shortly. If you are planning to join us, please ring me, and I will put you in touch with the organiser of the area where you live. Last year Ludlow raised £9,211 in Christian Aid week. Please help us to beat that this year. I will finish by quoting again part of a letter, published in the Church Times last year, from a Kenyan now living in London he wrote

".....as a Kenyan, I have witnessed the transformation of many lives in Kenya through projects sponsored by Christian Aid addressing needs such as sanitation, environment, conservation, education and many more. Now that I live on the other side of the globe, I am privileged to give to Christian Aid. ...."

And we are privileged to be able to work to raise money for such projects. A very big thank you to you all for all you do. Please continue to pray for the work of Christian Aid, for its witness and for all those who are working in Christian Aid projects overseas

**Claire Wilcox**

### **Spirituality Group – Report for 2015/16**

**The weekly Wednesday morning contemplation** continues to be the mainstay of the group. A brief focus for reflection is followed by 30 minutes silent contemplation. Coffee is available for those who wish to stay afterwards. The average attendance is 12. Overall there are 24 members.

**June 24<sup>th</sup> 2015 A Quiet Day**, was held at Walford Grange and led by Revd. Mike Catling.

**Advent '15 Silent Prayer** on Fridays at midday in the Lady Chapel.

**Advent Contemplation** – the group was led by Revd. Keith Crouch.

**Lent Contemplation 2016** – Rachael Davenhill has led, using photographs and readings illustrating the Refugee crisis in Lebanon, as experienced by her daughter Lauren.

**The Quiet Garden at Walford Grange.** Carole Dixon has joined the Quiet Garden Trust and her garden is available for those who value a quiet space on the first Friday of the month, from 10am to 3pm, March to October. There is a led meditation at midday. You are welcome to just drop in during the day if you prefer. Tea and coffee is available.

**Mailing List** We have a mailing list of those who wish to be informed of any events that we are organizing – this is an ecumenical list. Anyone wishing to add their names to this list is invited to contact Pat Helm 877683 or Helen Blyth 875041.

**Helen Blyth March 2016**

### **Arts @ St Laurence's Report**

**Mission:** The mission of Arts@StLaurence's, established in 2013, is to enable the people of Ludlow and its environs to experience and enjoy classical music of a high quality, professional standard. This it achieves by the promotion and organisation of a range of

musical performances in St Laurence's Church Ludlow, working in concert with the Ludlow Arts: Classical consortium.

**Summer Festival:** June 2015 saw a week-long programme of concerts, recitals and talks of a very high artistic standard, devised by Arts@StLaurence's under the leadership of Artistic Director Shaun Ward. Highlights included a performance of JS Bach's *Goldberg Variations* played by Charles Owen. Young performers featured prominently, including Ludlow's Patrick Dunachie. There were also welcome return visits from Tom Bowes (violin) and Victor Lim (piano), the latter including a breath-taking performance of Bartok's Piano Sonata in his recital. The final concert, involving the home team's "Ludlow Festival Chorus" included a performance of Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*. The week ended with a highly successful Candlelit Gala Festival Dinner held in the Chancel; an event which is likely to become an annual fixture.

An exciting programme is in place for the Summer Arts Festival at St Laurence's in 2016 (part of a joint venture *Three Weeks in Ludlow* with the Rooftop Theatre and the Ludlow Fringe), and planning is already well under way for 2017.

**Organ Recitals:** The well-established summer organ recital series continued successfully in 2015 attracting increased audiences. Henry Fairs of the University of Birmingham gave the Gala Recital that formed a part of the Summer Arts Festival. Other recitalists included cathedral organists and conservatoire students. An extended series of eight recitals is scheduled for 2016.

**Educational Outreach:** The third strand of activity focuses on educational outreach to local schools, led by Gemma King, Assistant Director of Music. This includes a major event in the Summer Arts Festival attracting hundreds of schoolchildren to St Laurence's: Peter and the Wolf and an introduction to the organ in 2015; a "Big Sing" in 2016. The *Little Trebles* singing group for 5 – 8 years olds has grown to 10 children after a social media push. Junior choir members have also risen to 10.

#### **Ewart Carson March 2016**

#### **Stewarding at St. Laurence's 2015 – 2016**

The stewards of St. Laurence's have continued to give excellent service whether filling regular or occasional slots; thank you to all of you. We could not keep the church open seven days a week throughout the year without your commitment and willingness to be part of the St. Laurence's team. Comments in the visitor's book always reflect the warm welcome you give to those who choose to visit our beautiful building.

2015 saw the introduction of the Lavazza coffee machine, used by both stewards and members of the public. With our encouragement visitors are now appreciating this new facility.

We have recruited several new stewards and a few have left us. If anyone is interested in becoming a steward – a truly rewarding experience meeting people from all over the world – please contact Sally Newman-Kidd via the office, or myself, thank you.

