

**The Parish Church of
St. Peter and St. Paul, Ash**

**Annual Parochial Church
Meeting and Parish Meeting**

on

Tuesday 26th April 2011

at

Ash Village Hall

**Agenda,
Minutes of the 2010 Meeting,
PCC Report and Financial
Statement to the 2011 APCM,
and Reports from Officers.**



Contents List

Included in this Document

	Page
Agenda for the 2011 Parish Meeting	3
Agenda for the 2011 Annual Parochial Church Meeting	3
Minutes of the 2010 Parish Meeting	4
Minutes of the 2010 Annual Parochial Church Meeting	5
The Rector's Report	11
The Electoral Roll Officer's Report	12
The PCC's Financial Statement to the 2011 APCM	13
Statement of Accounting Policies	20
Independent Examiner's Report	21
The Churchwardens' Report	22
The PCC's Annual Report to the 2011 APCM	23
The Choirmasters' Report	29
The Diocesan Synod Report	30
The Deanery Synod Report	31
The Open 2 Question Report	31
The Boys' Brigade and Girls' Association Report	32
The Web Team Report	32
The Healing Team Report	33
The Parish Weekend Report	34
YACA (Young Ash Church Alive) Report	35
Friends of Ash Church Report	36
Social Group Report	36

Additional Reports may be tabled at the Meeting or presented orally

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PARISH
FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF CHURCHWARDENS
(THE VESTRY MEETING)

TO BE HELD IN ASH VILLAGE HALL ON TUESDAY 26TH APRIL 2011
STARTING AT 8.00pm.

AGENDA

1. Appointment of two churchwardens.

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

TO BE HELD IN ASH VILLAGE HALL ON TUESDAY 26TH APRIL 2011
STARTING AT APPROXIMATELY 8.05pm.

AGENDA

1. Prayer and Welcome.
2. Apologies for absence.
3. Minutes of the 2010 Annual Parochial Church Meeting.
4. Matters arising.
5. Rector's Report and questions.
6. Report on the changes in the Electoral Roll.
7. Presentation of Financial Statement and Treasurer's Report and questions.
 - Review of the PCC's Reserves Policy.
8. Churchwardens' Report on the fabric, goods and ornaments of the church or churches of the parish and questions.
9. Election of three members to the Cobham Deanery Synod for a three year term.
10. Election of two members to the Parochial Church Council for a three year term.
11. Confirmation of the appointment of sidesmen.
12. Appointment of Independent Examiner of the Church Accounts for 2011.
13. REFRESHMENTS
14. Discussion on mission and finance in the church and parish including achievements over the past year and the plans for the future.
15. Consideration of the written and oral (if any) reports of the proceedings of the Parochial Church Council and the activities of the parish and church and questions on the reports.
16. Any other business.

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PARISH
FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF CHURCHWARDENS
(THE VESTRY MEETING)

HELD IN ASH VILLAGE HALL ON TUESDAY 20TH APRIL 2010

MINUTES

The meeting was attended by the Rector, Hon. Curate and 23 parishioners. 3 people who are not resident in the Parish were also in attendance. A list of names is appended to the minute book.

The Rector opened the meeting at 8:02pm.

1 Appointment of two churchwardens.

1.1 Nominations were received as follows:

	Proposed by:	Seconded by:
Colin Irving	Julia Kilfoyle	Chris Jones
Ian Nurdin	Jacky Richardson	Ann Aves

1.2 There being no other nominations, the Rector declared that Colin Irving and Ian Nurdin were elected for one year as churchwardens for the parish.

1.3 The Rector closed the meeting at 8:05pm.

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

HELD IN ASH VILLAGE HALL ON TUESDAY 20TH APRIL 2010

MINUTES

The meeting was attended by the Rector, Hon Curate and 26 people whose names were on the electoral roll. One other person was present. A list of names is appended to the minute book. Mark Nurdin apologised for late arrival.

1 Prayer and Welcome.

1.1 The Rector opened the meeting with prayer at 8:05pm.

2 Apologies for absence.

2.1 Apologies for absence were received from 10 people listed in an appendix to the minute book.

3 Minutes of the 2009 Annual Parochial Church Meeting.

3.1 The minutes, which had previously been circulated, were circulated and approved unanimously with the correction of the spelling of one name.

4 Matters arising.

4.1 There were no matters arising.

5 Rector's Report and questions.

5.1 There were no questions.

6 Report on the changes in the Electoral Roll.

6.1 The Electoral Roll Officer reported that the roll had been revised, according to the Church Representation Rules and that 8 people had been deleted as they had moved from the parish or no longer worshipped here.

7 Presentation of Financial Statement and Treasurer's Report and questions.

7.1 The Treasurer formally presented the accounts. He explained that the accounts for 2009 appeared to be worse than the actual position, although that was not good, because of the treatment of the tax reclaim.

7.2 The accounts were adopted unanimously; further discussion was deferred to item 13.

Review of the PCC's Reserves Policy.

7.3 John Harding proposed, Michael Rose seconded, that the policy of keeping £4,000 in the current account should be unchanged for the coming year. This was agreed unanimously.

8 Churchwardens' Report on the fabric, goods and ornaments of the church or churches of the parish and questions.

8.1 The written report was presented to the meeting.

8.2 Alison Harding asked if the church would be involved in Back to Church Sunday.

AGENDA, MINUTES AND REPORTS FOR THE 2011 ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING, APRIL 26TH 2011

The Rector said that because of the timing of the Parish Weekend, the church would do as much as possible.

8.3 There were no other questions.

8.4 The Rector thanked the churchwardens for their work.

9 Election of one member to the Deanery Synod for a one year term.

9.1 The Rector explained that there was a vacancy due to the resignation of Gillian Noakes. No written nominations had been received.

9.2 Roly Orr pointed out that the Deanery Synod representatives are the electorate for General Synod representatives this year so it is important to have full representation.

9.3 The Rector asked for nominations from the floor. None was received so the Rector declared that there was a vacancy but the PCC had the power to elect someone during the year.

10 Election of two members to the Parochial Church Council for a three-year term.

10.1 John Harding and Mike Rose were retiring by rotation.

10.2 The Rector asked for nominations from the floor. There were none.

10.3 The Rector said that written nominations had been received as follows:

	Proposed by:	Seconded by:
John Harding	Cameron Clark	Mavis Hearn
Jacky Richardson	Colin Irving	George Mills
Mike Rose	Ann Aves	Rhian Rutland

10.4 Jacquie Peal proposed that Jacky Richardson withdraw but be appointed as Minutes Secretary. Jacky Richardson agreed to withdraw her nomination. The Rector said that she could, if the PCC wished, be co-opted by the PCC.

10.5 The Rector declared that John Harding and Michael Rose were elected for a three-year term as members of the PCC for the parish.

11 Confirmation of the appointment of sidesmen.

11.1 Ian Nurdin was removed from the list of sidesmen following his appointment as churchwarden.

11.2 The following name was added to the list of sidesmen:

Jacky Richardson

12 Appointment of Independent Examiner of the Church Accounts for 2010.

12.1 The Rector proposed, Alison Harding seconded the re-appointment of Gael Lewis as independent examiner and this was agreed unanimously.

THERE WAS A BREAK FOR REFRESHMENTS

13 Discussion on Financial Policy and Priorities

13.1 John Harding (PCC Treasurer) opened the discussion. He presented a paper giving projected costs and expenditure for the foreseeable future. He said that the projected deficit for the next few years is about double that which applied last year. Fee income, especially for weddings, has fallen for obvious reasons. The fete has always been a lifeline for the church, last year there was a profit of about £5,000 which is a splendid achievement but the most that can realistically be expected. The cost of oil in 2009 was three times that in 2005. Worries about the boiler and the organ last year led the PCC to make provision for renewals. Costs of the Rector (not stipend or working expenses) are rising due to superannuation and other costs. The Parish Share is also rising and he suggested that the Church of England has to take the lead in keeping costs to a minimum.

