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***St. Leonard's Church***

***Birdingbury***

***Draycote Group***

***Annual Report 2013.***

**ST LEONARD'S BIRDINGBURY**  
**Annual Parochial Church Meeting [APCM]**  
**7.30 pm Wednesday 9th April 2014.**

**in The Birbury**

*Welcome with wine/juice and 'nibbles' followed by:*

**AGENDA**

*Apologies for absence*

***Meeting of the parishioners***

*Election of churchwardens*

***Annual Parish Meeting***

*Minutes of the meeting 18th April 2013*

*Matters arising*

*Reports:*

*Presentation of annual report*

*Presentation of terrier and inventory*

*Deanery Synod Report*

*Electoral Roll report*

*Any questions and other business*

*Elections*

*Up to 10 other lay members*

*2 Deanery Synod Members*

*Sidesmen and women*

*Independent examiner*

*Electoral Roll Officer*

*Followed by a short meeting of the newly elected P.C.C.*

**ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENT**  
**Of the Parochial Church Council for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2013**

***Priest in Charge Revd Canon Barbara Clutton [who retired in February 2014]***

***Churchwardens***

***Karen Armbrister***  
***Davenport Cottage***  
***Birdingbury***  
***CV23 8EN***

***Dick Withington***  
***Marton Glebe Farm***  
***Birdingbury***  
***Rugby***  
***CV23 8EE***

***Lay Readers***

***Elizabeth Kirk***  
***Kevin Downham***

***Independent Examiner***

***Mr. Andrew Armbrister***  
***Davenport Cottage***  
***Birdingbury***  
***CV23 8EN***

***Bank***

***Lloyds Bank***  
***14 High Street***  
***Rugby***  
***CV21 3PL***

# ***St Leonard's Church Annual Report***

## **Background**

*Birdingbury Parochial Church Council [PCC] has the responsibility of promoting the whole mission of the church: pastoral, evangelistic, ecumenical and social. It is also responsible for the maintenance of St. Leonard's Church. It is a charity exempted from registration with the Charity Commission.*

## **Our Aims**

*'St. Leonard's exists to provide a point of Christian focus for worship and learning for the whole community.*

*St. Leonard's looks to encourage its members to use their God given skills to reach out to all, to create a truly Christian community, which will make a difference to people's lives'.*

*We seek to put into practice the diocesan aims of – Worshipping God, Making New Disciples and Transforming Communities. We are also committed to developing the diocesan programme of '8 Essential Qualities of Healthy Churches'.*

## **Membership**

*During the year the following served as members of the PCC.*

*Priest in charge                      Revd Canon Barbara Clutton, who retired in February.  
We are now in an interregnum.*

*Churchwardens                      Mrs Karen Armbrister,  
Mr Dick Withington, Lay Chairman, Birbury Rep*

*Deanery Synod Reps.                Mrs Karen Armbrister and Mr Peter Law*

*Elected members:*

<i>Mrs Daphne Chippendale</i>	<i>Treasurer and Secretary</i>
<i>Mrs Liz Ellis</i>	<i>Minuting Secretary</i>
<i>Mrs Jenny Hawes</i>	<i>Village Pastoral Visitor</i>
<i>Mr Peter Law</i>	
<i>Mr Brian Lloyd,</i>	<i>Gift Aid Secretary, Site and Buildings.</i>
<i>Mrs Melanie Palmer</i>	<i>Rotas organiser</i>

*Organist-                                Mr Bryan Tompkins  
Sacristans                              Mr Andrew and Mrs Karen Armbrister, Mrs Daphne  
Chippendale, Mr Simon Davy.*

*Standing Committee    The churchwardens and treasurer of the PCC.*

## **Organisation**

*The PCC met six times during the year.*

## **Electoral Roll**

*There were 44 on the electoral roll, of whom 6 are not resident in the parish.  
There will be a new electoral roll in 2019.*

## **Patterns of Worship**

*Our regular pattern of monthly services at St Leonard's is:*

*2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday 9.15am Holy Communion.*

*3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday 11am Holy Communion.*

*4<sup>th</sup> Sunday 11am Morning Praise.*

*There is a monthly home communion service.*

*In addition to we have special services to celebrate Mothering Sunday, