

The Parish of Christ Church, Epsom Common

Registered Charity No. 1127945

www.christchurchepsom.org.uk



REPORT ON FELLOWSHIP AND OTHER ACTIVITIES – March 2011

INTRODUCTION

1. This report was commissioned by the PCC to give a fuller picture of the many activities in and around Christ Church and Christ Church on the Wells than can be given in its formal report to the Annual Church Meeting. It is presented with thanks to the contributors of the individual items and with profound gratitude to all those without whose hard work – often behind the scenes – the rich offering reflected here would not be possible.
2. Our core activity is, of course, services of worship, the regular pattern of which is as below.

SUNDAYS	
Christ Church	Christ Church on the Wells (at 11 am)
8.30 am Holy Communion	1 st Sunday Praise Service and (for the 5 to 11s) Mustard Seeds
10 am Parish Communion with Children's Groups – or, on (normally) the 3 rd Sunday, All Age Worship	2 nd Sunday All Age Worship
6.30 pm (alternating with St Martin's, with <i>ad hoc</i> arrangements for the occasional 5 th Sunday)	3 rd Sunday Holy Communion
1 st Sunday (CC): Evening worship	4 th Sunday Praise Service
2 nd Sunday (St M): Choral Evensong	5 th Sunday Morning Worship
3 rd Sunday (CC): Holy Communion	
4 th Sunday (St M): "Adventures in Worship"	
WEEKDAYS (all at Christ Church)	
9 am (except Wednesdays and Saturdays): Morning Prayer	10.45 am (3 rd Thursday) – <i>Shake, Rattle & Praise</i>
9.30 am (Wednesdays): Holy Communion	5 pm (Mondays, Wednesdays & Fridays): Evening Prayer

3. Few will be aware of just how much else goes on (perhaps even of the things in direct support of these services), let alone all the detail. This report aims properly to recognise, publicise and, indeed, celebrate all this valuable activity. If there is something new here that interests you – as either a participant or helper – the contacts indicated would be delighted to hear from you.
4. But even all this is not the complete story. Another yet more substantial report could be written about the work of: the Clergy, Worship Leaders and the Sacristan's team, including activities beyond the main services; the Churchwardens with their wide-ranging responsibilities; the Verger and her day-to-day care of the church; the PCC, its Officers and Committees; the Parish Child Protection Officer and her work in securing the clearance of all our valued volunteers who work with children and young people; the Mission "Champions" and their work as intermediaries with the good causes we support; the Parish Office and its work as a first point of contact and, among many other things, in the key tasks of maintaining the parish diary and assembling the various rotas as well as the weekly Notice Sheet; and many other office holders. (At least some of this is, of course, covered by the PCC's formal annual report.)

5. Then there are those involved in various *ad hoc* events, such as the recent Quiz Evening – and not forgetting some who have no official job but quietly undertake many odd tasks around the place which help keep things running smoothly. We should also acknowledge that members of our congregations are also involved in many valuable activities – formal and otherwise – outside Christ Church and Christ Church on the Wells.
6. For completeness, mention should be made of Christ Church's close relations with the uniformed organisations that meet in the adjacent Scout HQ and join in our parade services – and with the Little Hands Nursery and various local schools for which we are pleased to host their Christmas and other special services.
7. Finally, organisers of activities are asked always to bear in mind the scope for publicity through the Notice Sheet (christchurch.parishoffice@btinternet.com or 01372 743133), *Christ Church News* (CCNews@fsmail.net) and the website (webmaster@christchurchepsom.org.uk). *Christ Church News* also relies on a flow of other contributions from members of the congregations so that its monthly editions can give a rounded picture of our work and witness.

Roger Morgan
PCC Secretary
March 2011

ACTIVITIES

NOTE: A good number of the items in the first part of this report apply to both Christ Church and Christ Church on the Wells, while some others are obviously relevant only to the main church. In the remaining cases – as marked with **(W)** at the end of the title line – there is parallel activity at Christ Church on the Wells, details of which are set out on the final page.

Church Cleaning

We take it for granted that the church will be clean, but this is thanks to a small team of volunteer cleaners. There are eight altogether, now mainly at least into their late 70s. In pairs, these take it in turns to do the weekly clean (sweeping the wood floors, vacuuming the carpets, mopping the tiles as necessary and cleaning the Vestry toilet) on a day of their choice, normally towards the end of the week.