13.2 The Finance Committee of the PCC had met to consider options. Bryan Parlett said that the church is losing about £1,000 per month due to costs rising and income dropping by about £6,000 each annually. He said both long and short term issues had to be considered. The PCC has already formalised its position on parish share to secure the position for a couple of years, by saying we will only increase our payment in line with inflation. But we must look at what happens after that, it is not an option to pay nothing. The cost of paying for a Rector is another issue; we cannot justify maintaining the full cost in Ash. So the PCC must give consideration to its policy once the present Rector leaves. The only option is to reduce the amount we pay – essentially by sharing – with whom and on what terms is not known. Our situation cannot be unique and the solution should be part of a thought-through programme of putting parishes together. All this assumes that there is no more money available.

13.3 Does the church room money mean we can go on for a few years? Yes, but once spent it is gone and there will be nothing to show for it. We need to make the most of our assets, including the church. The facilities of the church room are needed to allow us to maximise our assets.

13.4 We could aim to deal with this through our own giving but this would mean everyone contributing nearly 50% more. 43% comes from 9 families, who are passed or near to retirement age. There are fewer members of the church and times are hard, but he asked if giving is sufficient and most effective (in terms of Gift Aid). Only the Treasurer and Independent Examiner know what is given by whom. It is possible for giving to be anonymous through the Charities Aid Foundation. Giving can also be in terms of time.

13.5 The Friends of Ash Church was set up to support the use of the church in the community and its fabric, not to support our religious beliefs. They have contributed to the bells and tower but cannot be expected to meet the costs of worship.

13.6 Can we do more fundraising or find commercial opportunities in the building? The Friends have ideas such as a farmers' market in the church, and the PCC will need to consider these.

13.7 The Treasurer has done a good job in minimising expenditure but further cuts will be painful. The Finance Committee will continue to meet and develop its proposals for the PCC.

13.8 Gabrielle Stook said that amalgamating parishes means fewer clergy, which must

also mean further people up the chain, so the Deanery and Diocese must also look at cutting costs. Bryan said that the new Bishop will face many problems, including financial ones. The Rector said that three archdeacons and two bishops were not significantly more than other Dioceses. John Harding has written to the Diocese asking for it to show a lead. Roly Orr said that Diocesan Synod forced the rejection of the budget and a reduction in parish share and will do so again. Has a campaign like TRIO been considered? John Harding said that he does not know the full amounts of what is being given, but could give some limited information. Bryan said that the Finance Committee has proposed appointing someone to lead a campaign to increase income. Roly said there is a stewardship adviser available in the Diocese. George Mills said that there seemed to be diminishing indians and increasing chiefs. The Rector said that Rochester Diocese does have more than average numbers of clergy; there are also external pressures that mean more still are needed.

13.9 Debbie Nurdin asked if the PCC would give a further push to the envelope scheme. John Harding said he will do so although the additional income from that is unlikely to be large.

13.10 George Mills said that from about 1983 there had been about 120 on the electoral roll (some not attending) so numbers have been similar to now, however most were then in church every Sunday but social patterns mean they are now only there one in three or four Sundays which must mean giving is lower unless they give regularly.

13.11 Bryan said the information must be given to everyone, not just those present.

13.12 Roly thanked John and Bryan and agreed that only a third of the church at most were present at the meeting.

13.13 Marion Simmons confirmed that increased use of the building is very difficult without toilet facilities.

13.14 Jacque Peal said that disasters often become opportunities if we keep focussed on the fact that we are a church and are here to worship God, so we must keep this in our prayers.

13.15 The Rector said that his retirement will cost the church £1,000.

13.16 Ann Aves asked about the money available for the church room. John Harding said we can afford the first phase. Colin Irving confirmed that fundraising work had started. Colin said that of the full estimated cost of £250,000, about £130,000 is available.

13.17 Alison Harding asked about the timescale. Jacky Richardson said that subject to resolution of differences between the DAC and Sevenoaks Conservation Officer the architects proposed a start before Christmas.

13.18 John Harding said that although the accounts show £200,000 designated for the church room, some will have to be used for other purposes.

13.19 The Rector thanked John and Bryan and said that the Finance Committee would continue to look at options.

14 Consideration of the written and oral (if any) reports of the proceedings of the Parochial Church Council and the activities of the parish and church generally.

14.1 **PCC's Report** There was no discussion.

- 14.2 **Choirmasters' Report** There was no discussion.
- 14.3 **Parish Disclosure/Child Protection Officer's Report** The Rector said that the PCC would invite Mavis Hearn to continue.
- 14.4 **Diocesan Synod Report** There was no discussion.
- 14.5 **Deanery Synod Report** There was no discussion.
- 14.6 **Boys' and Girls' Brigade Report** Carol noted that Glenys Davies was effectively housebound because of her elderly mother.
- 14.7 **Open 2 Question Report** There was no discussion.
- 14.8 **Healing Team Report** There was no discussion.
- 14.9 **Bellringers' Report** The Rector asked for 3:00pm on 23 May to be noted as the rededication of the bells.
- 14.10 **Parish Weekend Report** There was no discussion.
- 14.11 **Web Team Report** Roly Orr commended Colin Irving for keeping the website up to date, and the Rector also noted James Clark's contribution.
- 14.12 **Covenanting Churches Report** There was no discussion.
- 14.13 **YACA Report** There was no discussion.
- 14.14 **Social Group** Marion Simmons reported that the Group met 5 times in the year. Activities had included: Posh Frocks Ball (raising £362), Rectory garden party, Tea Party for elderly and others, Harvest Lunch, Quizzes and an Advent fashion show. The Pancake Party had to be cancelled. Forthcoming events included another Quiz in October, a Barn Dance on 15 May and on 28 April, a flower arranging demonstration.
- 14.15 **Friends of Ash Church** Ian Nurdin reported that membership had increased. The Hogeye Men concert was on Sunday 25 April, they were supporting the Barn Dance, and helping at the fete because of dwindling resources; a Front Room concert was planned in November.

15 Any other business.

- 15.1 Ian Nurdin asked the PCC to consider process mapping and succession planning. Jacky Richardson said succession planning has started with a mapping process but response is slow.
- 15.2 He had noticed pew sheets left behind, so he asked if we can find a better way to give out notices.
- 15.3 Sevenoaks District Council were planning to change the name of Ash Ward to Ash and New Ash Green – this was an opportunity to tie the church to the parish.
- 15.4 Jacky Richardson presented the Terrier to the meeting which now contains a complete record of all the church's property and documents.
- 15.5 John Harding said that it had been noted that there was not really a channel for positive and negative comments to be made. Would it be appropriate to have a discussion slot in the Church News? The Rector agreed that this was a useful idea subject to care being taken to avoid unnecessary comments.

15.6 Ian Nurdin commented on the blessing of very young children and noted that people seemed to be able to tolerate the inevitable disruption.

15.7 The Rector said that in 2008 there were 9 young people at the Easter Sunday service, in 2009 14, and in 2010 24.

15.8 Carol Clark asked if there could be a separate hymn at the end of parade services as well as the one for the collection.

15.9 George Mills said that it would also help the Crucifer if the opening hymn at parade services was not too fast.

15.10 Marion Simmons thanked the choirmasters for all their work.

15.11 The Rector thanked those who did the refreshments.

15.12 The Rector noted that we were asked to write a round robin letter individually to protest at proposal from Government to stop churches claiming back VAT on repairs.