**Fay Carson**

### **Guided Tours of St. Laurence's**

Since 2013 we have offered free guided tours of the church every Saturday afternoon throughout the summer months except when the building is in use for other events. This was extended in 2014 when, on certain Saturdays when the town was expected to be especially busy, we offered two free guided tours – one in the late morning and the other, as usual, in the early afternoon. At the same time, we have continued to provide pre-booked guided tours throughout the year for visiting private groups (for a small charge in aid of St Laurence's) and for school visits (at no charge).

Some statistics which compare last year with 2014 follow:

<b>Type of Tour</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>
Saturday tours (free)	26 tours with numbers attending ranging from 0 to 12 with an average of 6	24 tours with numbers attending ranging from 0 to 12 with an average of 5
Pre booked tours (charged)	5 tours comprising 56 adults	3 tours comprising 94 adults
Visiting school groups (free)	8 groups comprising 120 pupils	1 group comprising 50 pupils
St Laurence volunteers (free)	0	2 groups comprising 32 adults

Saturday guided tours restarted this year at Easter and will continue through to mid-November. Because of a continuing lack of take up we have decided to end the experiment of offering a second guided tour on a Saturday morning but to concentrate instead on the Saturday afternoon tours. It is hoped that more prominent advertising will result in an increase in numbers attending those.

Two developments are proposed for this year:

- Even when no one has appeared for a Saturday guided tour, the guide will stay and offer a roving service to anyone exploring the church
- We hope to identify other busy times and days of the year when a 'roving guide' might be scheduled to be on duty

None of this would be possible without the support of the present team of 10 volunteer guides who freely give of their time. Additional guides are always welcome, and anyone interested in exploring what is involved should contact me on 01584 878872.

***Barry Forrester***

## FABRIC

### Fabric Committee Report

Fabric Committee continues to take responsibility for all the buildings and associated property of the Parish. The principal activities overseen by Fabric Committee during the year are as follows:

**St Laurence's Church:** Further repairs and conservation works have been undertaken during the past year, continuing the policy of '*a stitch in time....*'. These are detailed in the accompanying report of the Vision Project.

Thanks are due to Paul, during his time as Verger, and now Matthew, as Custodian, for their 'ownership' of the building and all their efforts to ensure that the church building is welcoming to pilgrims and visitors alike. Our retained contractors continue to undertake minor repairs quickly and efficiently within a predetermined budget.

**Churchyard wall:** Liability for the repairs has now been accepted by Ludlow Town Council which will enable the necessary planning process to be put into effect.

**St John's Church:** The state of the fabric of St John's Church has remained essentially unchanged over the past year such that, on Health and Safety Grounds, only the Chancel is available for regular Sunday worship. The Nave will remain closed until such time as Fabric Committee might be able to approve proposals for repair, the carrying out of extensive works as required by past quinquennial reviews, and modifications to the building that, together, would afford strong evidence for the building to have a sustainable future. The views of Fabric Committee in response to such a submission expected later in 2016 will help to inform any subsequent decision by the PCC as to whether such works as proposed should be undertaken. However, it should be noted that a separate parish of St John's, with its own PCC, may come into being prior to any proposals coming to Fabric Committee. In such case all responsibilities for the St John's building would transfer to the St John's PCC.

**No.2 College Street:** During the year, some decorative works have been undertaken and the flat has been refurbished and decorated ready for re-letting.

**Ewart Carson**



### St Leonards Churchyard

The churchyard is beginning to look transformed. This has been achieved by the continuing support and involvement of the Friends. At the last working party we had around twenty-five volunteers including the team from Caring for God's Acre.

Also, we are seeing the results of the grant from the Big Lottery Fund, which has been used to deal with safety matters, conservation of headstones and tombs, and replacing and adding some benches. The yard is looking great with plenty of spring bulbs showing. A good balance between heritage and wildlife has been established, ensuring the green space is

accessible to local people and visitors and it is being used regularly. More interest is being expressed in the heritage. We can see the progress as a result of regular mowing and strimming.

In dealing with headstones, engraved kerbs were uncovered commemorating Bertram Wigmore of the Imperial Yeomanry who fell at Klerksdorp, Transvaal on 25<sup>th</sup> February 1902. It is likely that the memorial has not been seen for around a hundred years. Military records indicate he is buried and commemorated there in a mass grave. It raises the question as to the nature of the burial here in the churchyard.

The Remembrance service conducted by Canon Jeffry Wilcox was once again intimate and moving. Thank you to all who took part. This year it will take place on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> November.

The application for the removal of a large ash tree by the Linney wall is pending, however, tree work remains outstanding following the report commissioned by the PCC. A number of older trees shed branches during the stormy weather which pose a hazard.