In earlier days, a substantially larger number of generally younger volunteers meant that we were able to field weekly teams of about five. This enabled us to be more thorough, particularly as regards dusting. These days, the churchwardens have to organise a major “church clean” every six months when other volunteers help us keep on top of things.

It would be wonderful to have larger teams of regular cleaners – men and women – so that standards can be better maintained. If you have recently retired or reduced your working hours so that you could spare two hours a month for this important behind the scenes work, please let me know.

Patience Morriss, Co-ordinator (01372 723301)

Brass Cleaning

Christ Church has a good number of brass fittings and other ornaments. It is important to the overall appearance of the church that these are kept shining. This requires weekly attention by a small group of brass cleaners. A rota distributes weekly duties among the team, and individuals then choose their own time to clean towards the end of each week so that the brass looks its best for Sundays.

The numbers on the team have become quite low meaning that our rota currently has a six-weekly cycle. More volunteers would be welcome. If you could help, please let me know.

Marion Bathgate, Co-ordinator (01737 352993)

Church Flowers

The church's flower arranging team ensure that, except during Lent and Advent, there are regular fresh flowers displayed on the high altar and in the Memorial chapel. The team also provides

arrangements, if required, for weddings and funerals as well as for the occasional event in the Church Hall and for the church's Open Day.

At present, the group consists of four people who each take a turn once a month and who also assist at the major festivals of Easter, Mothering Sunday, Harvest Festival, Remembrance Sunday and Christmas. We derive great pleasure from being able to enhance our beautiful and interesting building with flowers, and like to think that the congregation enjoys the results.

We would welcome anyone who would like to join us and, if more information is required please contact me. And if anyone would care to make a donation to the Flower Fund (which fluctuates during the course of the year), it would be very gratefully received.

Liz Pullinger, Leader (01372 723406)

Bell Ringers (www.epsomcommonringers.org.uk)

Christ Church has had a ring of eight bells since shortly after the church was built, but the original bells were replaced with a newly-cast set in 1991/92. Like most churches, the bells are rung to call people to worship on Sunday morning, and some Sunday evenings. They are also rung for weddings and other special occasions, and also for the joy of ringing itself. When not being rung by the bell ringers, some of the bells are used by the church clock to strike the quarters and hours.

The bells are rung by a voluntary band of ringers currently numbering around a dozen. We represent a wide range of ages (11 to 80+) and abilities, with the only pre-requisite being the ability to climb the stairs. Our Wednesday practices (8 – 9.30 pm) and Sunday morning ringing (9.30 – 9.55 am) also attract a number of regular visitors from other local towers. Most of our ringers have learned to ring at Christ Church, whilst others have moved into the area and brought their skills with them. Many of our ringers also ring at other churches both in the local area and wider afield.

We welcome visitors to the tower on a practice night, and are always on the lookout for people who would like to learn to ring. The minimum age is 11 years old (and we ask that under 18s be accompanied by an adult for the first few weeks) but there is no maximum! If you are interested, please get in touch with either of us.

Mark Hodgson, Tower Captain (020 8786 5742)

Claire Stay, Deputy Captain (01372 812261)

Welcome Desk (W) – for the meaning of “W”, see the note on page 2

The Welcome Desk – established in the 1990s – operates at Christ Church's 10 am Sunday services. (Clergy and churchwardens usually pick up on any new people at other services and pass the details to the Team.)

There are currently five people on the Welcome Team, deployed week by week on a rota. We aim to greet newcomers and, where appropriate, give them a welcome pack containing a welcoming letter, mission statement, information sheet, and prayer leaflet. At a later stage – when people have come a few times – we usually ask for their address etc. This is used when inviting them to Newcomer Drinks & Nibbles in the summer and for possible Electoral Roll and visiting purposes.

It would be great to have some new members for the Team. It's more important to be a friendly face than know everyone's names!

Jo Woolfe, Co-ordinator (01372 726782)

Sidespeople

Sidespeople play a vital part in the worship life of Christ Church. They assist the churchwardens in keeping the Church a pleasant, organised and welcoming environment for the congregation and helping services to run smoothly.