15.13 He promoted the Diocesan Gathering on 8 May with a wide variety of workshops open to all to look at the potential for small projects to grow.

15.14 The Rector proposed that because of the timing of Easter in 2011, the Annual Meetings should be held on Tuesday 26 April 2011.

The meeting closed with the Grace at 10:30pm.

The Rector's Report

For some time now I have looked at the past the present and the future as I address the church's APCM. As I sat to write, however, my mind travelled back much further than usual. This year marks the anniversary of the King James' Bible, a great watershed both in religion and in literature. I have just had a wonderful wedding celebration where the bride was from Japan. We looked with her family at the church and they were very moved by the memorial brass in church to one of my predecessors who died 150 years before the King James' translation. How many changes our wonderful church has seen, from Latin to English, from eastward facing celebration to westward. At one time Communion would have been only a few times a year, in fact there was a time when you might expect to receive communion only two or three times in your lifetime – the Prayer Book corrects this by suggesting that it should be at least three times a year! Changes in music, liturgy, architecture and churchmanship, no pews, to box pews, to pews in rows. How many times are we tempted to suggest that 'we have always done it this way'? Forgive my saying so but 'rubbish'! What is important is not the way we do it but why we do it. My answer to the question, 'How many worship in your church each week?' would always be, 'Well, most of those present, I hope'. Thank God for the wonderful tradition that we have inherited – pray God that we can pass on a living faith to those who come after us. May we have the courage and the faith to allow them to worship in their way and in God's way.

So, where are we now? A rather quiet past year in some ways, though with the usual celebrations and tragedies within the congregation. A new Bishop, even further forward(!) with our toilets – thank you Colin, especially. My sincere thanks to so many who keep our church so beautiful, our worship and singing so meaningful, and who endeavour to share the wonderful message we are called to proclaim.

Where will we be five years from now- or even two? New toilets? I hope so! A new Rector? I hope for this too – BUT, on our present projections, we will run out of money in less than two years. A new Rector would either mean that we had had a large increase in our congregation – or that those who worship have put a lot more in the plate each week. It may be that other possibilities open up to us. Do we need (can we afford) a full time Rector of our own – to put it another way, what do I do that Alison or Joe or Roly or Martin, or others cannot do? In law the answer would be Communion most Sundays, and at Holywell Park and Turner's Oak, a dozen Marriages and several Baptisms a year, in total some five or six Sacramental hours per week – some might say not a great return for what you pay me. Of course you will still have a Rector, but changes will have to be made. What they are only God knows – will it be just Ash and Ridley as at present, or some other combination? Two things only are important here, though. Firstly that we trust Him. Secondly that we continue to worship Him with the whole of our beings, while, at the same time, helping others to do so too. I prefer to be an optimist than a pessimist, a 'half-full' rather than a 'half-empty' person, so I would like to finish simply by suggesting that I believe that God is offering us opportunities here rather than threatening us.

Where will our church be when we celebrate the 500th anniversary of the King James' Bible translation? That depends on God – AND US!

Rev. John Peal

AGENDA, MINUTES AND REPORTS FOR THE 2011 ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING, APRIL 26TH 2011

The Electoral Roll Officer's Report

The 2011 Electoral Roll for the Parish of St. Peter and St. Paul, Ash (this year just a revision) has been prepared in accordance with the Church Representation Rules and was completed on 13 April. The completed Roll was displayed in the church for a period of at least fourteen days as required by the Rules.

2 people have been added to the Roll and 4 have been removed due to death or because they no longer live or worship in the parish.

The new Roll is available for inspection and contains the following numbers of people:

A	Members of the Church of England resident in the Parish:	94
B	Members of the Church of England not resident in the Parish:	10
C	Members of other churches who worship in the Parish:	2
	This gives a total of:	106

Carol Clark
Electoral Roll Officer

Treasurer's Report

As will be recalled from last year's report, the refunded tax for 2008, as well as that for 2009, is in the 2010 accounts.

This is particularly relevant to consideration of the General Fund deficit, which is shown in the accounts as £1,571. The amount of the 2008 refund was £8,803, so the realistic General Fund deficit for 2010 is £10,374.

The PCC has in recent years accepted the need to support the General Fund, for a limited period, with money from other unrestricted funds, and has also had to use these to pay for major repairs.

To reflect this support in the accounts the following transfers between our unrestricted funds have now been agreed:

From Church Room Fund - designated:

£45,258 to General Fund
£23,779 to Fabric Fund

In addition, as only the Church Room element of the Millennium Fund now remains, it has been agreed that the remaining Millennium Fund amount is now transferred to the Church Room Fund - restricted.

If the above transfers had been made before the 2010 year-end, the Fund Totals would read:

£25,000	General Fund
£1,000	Renewals Fund
£128,272	Church Room Fund - Designated
£3,688	Church Room Fund - Restricted
£0	Millennium Fund
£12,405	Fabric Fund
£1,147	Bell Fund
£100	YACA Fund
£1,313	Choir Fund
£0	Charity Fund
<hr style="width: 50px; margin-left: 0;"/>	
£172,925	TOTAL

John Harding
PCC Treasurer

STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES - AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2010

	General Fund	Renewals Fund	Church Room Fund		Millennium Fund	Fabric Fund	Bell Fund	YACA Fund	Choir Fund	Charity Fund	Total 31.12.10	Total 31.12.09
			Designated	Restricted								
CRF - Diocese						12405					12405	10858
Bell Fund - Diocese							5928				5928	5905
Diary Account - Diocese	1408										1408	1403
A&L main current account *											26772	5847
A&L instant reserve account	-23794	1000	197310	0	3688	-23779	-4781	100	1313	262	199	199
A&L 30-day access account											124348	171027
Cash	955									437	1392	498
Total in accounts *	-21431	1000	197310	0	3688	-11374	1147	100	1313	699	172452	195735
* Adjusted to reflect amounts paid, but not listed in bank statements till subsequent year												
Debtors	1172										1172	14645
Liabilities										699	699	1349
FUND TOTALS	-20258	1000	197310	0	3688	-11374	1147	100	1313	0	172925	209032



Date: 22 March 2011

**PARISH OF ST PETER AND ST PAUL, ASH AND NEW ASH GREEN
FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2010**

**GENERAL FUND
RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS ACCOUNT**

<u>RECEIPTS</u> (for payments see next page)	2010	2009
Giving (unrestricted)		
Tax-reclaimable giving	£ 23,076	£ 18,990
Other collections at services	£ 5,208	£ 5,922
Other giving	£ 971	£ 2,573
	£ 29,255	£ 27,485
Income tax recovered	£ 14,385 *	-£ 78 *
Fees	£ 5,882	£ 7,148
Fete income	£ 7,104	£ 8,010
Other receipts from fund-raising activities	£ 474	£ 433
Other receipts from church activities		
Sales	£ 96	£ 118
Fee received: Ash Village Hall and Church	£ 750	£ 200
Church activities: other income	£ 1,072	£ 1,083
	£ 1,918	£ 1,402
Interest	-£ 13	-£ 178
Contribution from Ridley PCC	£ 3,000	£ 3,520
TOTAL RECEIPTS	£ 62,005 *	£ 47,740 *

* Includes two years' income tax recovery in 2010 (none in 2009)