Once again there is a big thank you due to Friends of St Leonards for the work that has been undertaken supported by 'Caring for Gods Acre'.

***John Aitkin February 2016***

## **VISION for St. LAURENCE'S**

### **Vision Report**

The Vision for St Laurence's is that there will be a church building conserved, re-ordered and maintained, which provides the necessary infrastructure to support the mission of St Laurence's in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This report describes achievements towards that end over the past year.

#### ***Heating, Lighting & Green Energy Initiatives:***

Failure of almost all the LED lights in the nave led to a "product recall" and a period of several months of inadequate lighting. Following agreement with the suppliers, these LED lights have now been replaced at no cost to the PCC and effective lighting has been restored. An extra, large radiator has been installed in the chancel, which has reduced the draught.

Given adverse changes in government policies, it is not now financially advantageous to proceed with biomass. Equally, whilst still an ethical, green initiative, solar PV is no longer a priority and will only proceed if a suitable source of funding becomes available. Work will shortly begin on making permanent the gas-fired heating system that was installed towards the end of 2013, with the gas boilers relocated into the underground space occupied by the old boiler.

***Conservation:*** During 2015 conservation of wall paintings has been completed, including those in the Parvis room. Conservation works to two of the altar frontals have also been completed.

***Internal re-ordering:*** Planning for Target 3, phase 1 interim internal re-ordering has continued in order to secure all the necessary approvals for works that it is anticipated will be undertaken during 2016, including pew removal, floor levelling and re-ordering of the nave dais area.

***Churchyard Walls:*** Liability for the repairs has now been accepted by Ludlow Town Council which will enable the necessary planning process to be put into effect. Monitoring of the tower of the church is on-going in order to track movement consequent upon the collapsed walls.

***Management & Governance:*** The day to day management of Vision is taken forward by two groups, the nine members of which meet each on an approximately monthly basis. The Project Management Group has responsibility for the planning, management and oversight of project works. The Finance & Funding Group has responsibility for operational finances and for securing the funding necessary to enable works to be undertaken. Vision produces regular reports for the PCC, enabling informed decision making by the PCC.

***Ewart Carson & Shaun Ward March 2016***

## FINANCE REPORT

***PCC Financial Report 2015 – see separate document Independently Examined Accounts approved by the PCC***

### **Appointment of Independent Examiners**

The PCC Treasurer, Michael Hunt, proposes that Whittingham Riddell be reappointed as Independent Examiners for a further year.

### **ST. LAURENCE'S SHOP REPORT: 2015**

Another year has passed and the shop has seen many visitors from all parts of the British Isles and beyond, many of whom are really impressed with the magnificence of our church and as they find their way into the shop, they usually find something of interest to tempt them into making a purchase and whether it be large or small we are always pleased to serve them.

I believe it is always important to greet people as they enter the shop. A simple 'Good Morning or Afternoon' is usually sufficient to 'break the ice' and often starts a conversation, especially if you recognise their dialect/accent. On one such occasion, I detected a Norfolk accent and on enquiring their whereabouts, it evolved that the gentleman came from Thetford in Norfolk and was an old school friend of my husband's! He was staying at The Feathers, with a coach party, and they were able to meet up in the evening and reminisce, over a pint, and the last 64 years!

We had four successful Fair Trade events at the shop this year, organised by Penny Bridstrup, which keeps the momentum of Fair Trade going.

Our assortment of Fair Trade toys etc. are ever popular. We sold five large wooden arks again this year, including two to the same couple for each set of their grandchildren! Our books on the Organ and Prince Arthur have both been reproduced this year and are becoming popular with visitors. Another popular book is the timeless, beautifully produced, 'Shropshire Lad', selling approximately 100 copies this year. It is also good to see that the re-vamped, attractive 'Historic Ludlow' book is back in print and selling well. The most popular book 'The Concise History of Ludlow...' written by the late David Lloyd, finally came to an end in November when we sold the very last copy. It has been the best-selling book we've had, with hundreds sold since its publication. Hopefully, it will be re-published in the near future. David would have been very pleased!

Our ever popular collection of resin Misericord replicas and other Medieval replicas, including the church mice, are firm favourites with our visitors, and constitute large replacement orders several times a year.

Come Springtime and it is time to think about new stock, so off we go to the NEC Spring Fair to see what's new. We usually come back, with tired legs, a few free samples and some new ideas. See if you can spot the new, tempting, *'impulse buy'!*

No sooner is it Spring, then Autumn is upon us again, and time for 'Cards for Good Causes' to join us. Once again it was a very successful and busy season. Many thanks go to Gill and Liz for supplementing our volunteers with extra help to run a very busy shop.

Autumn also saw the introduction of a drinks vending machine in the shop, which has proved to be a popular addition, dispensing a very nice assortment of coffees etc. Of course, we can't miss out our Christmas extravaganza at the NEC Autumn Fair, where we select our lovely glass tree decorations etc. We seem to sell more every year, when people come back time and again for something new for their tree.