They do this by welcoming people, handing them service sheets, being a point of information, and trying to pre-empt people's needs (for example, providing large print to the visually impaired, offering “happy bags” of toys for small children and removing chairs to accommodate people in wheelchairs). They also keep an eye on safety issues such as access to fire exits. During a service, they take the

collection and help direct people to Communion. Afterwards, they tidy the church, and count and record the collection.

There are currently about 18 men and women in the Team – all volunteers from the Electoral Roll, being (re)elected by the APCM on an annual basis, although there are arrangements to add to the Team throughout the year as people come and go. Each member has a fixed duty once a month, working in a team – usually of three.

In addition to the contribution to church life, being a Sidesperson is a great way to meet people and make new friends. If you feel you could help, please let me know.

Jenny Breese, Senior Sideswoman (01372 747235)

Crèche

We aim to make a crèche available in the Church Hall during every 10 am Sunday Service at Christ Church. This offers a happy environment and a range of toys to amuse babies and toddlers from newborn to 2½ or thereabouts while their parents attend the Service. We sometimes join the older children's groups for songs: the little ones enjoy this and, from their earliest days, it helps familiarise them with Scramblers, our Sunday group for pre-school children.

Helping in the crèche is a fun and very rewarding way to meet the youngest members of our congregation and their families as well as being a significant contribution to the life of the church. The children return to their families before the Eucharist is served, so helpers are free to join the service at this point.

Crèche helpers do not need to be parents themselves. Our current team includes both men and women. The crèche is staffed each week by two members (serving just once or twice a quarter) drawn from the team on a rota basis.

If you have any questions or wish to join the crèche rota please contact me.

Gill Glasspool, Co-ordinator (01372 741699)

Children's Groups (W)

Thanks to a recent growth in numbers, we have been able to re-establish three separate and thriving Sunday school groups for younger children, being

Scramblers (ages 3-5)

Climbers (ages 5-7)

Explorers (ages 7-11)

(Those of secondary school age are catered for by the Pathfinders group – see next item).

The groups meet every Sunday (except for the all-age services that are held monthly or during school holidays) and use material suitable for their age group based on the Scripture Union programme.

There were some joint activities involving all the groups this past year from planting bulbs (results can be seen towards the end of the path leading to the car park) to making cards to be sent to people in the parish & the children in Brazil. There was also an activity in relation to "Mothering Sunday" – as seen on the day!

With the aim of enabling the children (and the adult leaders and helpers) to share more of the Communion services, the groups have, since late 2010, shared in the first part of the church service, moving into the Hall for their sessions during the second hymn, immediately before the reading of the Gospel. As always, children come back into the church to be with their parents for the administration of Communion and, near the end of the service, are invited to come to the front and tell the congregation what they have been doing.

The groups are a key part of Christ Church's provision for the next generation, and it would be good to strengthen the team of adult helpers to help in this important work. If this is something for you, please contact one of us.

Kay Matthews, Leader of Scramblers (01372 723472)

Devorah Burns, Leader of Climbers (01372 724798)

Helen Smith, Leader of Explorers (01372 749368)

Pathfinders

Pathfinders is the Sunday morning group for those of secondary school age. Like the children's groups, we meet every Sunday except when there are all-age services.

Members share in the first part of Parish Communion and, immediately after the Gospel reading, leave for their own session in the Vestry during the sermon. They rejoin the main service for the Peace.

The sessions include group discussion and reflection on a theme and related passage of Scripture, exploring its relevance for today and how we might apply the lessons that we learn from it in our everyday lives. Sometimes we also engage in fundraising activities as a group, such as a charity car wash.

Seb Crutch & Esther Jones (020 8393 5207) and **John Warburton** (01372 200584), Leaders

Choir

The Choir helps provide the musical lead at the Sunday 10 am Parish and All-age Communion, at the monthly Sunday 8.30 am Communion with hymns and, with the Music Group, at occasional Sunday 10 am non-Eucharistic services. It also helps provide the lead at occasional special services – not least the annual Carols by Candlelight service – and, as requested, at weddings and funerals. Our music covers the whole range from traditional anthems to modern worship songs.

We meet for fellowship and practice at 7.30 pm on Thursdays, and hold a number of social events throughout the year.

The regular membership of about 20 is fairly evenly split between adults and juniors (some of whom have come up from Song Squad) and we have a number of occasional helpers. We would be glad to welcome newcomers. While some musical ability is obviously an advantage, we can help you begin from scratch – as have a number of our present members.