<u>PAYMENTS</u> (for receipts see previous page)	2010	2009
Transfer to Fabric Fund (Church Repair Fund)	£ 1,500	£ 1,500
Transfer to Renewals Fund	£ 1,000	£ 0
Church premises (including churchyard)		
Utility costs	£ 2,244	£ 2,424
Maintenance & running expenses	£ 3,490	£ 4,701
	£ 5,734	£ 7,125
Rector		
Stipend, NI & Pension	£ 32,921	£ 30,950
Rectory & working expenses	£ 4,179	£ 4,197
	£ 37,100	£ 35,147
The church's work: other payments		
Visiting clergy	£ 39	£ 93
Website	£ 281	£ 290
Upkeep of services & study groups	£ 983	£ 1,200
Hiring of venues	£ 313	£ 609
Readers' costs	£ 90	£ 60
Salaries	£ 1,455	£ 1,220
Training, mission & evangelism	£ 33	£ 20
Management & administration, incl. Stationery, Photocopying, Postage	£ 784	-£ 494
Bank charges	£ 24	£ 24
	£ 4,002	£ 3,022
Contributions to Diocese and Deanery	£ 12,000	£ 13,200
Mission giving (from General Fund)	£ 10	£ 10
Costs of fund-raising		
Fete	£ 1,968	£ 2,463
Other events	£ 190	£ 240
Giving envelopes	£ 71	£ 142
	£ 2,230	£ 2,845
TOTAL PAYMENTS	£ 63,576	£ 62,849

Excess of payments over receipts: £ 1,571*

 Account total at 1 January 2010: -£ 19,860
 Account total at 31 December 2010: -£ 21,431

* Includes two years' income tax recovery in 2010 (none in 2009)

PARISH OF ST PETER AND ST PAUL, ASH AND NEW ASH GREEN
 FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2010

RENEWALS FUND (Designated Fund)

RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS ACCOUNT

<u>RECEIPTS</u>	2010	
Transferred from General Fund	£ 1,000	
TOTAL RECEIPTS	£ 1,000	
TOTAL PAYMENTS	£ 0	
	<i>Excess of receipts over payments:</i>	£ 1,000
	New fund. Account total at 31 December 2010:	£ 1,000

CHURCH ROOM FUND (Designated Fund)

RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS ACCOUNT

<u>RECEIPTS</u>	2010	2009
Interest	£ 345	£ 3,389
TOTAL RECEIPTS	£ 345	£ 3,389
<u>PAYMENTS</u>		
Fees paid from Designated Fund	£ 5,152	£ 0
TOTAL PAYMENTS	£ 5,152	£ 0
	<i>Excess of payments over receipts:</i>	£ 4,806
	Account total at 1 January 2010:	£ 202,116
	Account total at 31 December 2010:	£ 197,310

CHURCH ROOM FUND (Restricted Fund)

RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS ACCOUNT

<u>RECEIPTS</u>	2010	2009
Interest	£ 5	£ 79
TOTAL RECEIPTS	£ 5	£ 79
<u>PAYMENTS</u>		
Fees paid from Restricted Fund	£ 2,948	£ 3,769
TOTAL PAYMENTS	£ 2,948	£ 3,769
	<i>Excess of payments over receipts:</i>	£ 2,943
	Account total at 1 January 2010:	£ 2,943
	Account total at 31 December 2010:	£ 0

AGENDA, MINUTES AND REPORTS FOR THE 2011 ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING, APRIL 26TH 2011

PARISH OF ST PETER AND ST PAUL, ASH AND NEW ASH GREEN
FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2010

MILLENNIUM FUND (Restricted Fund)
RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS ACCOUNT

<u>RECEIPTS</u>	2010	2009
Interest	£ 13	£ 123
TOTAL RECEIPTS	£ 13	£ 123

PAYMENTS

Transfer to Bell Fund (the whole Bell-Fund element)	£ 3,688	£ 0
TOTAL PAYMENTS	£ 3,688	£ 0

Excess of payments over receipts: £ 3,675
 Account total at 1 January 2010: £ 7,363
 Account total at 31 December 2010: £ 3,688

FABRIC FUND (Restricted Fund)
RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS ACCOUNT

<u>RECEIPTS</u>	2010	2009
Income tax recovered	£ 207	£ 0
Grants	£ 0	£ 5,976
Donations	£ 250	£ 1,525
Interest	£ 20	-£ 132
Transfer from General Fund (to CRF)	£ 1,500	£ 1,500
TOTAL RECEIPTS	£ 1,977	£ 8,868

PAYMENTS

Cost of works

Tower repairs (less VAT reclaimed, including for works in 2009)	£ 952	
Belfry repairs (less VAT reclaimed)	£ 4,164	
Chancel ceiling repairs	£ 3,093	
Lightning conductor (less insurance claim)	£ 100	
	£ 8,309	£ 11,187
TOTAL PAYMENTS	£ 8,309	£ 11,187

Excess of payments over receipts: £ 6,332
 Account total at 1 January 2010: -£ 5,042
 Account total at 31 December 2010: -£ 11,374

PARISH OF ST PETER AND ST PAUL, ASH AND NEW ASH GREEN
 FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2010

BELL FUND (Restricted Fund)
RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS ACCOUNT

<u>RECEIPTS</u>	2010	2009
Giving		
Tax-reclaimable giving	£ 0	£ 250
Collections at services	£ 69	£ 218
Donations	£ 150	£ 907
	£ 219	£ 1,375
Tax reclaimed	£ 72	£ 69
VAT reclaimed	£ 4,904	£ 0
Grants	£ 10,550	£ 0
Receipts from fund-raising activities	£ 179	£ 3,991
Interest	£ 23	£ 136
Transferred from Millennium Fund	£ 3,688	£ 0
TOTAL RECEIPTS	£ 19,634	£ 5,571
<u>PAYMENTS</u>		
Fees and project expenses	£ 23,748	£ 11,278
TOTAL PAYMENTS	£ 23,748	£ 11,278
	<i>Excess of payments over receipts:</i>	£ 4,114
	Account total at 1 January 2010:	£ 5,261
	Account total at 31 December 2010:	£ 1,147

Y.A.C.A. FUND (Restricted Fund)
RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS ACCOUNT

<u>RECEIPTS</u>	2010
Funds raised	
Donations	£ 100
	£ 100
TOTAL RECEIPTS	£ 100
TOTAL PAYMENTS	£ 0
	<i>Excess of receipts over payments:</i>
	£ 100

New fund. Account total at 31 December 2010: £ 100

Statement of Accounting Policies

The financial statements of the PCC have been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 1997 as amended by the Church Accounting (Amendment) Regulations 2001 using the Receipts & Payments basis.

Funds

The General Fund represents the funds of the PCC that are not subject to any special restrictions regarding their use and are available for application to the general purposes of the PCC.

The accounts include monetary transactions, assets and liabilities for which the PCC can be held responsible. They do not include the accounts of other Church groups that owe an affiliation to another body, nor any that are informal gatherings of Church members.

Subject to the above, receipts and payments include income as received and expenditure when irrevocably paid.

Statement of Assets and Liabilities

Bank balances are adjusted to take account of payments which were irrevocably made during the accounting period but were not yet reflected in the final bank statements.

Amounts owing from the Inland Revenue are included under Debtors.

Other amounts owing from and owed to other bodies at the end of the accounting period are included under Debtors and Liabilities respectively.

The remaining amounts are derived from the closing bank balances, adjusted as above.

John Harding
PCC Treasurer

Independent examiner's report to the PCC of St. Peter & St. Paul, Ash-by-Wrotham

This report on the accounts of the PCC for the year ended 31 December 2010, which are set out on pages 14 to 19, is in respect of an examination carried in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 ('the Regulations') and s.43 of the Charities Act 1993 ('the Act').

Respective responsibilities of the PCC and the examiner

As members of the PCC you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts; you consider that the audit requirements of the Regulations and section 43(2) of the Act do not apply. It is my responsibility to issue this report on those accounts in accordance with the terms of the Regulations.