We must mention the success of our Nativity Crib sets, large and small. Approximately forty were sold again this year (and we've even sold two since Christmas!). I could go on... Our grateful thanks also go to the proprietors of the Art gallery in Church Street, who allow us a valuable 'shop window' space in the run up to Christmas. It is a very generous gesture and attracts a lot of visitors to our shop.

However, all of this would NOT be possible without the loyal support of our ***fantastic shop volunteers***. Don't underestimate your valuable contribution, and the importance of what you do, in keeping the shop open from 10am - 5/5.30pm every day and making people welcome. It is **VERY MUCH APPRECIATED**. You helped us by adding approximately £28K to support the work of our lovely church and we owe you a large debt of gratitude. Thank you so much one and all.

This report would be incomplete if I didn't mention the massive disappointment at my friend and colleague, Helen's decision to withdraw her voluntary input to the shop. Her experience, expertise and friendship was second to none and I shall/do miss her very much. Thank you so much, Helen, for all your hard work and dedication over the years. Enjoy your dog-walking with Tallis!

Very best wishes to you all for 2016

***Di Corston***

## **Ludlow Deanery Synod Report**

The Synod met four times in 2015. With Claire Lording leaving, a new Rural Dean, who alternatively chairs Deanery Synod with the Lay Co-Chair, was appointed, the Revd Ashley Buck from Cleobury Mortimer. The Lay Co-Chair Andrew Pike retired after 13 years' service and Henry Chance from Bitterley replaced him. Colin Hamer also retired as Treasurer and was replaced by Colin Weston from Wigmore. The only one that didn't move on was myself as Secretary - maybe next year when everyone else has settled in!

For the first time in many years there had been a shortfall in payment of the Deanery Parish Share to the Diocese in 2014 and that was set to continue in 2015 with several parishes around the Deanery not paying their share in full. We were also short of the £1000 to support our Tanzanian ordinand so '£1 for Yohana' was set up.

In February Preb. Kay Garlick spoke to us on 'Inclusive Church in Hereford Diocese', saying that Hereford Cathedral was the most inclusive church she had come across. To find out more, [www.inclusive-church.com](http://www.inclusive-church.com).

The May meeting saw a visit from Rosanne Boyce of The Children's Society telling us about their work and their partnership with churches. They have resources for children's work, website [www.childrensociety.org.uk](http://www.childrensociety.org.uk).

The annual Deanery Evensong followed by a delicious array of refreshments was a pleasant social event which was held at St Peters Clee Hill on 17th June. A Deanery Eucharist was held at Richards Castle in August when the collection was given to our Yohana fund. The Deanery was also invited to a Cathedral Evening on 25th September including a supper and entertainment.

The September meeting looked at the Ludlow parishes reorganisation that is in progress; we had mention of the new parish share 'Offer Scheme' that is due to come in 2017; and we heard that 'The Gathering', the new Diocesan conference, had been a big success.

In November Henry suggested that all Deanery parishes should get involved in a "Month of Grace" with more lay involvement in a service in May 2016; perhaps just getting a lay person to read a lesson, intercessions, or as much as a whole lay-led service. It is hoped that each parish will do something out of their ordinary, just once. Tenbury Team already have a lot of lay involvement but not all Deanery parishes do, however it is hoped that they would be able to help other parishes if needed.

***Julie Cook, Ludlow Deanery Synod Secretary***

### **TANZANIA PROJECT**

Yohana Kinago, Ordinand from Maramba said he is very grateful for the support of Ludlow Deanery during 2015. The school links with Maramba are also very vibrant with teachers from Maramba staying in Herefordshire during the summer. This was good experience I am sure and maintains a viable link with Ludlow.

An informative and successful church service was held in St. Laurence's on the 4<sup>th</sup> October with Mr & Mrs Peter Metcalfe, from Tenbury church, who gave an illustrated presentation

of their visit to Maramba with photographs showing some of the events that took place, including the dedication of St. Aidan's church in Maramba by Bishop Maimbo, which has taken 8 years to build. A collection for the project was held and Outward Concern has also donated the sum of £264.26 as part of the Harvest collection.

Unfortunately, the garden tools and sewing machines that St. Laurence's church gave to the project to be sent as part of the Hereford Hospital donations, are still unable to be sent. The last consignment of goods has only just been delivered as it was held up at Customs in Dar-Es-Salaam for several months and was only released to the church at a cost to Hereford Hospital of £5,000. A terrible penalty for them to bear and which means that any further consignments are unlikely to be sent in the near future due to unforeseen costs.

***Peter C. Pardoe***

**Any other business of general parish concern,  
or items those attending may wish to be referred to the PCC**

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