Esther Jones, Director of Music (0208 393 5207)

Sound Desk

Christ Church has a good quality sound system that includes an induction loop for hearing aid users. The heart of the system is a 24 channel mixing desk; there are microphone points all over the church; and 3 radio microphones are included. Monitor loudspeakers are available for musicians and there are relay speakers in the hall and the entrance porch. The hall also has a simple PA installation and induction loop.

To get the best out of the sound system we have a small team of technically competent people who set up and operate the system at the main Sunday morning and other important services. (At smaller services it can be switched on by the wardens or sidespeople and used in a more basic fashion.) The team of regular operates numbers around 5 so each person takes a turn about once a month.

We could always use an extra pair of hands to help take a turn on the desk but it's a job for those with an aptitude for the technology. It's also an opportunity to learn some of the basics of how a professional PA system works. I draw up the rota of operators, and also maintain the systems. Anybody interested in becoming involved should contact me.

Roger Wedlake, Co-ordinator (01372 720793)

Music Group

The Christ Church music group accompanies worship at some of our less formal services, most regularly at our monthly all age worship. This usually takes place at 10 am on the third Sunday of each month and we rehearse by gate-crashing the previous Thursday evening's choir practice. The band usually consists of 5-10 people, including guitars, bass, woodwind and brass, keyboards, a drummer and vocalists. We are always looking for new members; please contact me with any questions or offers of help.

Andrew Smith, Co-ordinator (01372 749368)

Epistle Readers and Intercessors

A feature of Christ Church is lay involvement in our worship, and I am responsible for drawing up the rotas for those who either read the Epistle (or, occasionally, an Old Testament lesson) at the 10 am Parish Communion or lead the intercessions.

There are 17 people on the current list of Epistle Readers. As there is only a Gospel reading (delivered by the President or Minister) at the various All Age services, this is more than adequate for each reader to be needed only once every three months.

However, there are only eight Intercessors on the current list, only two of whom are available to lead intercessions for the evening services. (When no lay person is available, the officiating minister leads the intercessions.) It would be good to boost numbers so that, for example, we could move to a quarterly cycle for the 10 am service rather than the present duty every two months. The selection of Intercessors is by personal invitation from the Vicar, and I shall be raising this with the Revd Rosemary Donovan in due course.

Peter Grint, Co-ordinator (01372 727771)

Coffee Rota (W)

An important part of parish life is the opportunity for fellowship and conversation over refreshments (coffee, tea, squash – and biscuits) in the Hall after the 10 am Sunday service. Thanks are due to the volunteers who, in teams of three, see to this provision week by week.

We could do with more helpers so, if you'd like to join the rota (and this is an excellent way to meet more people) or want more information, please contact me.

Kate Drummond (kate.ccpo@btinternet.com or 01372 743133 – Wednesday & Thursday mornings)

Fairtrade

Some years ago, Christ Church signed up to being a "Fairtrade parish", aiming to maximise its own and parishioners' use of fairly-traded goods.

As part of this, we provide a Fairtrade stall in Christ Church Hall after the 10 am service on the fourth Sunday of the month, and at Christ Church on the Wells when there is a fifth Sunday in the month, about 4 times a year. We also supply the church with the fairly traded tea, coffee and sugar that is used for post-service refreshments. A stall is also provided at the Annual Church Open Day and on Epsom Common Day

The stall is run by Peter Rutter with the items supplied by Tricia Rutter, who is a Key Contact for **Traidcraft** (www.traidcraft.co.uk) and **Created** (www.createdgifts.org). We seek to anticipate demand for goods – for example with this year's "Real Easter Eggs" – but are pleased also to take orders. Catalogues for Traidcraft and Created fairly-traded goods are available for the congregation at the back of the church throughout the year.

Peter would greatly welcome regular help with setting up and running the stall. He has a lot to carry up from the car park and can be very busy at the stall on his own. If you can help – or have any other questions – please contact us.

Peter & Tricia Rutter (01372 739757)

Passion (W)

Passion is the Christ Church Sunday night youth group. We meet each Sunday to play games including table tennis, pool and, when the weather allows, outdoor games. The current group also likes to just sit and chat about issues that they come across over the week, be it political or the latest film. With a little forethought, we have even been known to go bowling.