Basis of this report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 43(7)(b) of the Act and to be found in the Church guidance, 2006 edition. This examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the PCC and a comparison of the accounts with those records. It also includes considering any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 41 of the Act; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the requirements of the Act and the Regulations have not been met; or
2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Observation

As the Treasurer has warned repeatedly, the PCC continues to spend approximately £9,000 more each year than it receives, despite strict management of expenditure. I recommend that the PCC develops a robust plan to correct this.



Gael Lewis JP B.Sc MBA C.Eng
48 Redhill Wood
New Ash Green
Longfield
Kent DA3 8QP
15 March 2011

The Churchwardens' Report

Church Building

Currently, the main building of the church is in good repair.

During the last year a small section of the chancel ceiling has been repaired as has some of the masonry in the belfry. Our bells were returned following full refurbishment and tuning and are now seated on new running gear, providing a very pleasing sound across the fields.

During September we had a couple of attempted break-ins to the Vestry which resulted in the door being damaged. Our thanks go to Bob Aves and George Mills for repairing the door and making the Vestry safe again. The installation of CCTV is under consideration. Following a lot of heavy rain in October, we found a crack in the south aisle roof which had to be sealed.

At the beginning of this year we had a small fire in the Vestry which, luckily, did very little damage but resulted in a small team coming in to repaint. Our thanks go to that team of painters.

Our Quinquennial Inspection was carried out in April and the report is awaited.

Churchyard

The churchyard is regularly inspected and the grass mown at regular intervals. The Rector continues to work hard to keep the churchyard tidy and safe.

Bell Ringing / Brass Cleaning / Choir / Christingle making / Church Cleaning / the Fete / Flowers / Healing / Intercessions / Leaflet distribution / Palm cross making / Pew sheet & leaflet production / Plant maintenance / Refreshments / Scripture reading / Serving / Social events / Transport / Working parties / YACA

We would like to extend our grateful thanks to all those who provide support and service in all these vital activities. We are particularly grateful to George and Joan Mills for their help and support in the day to day running of the church.

Sidesmen (Welcomers)

We would like to thank all those who have served as Sidesmen throughout the year, without your help and commitment our services wouldn't run as smooth as they do. If you feel you would like to welcome the congregation to our church, please let one of the Churchwardens know.

Church Room

Since obtaining planning permission last January, we have a number of issues trying to move this project forward. We spent 8 months trying to get the Diocesan Advisory Council (DAC) to agree that the external walls of the room should not be rendered. All other activities were put on hold whilst we negotiated with the DAC. At the moment we have agreed to differ on this and have begun to move forward again. The fine detail has now been agreed with the architects and this will be submitted to the planning officer for final agreement. At that point, we will go out to tender and hopefully start building during the summer.

Thank you to all of you who have supported us through the year.

Colin Irving and Ian Nurdin

PCC Annual Report to the 2011 Annual Parochial Church Meeting

The Annual Report to the APCM sets out in a formal manner the basis on which the PCC has acted and continues to act as stewards of Ash Church. The information it contains is largely prescribed by statute.

- *Full name of the parish*

The Parish Church of St. Peter and St. Paul, Ash

- *Location of church*

Church Road, The Street, Ash, Sevenoaks, Kent TN15 7HD

- *Correspondence address*

The New Rectory, The Street, Ash, Sevenoaks, Kent TN15 7HA

- *PCC Organisation – Standing and other committees*

The PCC normally meets bimonthly. The composition of the PCC is as follows:-

<i>Ex-officio</i>	The Rector The Hon. Curate The Churchwardens One member of Diocesan Synod from Ash Church*
<i>Elected</i>	Three Deanery Synod members, elected for a three year term Six ordinary members, elected for a three year term

* One further member of the Diocesan Synod who is on the electoral roll of the Parish has chosen not to exercise the right to serve on the PCC.

In between meetings the Standing Committee meets as required to deal with urgent matters or issues that have been delegated to it by the PCC. The Standing Committee comprises the Rector, the Churchwardens, the Treasurer and the Secretary. Other committees are appointed and meet as required to fulfil their terms of reference.

- *PCC members during the year 2010, with office held and dates*

<i>Ex-officio</i>	Reverend John Peal	Chairman	January – December
	Reverend Jacquie Peal	Hon. Curate	January – December
	Jacky Richardson	Churchwarden	January – April
	Colin Irving	Churchwarden	January – December
	Ian Nurdin	Churchwarden	April – December
	Cameron Clark	Diocesan Synod, Deanery Synod* & Secretary	January – December
<i>Elected</i>	John Harding	Treasurer	January – December
	Gillian Noakes	Deanery Synod	January – April
	Julia Kilfoyle	Deanery Synod**	January – December
	James Hughesdon		April – December
	Ian Nurdin		January – April
	Joan Littlejohn		April – December
	Joe O'Neill-Byrne		January – December
Bryan Parlett		January – December	

	Michael Rose		January – December
Co-opted	Jacky Richardson	Deanery Synod	May – December
	* Elected to the Deanery Synod in addition to being an ex-officio PCC member by virtue of election to the Diocesan Synod to represent Cobham Deanery.		
	** April – December.		

- *Number on Electoral Roll*

The number on the Electoral Roll was reported at the 2010 APCM as 108 persons. The Electoral Roll has been revised for the 2011 APCM in accordance with the Church Representation Rules. The new roll contains 106 names.

- *Average Weekly Attendance*

The number reported to the Diocese as the average weekly attendance for 2010 was 68 adults and 8 children, a reduction from 70 and 10 respectively in 2009.

- *Aims of the PCC*

St Peter and St Paul Ash & New Ash Green's Parochial Church Council has the responsibility of co-operating with the Incumbent, the Reverend John Arthur Peal, both being committed to Collaborative Ministry and to Proclaiming the Word and Work of God, in promoting within the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the Church, evangelistic, pastoral, social, spiritual and ecumenical. The Parochial Church Council also has maintenance and financial responsibilities for the Church and churchyard of St Peter and St Paul, Ash, Sevenoaks, Kent.

- *The value of the church*

The Church in the parish of Ash that is dedicated to St Peter & St Paul meets in an ancient building on a site that has been a centre of worship for nearly 1,000 years – this is recognised by many people who do not regularly worship with the Church but who value the building and the fact that the Church is there when they need it. People appreciate what the Church has to offer to the community and its availability as a building and for the services that people find important – baptisms, weddings and funerals. In this the Church not only has an obligation to its regular congregation but also to the wider community. The challenge is therefore to maintain a sufficient core congregation and, where appropriate, seek resources from other sources to ensure the upkeep of the building and the continuation of worship that is both true to Christian principles and tradition and also meets the needs of a world whose expectations are changing with developments in fashion and technology.

- *Report on the church's work, pastorally and through mission and in special projects, towards fulfilling its aims, including significant developments and achievements in the year and matters that have been discussed at PCC meetings*

The PCC met on 7 occasions during 2010. Its discussions continued to be dominated by the related topics of finance, the use of the proceeds from the sale of Ash School for redevelopment, and the repairs to the fabric and infrastructure of the church building and follow up from the 'Together with God' church weekend in September 2008 from which discussions were initiated to develop a plan for the future of the church as well as the planning and analysis of the church weekend held on 5-7 November 2010 on the subject of prayer.

The Treasurer's Report will present the financial position to the APCM. The PCC has continued to look at ways of increasing revenue and reducing costs in the light of the significant deficit in 2010, which was predicted at the start of the year. The PCC put forward proposals for addressing the deficit, in the knowledge that there is unlikely to be any significant improvement due to the anticipated significant additional expenditure in the coming years as a result of adjustments in national Church accounting. The PCC's proposals included discussions about the provision of clergy throughout Cobham Deanery, including the likelihood that Ash Church (with Ridley) would not in future have a rector of their own. These steps may involve changes to the pattern of worship in the parishes but not the closure of Ash Church. The incoming PCC must therefore be prepared to take forward these measures to ensure that the continuing financial position of the church remains tenable.

The PCC is seeking advice and assistance as widely as possible in deciding the most appropriate use of the proceeds from the sale of Ash School and fundraising to enable all the projects to go ahead.

The "Friends of Ash Church" organisation has continued to help with fundraising.

Planning permission for the church room was granted on 19 January 2010. Work has progressed subsequently with the architect appointed to advise the PCC on detailed design issues, fund raising and preparatory works including arrangements for an archaeological survey of the site.

The bells were removed for refurbishment and retuning at Whitechapel Bell Foundry at the end of 2009 and were rehung as planned just after Easter 2010.

Healing services were held monthly to provide an opportunity to pray for people's specific needs with additional services in various locations in New Ash Green.

The Social Committee, under Marion Simmons' direction, organised a full programme of events in 2010 and more are planned for 2011. The contribution made by these events to the Church, both financially and in terms of encouraging fellowship was greatly appreciated.

Following the closure of the Junior Church, the PCC has developed a monthly alternative service as Young Ash Church Alive to provide teaching for children and also intends to work towards greater emphasis on all-age worship. The PCC received regular reports on the activities of the Boys' Brigade, Girls' Brigade, and Young Ash Church Alive and took a close interest in their work (including the merging of the Girls' Brigade into the Girls' Association of the Boys' Brigade), encouraging them to participate fully in services and other Church activities.

The Standing Committee meets monthly, with responsibility for normal business; a bimonthly Parish Affairs Committee provides an opportunity for more detailed discussion of important issues within the parish and a Church Affairs Committee discusses and advises on the church's relations with the Diocese and Deanery. All Committees report to a bimonthly full PCC meeting which will authorise significant expenditure and decisions.

The Standing Committee of the PCC met on 10 occasions during 2010. The Parish

Affairs Committee met 6 times and the Church Affairs Committee had no meetings during the year. The PCC also appointed a Finance Committee which had no need to meet during the year.

- *Description and effect of significant events since the end of the year*

Work is progressing towards gaining agreement for the details of the construction of the church room and to fundraising to provide the balance of the construction costs.

- *How the church responded to any important events in 2010*

During the year prayers have been said for the safety of British and Allied troops engaged in peacekeeping activities in Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere, with particular emphasis on supporting Nick Connell in his work in a bomb disposal unit in Afghanistan, and for those affected by economic difficulties.

The PCC and church supported the Rector in his work as Rural Dean of the Cobham Deanery.

- *Likely future developments*

The PCC will be continuing to make progress with the construction of a Church Room following the appointment by the PCC of Colin Irving as Project Manager, in the expectation that construction will start later in 2011 and with essential major repair and replacement projects including any identified in the 2011 Quinquennial inspection. It is expected that a significant fundraising effort will be necessary for the church room.

A large forecast budget deficit in 2011 and subsequent years will require a major initiative to improve the financial position of the church.

- *Exempt charity status*

As a church the PCC has exempt charity status.

- *Relationship to other related trusts*

Ash Parish Church is related to the Ash Combined Charities Trust which administers the two almshouses at the North Ash cross-roads. The Rector and Churchwardens are ex-officio members of the Trust.

The Rector and Churchwardens are trustees of the land and buildings of the Ash Village Hall. This property is leased for a 35-year period (extendible to a maximum of 99 years) to another trust operating under a Charity Commissioners' Scheme that is run by a Management Committee including one member appointed annually by the PCC and also the Rector, as one of four members elected by the AGM of the Management Committee.

The PCC appointed one member to the committee of the New Ash Green Youth Centre Trust.

- *Financial activities of the PCC*

Please see the PCC Treasurer's Report and the Financial Statement.

- *Names & addresses of bankers, legal & other advisers and independent examiners*

Bankers: Alliance and Leicester
62 Hagley Road, Birmingham B16 8PE

Legal advisers: Sharpe & Perl
23 The Row, New Ash Green, Longfield, Kent DA3 8JB

Other advisers: John Bailey, Architect
Thomas Ford & Partners, 177 Kirkdale,
Sydenham, London SE26 4QH

The church can also call upon Diocesan resources for advice and guidance.

Independent Examiner: Gael Lewis
48 Redhill Wood, New Ash Green,
Longfield, Kent DA3 8QP

- *Details of any liabilities with resources (cash & non-cash) available to meet them*

The Church has no significant liabilities; details are in the PCC Treasurer's Report and the Financial Statement.

- *The reserves policy of the church*

The effective level of the PCC's main current account is expected not to fall below £4,000 at any time. This figure applies until the 2011 APCM, at which it will be reviewed. The Treasurer shall call a meeting of the Finance Committee to consider and recommend corrective action if there appears to be a risk that the level will be consistently below this figure; and in any case if it has been below this figure for three consecutive weeks. After any such meeting the Finance Committee shall report to the PCC.

- *Policies on selection of investments*

Money not required for the effective management of routine or immediately foreseeable expenditure is invested in appropriate funds operated by the diocese, or in commercial deposit accounts. The PCC shall annually review the accounts selected and the principles governing the allocation of sums to the respective accounts.

- *How parish activities will continue to be funded*

Funds for the day-to-day running costs of the church come largely from occasional and regular giving by members of the congregation, including the recovery of tax under the Gift Aid scheme. Fund-raising activities, including the annual Ash Fete, provide a significant additional contribution which has been crucial in helping to meet liabilities. The Friends of Ash Church have also provided generous funds for specific projects. Giving by the church to external charitable causes has largely been the result of specific appeals and fund-raising events. The sale of Ash School in April 2006 realised £180,939 which the PCC decided, after consultation with the congregation, to devote principally to the construction of the church room. However, the worsening financial position of the church and the need for a series of urgent major repairs has meant that some of this money has had to be used for other purposes. The PCC has continued to monitor closely the financial outturn against the budget; it remains extremely concerned to note the increasing deficit and the factors which, as foreseen in recent years, will cause it to increase further. In the long

term it plans to promote the use of the church for events which, as well as providing a cultural focus for the parish, will generate some income to offset losses. However, there are significant reductions in income from fees and the fete, and in giving; and increasing contributions are required to meet clergy pension costs. The PCC will continue to explore carefully all possible options for addressing the deficit in the medium term, but it must be recognised that the new factors contributing to it are not reversible, and virtually all discretionary expenditure has already been eliminated.



Signed:

PCC Chairman

Date: 22 March 2011

The Choirmasters' Report

Again there have been highlights.

The 'instant' featured two glittering works, one familiar, the other not as well known as it deserves – Haydn's 'Nelson' Mass and the Bruckner 'Te Deum' – 'the pride of my life', he called it. Many notes were learned in the short space of one afternoon, particularly in the Bruckner; and it bore fruit in an effective performance, culminating in a very respectable soprano top C at the end.

For a second time we hosted 'Chorus of Praise', a joint musical celebration bringing together the choirs of the local covenanting churches. This was a joyful success, consisting of short programmes from each choir and energetic performances by the combined forces ('The heavens are telling' and 'Hallelujah!' in a seriously overcrowded chancel).

Our planned cheerful programme for the 'Elegant Evening' in the summer fell victim to the elements, but instead turned into our contribution to the entertainment at the Parish Weekend.