The main trip of the year is to *Soul Survivor* during August. Here we take over a dozen teenagers with a few leaders camping at the Bath and Wells show ground near Shepton Mallet. Over 10,000 teenagers are camping together while learning about – and worshipping – God. It's a great week that all of us enjoy. In addition to the Christian teaching, there is loads to do including skateboarding, discos, bands and an "It's a Knockout" competition. The camp cooking isn't too shabby either!

For more information either to help lead this group or to join as a teenager please contact either of us.

Phil Goldby (01372 800714)

Martin Virgo (01372 741622)

Pastoral Team

Christ Church has a long established Pastoral Team. The team presently consists of six authorised Pastoral Assistants (Sue Matthews, Jo Woolfe, Avril Shipton*, Fay Wedlake,* Ann Chandler & Tricia Coleman) and two Pastoral Visitors (Julie Chartres & Pamela Vonberg). The two asterisked PAs are largely concerned with the work of the Baptism Team (see the report immediately below).

In close co-operation with the clergy, the Pastoral Team visits the bereaved, newcomers, the sick in hospital and at home, and seeks to support those in any kind of need. It maintains and updates the Intercessions List, maintains close links with the Home Communion Team, Electoral Roll Officer and Welcome Desk.

Other activities include Christmas cake distribution to the bereaved & housebound, social events for newcomers (an annual wine & nibbles event after a 10 am service) and the elderly (Tea Club about three times a year.)

Sue Matthews, Co-ordinator (01372 724080)

Jo Woolfe, Secretary (01372 726782)

Baptism Team

Baptisms are an important part of the church's provision. Only some are held in the usual slot during Parish Communion on the fourth Sunday each month. More are held on that Sunday afternoon and some at other times too, including at Christ Church on the Wells. Last year, there were 49 baptisms altogether. Most of these were of children under 18 months, but there were also three older children and three adults.

Through the year, we had eight Baptism Preparation evenings for parents in the Hall and made home preparation visits for some candidates. In May, we held a Tea Party for families with baptisms in the preceding two years, a short children's service in church, games, activities and tea in the hall. We also made contact with 120 families from the preceding three years on the anniversary of their baptism.

The Baptism Team assists the clergy in all this. In addition to Fay Wedlake (Co-ordinator) and Avril Shipton (Secretary), current members are: Ann Chandler; Gill Catcheside; Gill Glasspool; Katherine Chambers and Sarah Chorley. Janice Adey and Angela Mutton also assist, and Jessica Walls is our dedicated Baptism Sidesperson. Activities are co-ordinated on the baptism rota which, together with a list of the candidates as they progress through the system, is published once a month.

It is a privilege to work as part of this active team, meeting people who want to explore the meaning of baptism and take this step of faith. Each family is different but this is a significant time in their lives and we are invited to share in their celebration of new life. Should you be interested in helping, there are many tasks "behind the scenes" in administering the process, as well "out front" meeting with people. There will be a task to suit you!

We are here to help anyone wanting to find out more about Baptism or Thanksgiving for the birth of a child. You can contact us in many ways, speak to any member of the baptism team, send an email via the Baptisms page of the church website or ring one of us.

Fay Wedlake, Co-ordinator (01372 720793)

Avril Shipton Secretary (01372 812175)

Weddings & Funerals

These services are also an important part of Christ Church's provision – for not only for the couples / bereaved families immediately concerned but also the many others who attend to support them (and for some of whom it may be a rare experience of a church service).

Christ Church's attractive location and interior make it a popular choice for weddings, of which there are about 15 a year – mainly during the summer months. About a third of this number live outside the geographical parish. These are either "habitual worshippers" at Christ Church who are thus on the

Parish Electoral Roll or, thanks to the 2008 change in the national rules, people who have a “connection to the parish” through, for example, established attendance before moving from the area or close kinship with an existing parishioner. We do not preclude the marriage of divorcees, but this is decided by the priest after interviewing the couple.

There are 6 or 7 funerals a year in church. Occasionally, these are for Traveller families – who, because of Epsom’s horse racing connection, regard Epsom as “home” – and typically attract 200+ mourners. In addition, our clergy lead over 20 funerals a year at the local crematorium and cemetery.

I am the main point of contact with, respectively, the wedding couples and bereaved families to help ensure the smooth running of these most significant occasions. I also act as the vergers for the services, preparing and then clearing up the church.