The build-up to Christmas presented an organisational challenge as the snow discouraged movement to practices, but commendable commitment and the hospitality at Burrows Towers enabled us to deliver a programme as usual, both for the 'set pieces' in the churches (Ash and Ridley) and in our customary circuit of Waitrose, Woodlands Garden Centre, the Black Horse and Trafalgar Square, in which we raised over £400 for Demelza House Hospice.

Looking ahead, 2011 will be for us the year of the opera. The 'instant' will begin with the familiar – the Fauré 'Requiem'. But we then venture into new ground with extracts from the operatic repertoire, incorporating Italian, Latin, German and French (and possibly English) content. If nothing else, it will be different.

Meanwhile our week-by-week work is to help in leading the worship of the church. We have become used to doing this with fluctuating and often quite small numbers, but venture to hope that this has not diminished our contribution.

Because of his other duties Mark Nurdin has had to leave the choir after a lifetime (almost) of service; and Paul Jennings has, with our best wishes, moved on to university. Meanwhile we have been delighted to welcome Jean Bentley – long known to some of us, and now resident in New Ash Green - who has already made an impact in the choir and beyond.

Thanks are due as ever for the continued support and involvement of John and Jacquie Peal, and the expertise, versatility and good humour of Gillian Noakes.

We are all getting older. For some retirement has brought an increased range of family and other commitments. And we have reached the end of the illustrious series of young people who have made a distinctive contribution over the past decade. The quality still exists, and every member is used to delivering in performance. But we are increasingly at the mercy of individuals' availability, and conscious that the future is not something we can plan for. Meanwhile we continue to enjoy making music together, and trust that we convey the enjoyment in concert and worship.

John Harding and Nick Noakes

The Diocesan Synod Report

As in recent years, the Diocesan Synod only met twice during 2010, with an additional “Gathering” in May that included a short formal meeting of the Diocesan Board of Finance which, in Rochester Diocese, has the same membership as Synod.

I was unable to attend the “Gathering” this year but it took its usual form of a series of workshops or short talks on a variety of subjects. Any church members are able to attend. The 2011 “Gathering” on 21 May will be rather different this year. The Church of England is facing some very important debates in the coming months on the subjects of Women in the Episcopate and the Anglican Covenant. That is, in layman's terms, women bishops and preserving the relationship between Anglican churches around the world that has been severely tested recently by such issues as the ordination of homosexual clergy. The “Gathering” will therefore focus on these issues, particularly the former which is the more immediate of the two. The aim will be to inform and prepare anyone who wants to participate in the debates, whether at national, Diocesan, Deanery or parish level. Again it will be open to all and I would recommend anyone who has an interest to attend.

Diocesan Synod in 2010 was relatively routine except for the preoccupation with finance which proved to be something of a battleground between the Bishop's Council and those who believed that parishes were being asked to contribute too much towards the funding of the Diocese, to the detriment of their own local mission. I and the great majority of our Deanery's delegates were firmly in the latter camp but were unable to prevent pressure from some of the wealthier parishes in the Diocese leading to inflation-busting parish share settlements being agreed. Unsurprisingly this is now leading to an increasing number of parishes failing to pay all or some of their parish share.

We have continued this theme into 2011 but it will be interesting to see the line that our new Bishop takes. He has already given some indications that he will be willing to tackle the Diocese's unsustainable financial position head-on, and that he has some radical ideas to deal with the disproportionate costs of stipendiary clergy that are skewing parish finances. He is still in listening and learning mode but by the middle of this year he intends to have visited every Deanery and spoken on a one-to-one basis with every member of clergy. From that point, in time for the next Synod in October when the 2012 budget will be presented, we may be looking at a very different approach to Diocesan finance.

Cameron Clark

The Deanery Synod Report

Cobham Deanery Synod is small, the smallest in Rochester Diocese. This leads to a less formal and more friendly structure than many others. It also brings its own difficulties in that it is sometimes difficult to find enough people to undertake the various tasks. We also struggle at times to provide leadership since the nine parishes share six incumbent clergy and a small assortment of stipendiary or non-stipendiary curates. We also have an invaluable collection of authorised lay leaders who give their time to their parishes willingly and freely – often also helping out in neighbouring parishes at times of need. The parishes of Cobham Deanery have, after some considerable upheaval, now obtained a full set of clergy and that has enabled us to look forward to at least a year or two of stability.

We have however learned one lesson, which is that at its present size and structure the Deanery is only just on the edge of what is viable. At a time when several clergy posts were unavoidably vacant it proved challenging, and exhausting, for those who remained to fulfil their duties. With the present financial position of most, if not all, parishes it is clear that in no more than five years or so there will have to be very major changes in the Deanery since we will not be able to afford to pay as many stipendiary clergy. With this in mind, Canon Jean Kerr, in her role as the Bishop's officer for Mission and Unity, has been assisting with the development of a Deanery Mission and Ministry Plan. This work is still in progress but it is almost inevitable that there will be much more sharing of resources between parishes so we need to look at ways in which this can be turned to our advantage as an opportunity to build on the skills and gifts that exist in our respective congregations. A parochial mindset may no longer be best for our parishes!

As a Deanery Synod we will be sharing in the debates about women bishops and the Anglican covenant because the Diocesan Synod agreed to give deaneries a formal role in the process by debating and voting on the proposals from General Synod before they are considered by Diocesan Synod. This is therefore an important time for those who will be elected to Synod at the 2011 Annual Parochial Church Meeting and I would encourage them to do as much as possible to understand the issues involved – the Diocesan “Gathering” on 21 May will be a great opportunity to do this.

Finally I must thank those who have joined me on Synod over the past three years, Gillian Noakes, Jacky Richardson and Julia Kilfoyle, for their interest and enthusiasm.

Cameron Clark

Open 2 Question Report

Open 2 Question was a home study group which met on alternate Mondays until late summer 2010. It provided an opportunity for people to ask questions about or discuss aspects of their faith. No question is considered too small and no aspect is considered insignificant. Each meeting was totally free-standing allowing individuals the opportunity to attend whenever they able.

Contacts:

Colin Irving, 15 Spring Cross, 879500, colin.irving@btinternet.com

Alison Harding, 62 Knights Croft, 874770, alison.harding@btinternet.com

The Boys' Brigade and Girls' Association Report

The 1st Ash Green Girls' Brigade and the 1st Ash Green Boys' Brigade Companies continued to meet together on Friday evenings, in two mixed sessions of an hour and a half each, until the end of the Summer Term 2010. During the Summer, we changed the designation of the Boys' Brigade Company to a Boys' Brigade Company with Girls' Association, and when we started back in September, we registered everyone as a BB member. Finally, in April 2011, we formally closed the Girls' Brigade Company. A Girls' Association means that the girls can take part in the same activities as the boys.

We were delighted to welcome a number of new members in September. We reopened the Anchors (5 to 8s) with 3 girls and 2 boys, and by Easter had 3 girls and 4 boys, with another girl due to start after Easter. We have 7 Juniors (8 to 11s), 4 boys and 3 girls, and then it really gets lively. For the last session, we have 7 Company Section (11 to 14s) 6 boys and 1 girl, and 5 Seniors (15 to 18s) 4 boys and 1 girl. The vast majority of these young people are with us each week.

On the staffing front, we were encouraged when Debbie Maxted, a former Girls' Brigade Young Leader, who went right through the Company from the age of 5, asked to join us. She is now a BB Warrant Officer with a view to becoming a Lieutenant. We are also pleased to have Glenys back, even though she is only able to come for the first hour.

Last year, two boys undertook the first level of BB Leadership Training and one the second level. There is a year's gap between the second and third levels, so this year two did the second level, and one girl did the third level as she had previously done GB leadership. She was the first girl ever to attend our Battalion Leadership training and she fitted in well.