Marion Bathgate, Weddings and Funerals Clerk (01737 352993)

Prayer Chain

The Prayer Chain consists of church members who will pray totally confidentially for any concerns, passing telephone messages in a circle in the morning or evening and at weekends where needed.

At present, the chain is slightly low in numbers as some members have moved away. If this is something you would like to help with please speak to me.

Sue Matthews, Co-ordinator (01372 724080)

Prayer Ministry Team

Christ Church has a long tradition of offering prayer for the healing of mind, body and spirit. At present, two or more team members are usually available after 10 am Holy Communion services to pray for and alongside anyone who wishes to come forward to receive God’s help at their point of need. There are also specially designated healing services with Anointing & prayer available 4 – 5 times a year.

Team members (6 at present) meet regularly and have been trained to listen and pray confidentially, modelling our usual practice on the Church of England handbook “A Time to Heal”.

There is a leaflet explaining the Church’s Healing Ministry available at the back of church.

Sue Matthews, Co-ordinator (01372 724080)

Song Squad

Song Squad is for young people aged 7+ who love to sing. At our meetings (in the church, from 6 to 7 pm on Thursdays during term time) we provide singing training, musical games, fun & friendship. Our music is in a wide range of styles.

Having practiced the pieces, the Squad performs 2-3 times a term at Christ Church, including mini-musicals twice a year. There are occasional outings to other events.

Song Squad currently has 15 members, and we would be pleased to welcome others. There is no charge for membership.

Esther Jones, Director of Music (0208 393 520)

Ladies Book Club

The club meets about once a month on a date agreed at the previous meeting. We usually meet at 8pm in the home of a volunteer member who also provides tea/coffee and biscuits. Each meeting has a leader (also a volunteer) who guides the discussion by a series of prepared questions.

Depending on how good a discussion the book we have read generates, meetings finish around 10 pm. The books are chosen collectively and, if available, ordered from the Epsom Library for us by Kay Matthews who is a librarian there. (The club is free, but we do ask for a contribution of about £2 a year to cover the Library’s reservation charges).

At present, the Club has about 15 members – of a variety of ages, and including people from other churches. Meetings are advertised in the Christ Church Notice Sheet and by word of mouth. Anyone

wishing to join can either just turn up at a meeting or, if they require the chosen book, contact Kay Matthews.

Jenny Breese (01372 747235)

Kay Matthews (01372 723472)

Mothers' Union

The Christ Church MU branch has the honour of being one of the earliest to be formed after Mary Sumner started her inspiring work around 1896. We celebrated our 120th anniversary in December 2010. We have around 40 members, including a small number of "indoor members" who are unable to participate in some of the activities but wish to remain supportive of the organisation.

The Mothers' Union has many strands – international, national, regional and local – so our voluntary committee is kept pretty busy! Apart from our main meetings (held monthly during the morning or evening with a variety of topics and speakers) our current interests as a branch include: links with the MU branch at Christ Church, Freetown in Sierra Leone; "Happy Bags" of toys to help parents keep very young children amused whilst in church; well-attended Parenting Courses (run in conjunction with another branch); and fund-raising for *Away From It All Holidays* for families in need. We also meet up with other branches in the local and wider area on a regular basis and participate in many of the centrally organised campaigns.

Wheels & Squeals and *Shake, Rattle & Praise* (see the two reports immediately below) are also MU initiatives.

We are pleased to enrol anyone who sympathises with the aims of supporting marriage and family life – men and women, married, single or separated, parents or not. The Mothers' Union believes that families come in many different guises and all deserve support whatever their personal situation.

Ro Stretton, Branch Leader, (01372 747957)

Wheels & Squeals

Wheels and Squeals is a parent and toddler group, which operates as an outreach of the Mothers Union. In addition to catering for the children (from 0 to 2½), we provide a good network for mums, dads, grandparents and childminders who enjoy coming each week to catch up with friends over coffee and tea.

Our meetings are held – during school term time only – in the Church Hall on Tuesdays from 9.45-11 am and on Wednesdays from 10.30-12 noon. There are three leaders for each session. Toys are provided for children's general play, and there is always a craft activity. Sessions finish with a song time and a drink and biscuit for the children. A newcomer's first session is free. Thereafter we seek the modest contribution of £1.75 per session towards our costs. At present, we have some 30 families on each day.

Management is in the hands of a small committee. Its planning includes arrangements for special activities such as the Christmas parties, the egg hunt at Easter and the Summer Fun Day.

If you are interested in joining us, please contact me.

Pippa Rothwell, Joint Co-ordinator (01372 745955)

Shake Rattle & Praise

Shake Rattle and Praise is a monthly service for babies, toddlers (older siblings are also welcome) and their grown-ups. Activities include singing, Bible stories, crafts and homemade cakes! It is held on the third Thursday of the month, at 10:45 – 11:30 in Christ Church Hall. Average attendance is approximately 12 children with their grown-ups. Additional help to run the morning would always be welcome. For more information, please contact me.

Vicki Goldby, Leader (01372 800714)

Home Groups

Christ Church currently has five adult Home Groups, one of which meets during the day on Monday, and the remainder on a Tuesday evening. (The teenagers' Wednesday evening CYFA – see separate item below – also comes within the Home Group family). Prayer, Bible Study and discussion are the main ingredients, and those involved recognise and value the benefits of learning and having fellowship in a small group.

Generally, each group works independently in the choice of study material and how it operates. However, last year for one term it was agreed to undertake a uniform study under the heading "The Church as the Body of Christ" based on 1 Corinthians. Within that framework each group could study as it wished. This proved very popular and also lent itself to be linked with a sermon series, which had the advantage of opening Home Group study to the wider congregation.

During Lent each year the Home Groups put aside their individual identities and join in an ecumenical exercise with home groups of other churches and a uniform study format. In 2011 "Pilgrims Together in Epsom" by Rev Adrian Esdaile, reflects that we are all on a journey as individuals and churches and follows the journey of Christ through the Gospel of Matthew.

There is an open invitation to anyone wishing to join a Home Group, and an active encouragement to do so as the spiritual benefits for those who wish to come closer to the Lord far outweigh the time taken out of busy daily schedules. I would be pleased to hear from anyone interested in joining a Home Group.

Ruth Grint, Co-ordinator (01372 727771)

CYFA (W)

CYFA is the Christ Church's youth groups Bible Study, held at 8.00pm on Wednesday evenings at our home. It is intended for those aged from 14 though to leaving school and is always open to new teenagers looking to find out about Christianity. We discuss a range of things from Biblical characters to life morals and teenage pressure points whilst eating Vicki's home baked products! The average turnout is around 7 teenagers with 3 leaders.

For more information please contact either of us.

Phil & Vicki Goldby (01372 800714)

The Merry Mowers

The mowing team currently consists of a group of 10 men who, with the opportunity of riding on the tractor mower ("Big Red"), rise to the challenge of looking after the church lawns – and, during the Vacancy, those at the Vicarage.

We usually work in pairs (one on the tractor mower whilst the other operates the hand mower and/or strimmer), on a rota basis every 2-3 weeks throughout the mowing season, March to October. This is normally on Saturday mornings, but some choose other days. In any event, we do our best to be finished and out of the way before any wedding or function party.

The season usually kicks off with an informal evening gathering at the local pub, and anything and everything apart from the mowing is discussed over a few beers! We start with a general tidy up from the winter debris of leaf litter, and the trimming of brambles and overhanging branches as part of the annual church & grounds spring clean process.

The members' list is always open for new volunteers (who don't have to be men!), and full training is given by existing members on how to operate the tractor mower. If you're interested, please contact me.

Paul Chamberlain, Co-ordinator (01372 727240)

Christian Aid

Christian Aid helps people of all faiths and none. Its support is principally designed to help people help themselves through education, infrastructure projects and pump-priming gifts of seeds or livestock. As the proverb says, "give a man a fish and you feed him for a day; teach him to fish and you feed him for a lifetime."

While Christian Aid collects from all faiths and none, it is Christians who do the fund-raising – not least through house-to-house collection during the annual Christian Aid Week. Every single collector makes a real difference. In 2004, for example, 13 people from the main church collected £1,208; the following year, 29 people collected £2,113; and last year 17 people collected £1,526. You don't have to be brilliant at maths to see the connection between the number collecting and the sum raised for Christian Aid's valuable work.

With the size of the congregation at Christ Church, we ought to be able to field a bigger team of collectors. (The smaller congregation at Christ Church on the Wells does proportionately rather better than the main church.) This is something both men and women can do!

Please let us know if **you** can help with collections during this year's Christian Aid Week, which is from 15 to 21 May.