We continue to support Battalion events when our young people are available. Particularly popular are the Junior Battalion Camp and the Battalion Camp.

We should like to thank all the staff for their contribution – Glenys, Gary, Peter, Debbie, Joan, and Marion. As you can see, numbers of members are increasing and there are still not many of us!

Carol Clark & James Clark, 1st Ash Green Boys' Brigade Company & Girls' Association

Web Team Report

www.ash-church.org.uk

The website continues to be maintained on a regular basis but very little information is passed to the web team for inclusion. If we want a vibrant website, the web team needs information, reports, news items, photos, etc.

Contacts:

web.team@ash-church.org.uk

Colin Irving

Healing Team Report

There are 13 members of the healing team and we offer prayers for healing during various services throughout the year.

We provide three prayer stations during the 10:30 service on the 2nd Sunday of the month at which members of the team offer prayers for healing to members of the congregation.

We also hold bi-monthly Saturday morning services in New Ash Green, in the lounge of Turners Oak. Although the services are held in this sheltered accommodation, they are open to everybody in the community.

We have a permanent prayer station on the St. Blaise altar in church which provides the facility for visitors to leave prayers during the week. These are then offered up to God, unread, during the 10:30 Sunday service.

The team hold regular meetings to review recent events and to plan forthcoming services and activities. These meetings end with prayers for the church, the wider community and individuals who are in particular need.

In June, we provided a peaceful sanctuary at the fete. This is set up in a couple of tents on the opposite site of the cricket square to the fete control tent and provides a peacefully break away from the bustle of the fete. Members of the team were on hand to provide support and prayers, if required.

In November, team members are in church to offer support to members of the congregation attending the very moving All Souls Day service.

New team members are always welcome.

Contacts:

Jacque Peal, The Rectory, 872209, peal@btinternet.com

Colin Irving, 15 Spring Cross, 879500, colin.irving@btinternet.com

Alison Harding, 62 Knights Croft, 874770, alison.harding@btinternet.com

Parish Weekend Report

S tated aims and objectives:

AIMS

- To strengthen our bonds as 'one people, with one faith, and one future'.
- To become a more prayer-focussed, prayer-directed community.

OBJECTIVES

- To discover together the purpose and power of prayer.
- To build up our confidence in our own ability to pray as individuals and as a community.
- To discover together ways in which we might improve the prayer-life of our church community.

OUTCOMES

What were the benefits?

They were experiential and largely, personal, with many people feeling they had got personal mileage out of the weekend, meeting with new and different experiences of prayer, and time to reflect and listen to God.

Through the weekend people began to feel more confident in expressing themselves, and had a strong sense of experiencing prayer together, although it was largely silent.

How can people can be encouraged to build on the experience of the weekend?

Suggestions ...

- to identify relevant literature and make it available. This could also lead to establishing a church reading club, that could start by reviewing the books Jean had recommended.
- to meet in small groups, possibly before church on a Sunday, or on a weekday evening. This idea was carried forward and a monthly Parish breakfast with a time of prayer included has been started.
- to look wider than our own parish and to actively seek out opportunities to go to relevant events. As a result of this Alison Harding is now taking a group to the Taize service in Rochester Cathedral each month.

How can we improve the collective experience of prayer across the congregation?

Suggestions ...

- the intercessors should feel free and comfortable in using different approaches in their prayers.
- there could be more silence in the Eucharist with clear directions as to why we are having a silence at that point in the service.

We could *all* be more pro-active in praying for the community by ...

- Praying as we walk through our own neighbourhoods.
- Praying for our shopping centre as we walk through it.
- Using links and involvements we have with community organisations.
- Not being afraid to cultivate greater visibility in the community.

- The bold suggestion was made that we could do a 'NOT psychic' night at the Badger or the White Swan. This would need a lot of thought and prayer, but could be very effective.
- We should insert a sheet with useful church contact details into the Memorial Service 'Order of service' so that people could make further contact easily if they want to.

To sum up

Those who attended enjoyed the weekend and especially appreciated the friendly, informal, but very strong lead that Jean Kerr gave us in both the sessions and the worship. Jean has been invited to return and preach at a later date and has agreed to come on July 17th and if she possibly can, to share in the Rectory Picnic afterwards.

It was felt by the PWE group that the weekend had largely met the aims and objectives as stated. Some ideas have already been put into action, but there are others that could be taken up if anyone feels that they could give their time and energy to any of the suggestions. Prayer is the 'work' of the whole church community, and the more people involved in doing it, the stronger our communal faith and spiritual life will become.

Jacquie Peal

YACA (Young Ash Church Alive) Report

Young Ash Church Alive (YACA) is continuing healthy and strong into its third year now, which is such a joy for those of us who first developed it to see. The mixture of arts, crafts, games, worship and teaching seems to have moulded itself into a nice programme that both leaders and attendees can work with easily.

On average we have been welcoming ten children and their respective mums/dads to every third Sunday of the month. Our range of topics has been as diverse as looking at different types of prayer to learning about sharing. Last year we also looked briefly at the Eucharist in a slimmed-down version of what our young people learn when they begin their Confirmation classes. Speaking of Confirmation, we have been ecstatic to see a few mums from YACA joining our Church in Confirmation over the last year.

In December YACA helped Mark Nurdin with the Family Service, but our Christmas meeting was cancelled sadly due to the weather conditions. This is the only occasion when YACA has had to be postponed in its young life. In January we held a brief talk with all parents present as to their thoughts and ideas as to how we could keep YACA fresh and original for their children.

Unfortunately, due to work commitments, Mark has had to step down from leadership of YACA, though he is looking to return as soon as possible to the role. Though leaders are still in supply, we would like to finish by inviting all of Ash Church to come along to YACA at least once this year. We have always said that it is for the young and the young at heart, and those who have attended will tell you how much fun it is.

Our thanks and acknowledgements to all helpers, parents, the PCC and the Rector.

YACA Team – Mark Nurdin, Jacquie Peal, Kiki O'Neill-Byrne

Friends of Ash Church Report

FOAC is now well established as a support group to provide a mechanism for raising funds from the wider community and defraying some of the costs associated with the upkeep of the church's structure.

During 2010 a series of events were held successfully

- April: - 'Tall Ships – A Sailor's Life' performed by the Hog Eye Men Shanty Crew.
- May:- Barn Dance – a joint event with the Social Committee
- October:- 'Thank You For the Music' performed by choral group Front Room (finalists in the Top Choir Kent competition 2010 and 2011)
- November:- 'Remembrance – An Evening of Reflections'

Distribution of monies raised has been delayed as the CCTV project was stalled and work on the revision to the book of the Church's history by John Newman has yet to be completed.

During the year Colin Senneck stood down from his PR / Publicity role and Ian Nurdin handed over the duties of Membership Secretary to Michael Rose but remains on the Committee as a member without portfolio. It is hoped to recruit one or two new committee members in the coming months to supplement our existing team.

J.E.P. Whittaker
Chair F.O.A.C.

Social Group Report

Social events arranged were a Pancake Party, 2 Quizes (organised by George), Flower Evening (organised by Fay and Friends), Barn Dance, Rectory Picnic, an Elegant Evening (with entertainment) Tea Party (with games) and a Christmas Bazaar. Unfortunately the Pancake Party had to be cancelled due to lack of support, the Elegant Evening moved to various venues due to torrential rain and the Christmas Bazaar could not be held at the Noakes' house due to heavy snow. The latter, however, was held in church.

Two items have been put into the Church Newsletter asking for suggestions for this year and one or two ideas were offered by the Parish Affairs Committee when members of the Group were invited to a recent meeting of the PAC. These will be discussed at our next meeting so 'watch this space' for forthcoming events.

Marion Simmons