Patience Morriss, Co-ordinator at Christ Church (01372 723301)

Elizabeth Martin, Co-ordinator at Christ Church on the Wells (020 8393 2985)

Church Hall

The Hall is used for many of the regular activities noted in this report, as well as for various one-off Christ Church events – such as the recent Quiz Night.

It is also frequently hired out – for children's parties (it is a very popular venue), for the regular meetings or AGMs of a range of outside (non-commercial) organisations and, occasionally, as a Polling Station. The conditions of hire and charges are on the church website. The income of around £8,000 pa from these lettings helps defray the substantial costs of maintaining the Hall.

To avoid clashes (and to ensure that heating is provided in the colder months), **all use of the Hall must be booked**, preferably by email via the website page: www.christchurchepsom.org.uk/hall-bookings.htm. Some events – particularly parties – are booked long in advance, so giving two or more months' notice greatly increases the chances of your preferred date being available.

Lesley Morgan, Hall Bookings Secretary (01372 745013)

Christ Church United and Shooting Stars (www.epsomnet.co.uk/ccufc)

Christ Church United started life one September day in 1992 when the football-crazy Curate thought it would be a good idea to have a church-based football club. Seven players turned up.

19 years later the club is fully established with a membership of over 200. It is run by unpaid volunteers to provide soccer coaching for boys and girls, from under 7 to 16, regardless of their ability level. The Club is recognised by the Football Association as a 'Charter Standard' football club and Mini-Soccer Centre, and its coaches hold appropriate FA coaching qualifications. It forms a part of Christ Church's outreach programme, and works with other sporting and voluntary organisations so that links between the Church and the local community are maintained and developed through sport. Matches and tournaments with other clubs are arranged from time to time throughout the season.

Shooting Stars caters for those not quite old enough to play in teams, so the 5 years olds can still have fun with footballs.

Coaching takes place at Blenheim High School, Longmead Road, Epsom on Saturdays between 9 am and 10.30 am during term-time.

Robert Burns (01372 724798)

Items specific to CHRIST CHURCH ON THE WELLS

As noted previously, some of the items in the first section of this report apply equally to both the main church and Christ Church on the Wells.

In a number of other cases (as indicated by “W” in the title lines above), there are parallel activities separately organised at Christ Church on the Wells. Details of these are set out in the following paragraphs.



Sunday Services

We are grateful to the rotas of volunteers who, at each of our Sunday services in the Wells Community Centre, take care of the following.

- **Room set up** – to arrange the chairs and altar back drop before the service and put everything away afterwards (many people offer to help, but someone needs to take charge.)
- **Altar preparation** – to cover the altar table with a white cloth and make sure that everything is in its right place for the service. (The current single volunteer would love to train up an assistant.)
- **Welcome Desk** – to greet people when they arrive and hand out service sheets etc.
- **CD player** (on those occasions when we do not have a pianist) – to play the right hymn at the right time!
- **Tea and Coffee bar** – to serve hot and cold drinks after the service (bringing only the milk, as everything else is provided – and we don't charge so there is no money handling involved).

It would be good to boost the number of volunteers on these rotas. If you think you could help, please talk to Mike Reeves or Ann Chandler after one of our services.

Work with children and young people

- **Mustard Seeds** is our children's group, meeting at the Wells Centre, on the first Sunday of the month at 11 am for Bible stories, crafts and fun.
- The **Senior Mustard Seeds** is our cake and discussion group for children of secondary school age, meeting at 65 The Greenway from 7 to 8.30 pm on the third Thursday of the month. We've recently been basing our discussions on extracts from the Harry Potter films. We also have occasional social outings.
- **The Wells Holiday Club** takes place every summer holidays. Organised by members of Christ Church on the Wells, with help from others, it is intended as outreach to the children of the Wells and Ebbisham estates. Recently it has become very popular and is oversubscribed on some days.

Ann Chandler (01372 727746) & **Shirleyann Dartnell** (01372 747069)

Prayer group

As well as prayer at our Sunday services and Home Group, we have a small, informal prayer group. This is open to all, and meets on the third Monday of the month (with adjustments if that coincides with school holidays) from 9.30 am at 65 The Greenway. We pray for the needs of the Wells, its people and its church. In addition, it gives those who attend an opportunity for coffee and a chat.

Ann Chandler (01372 727746)
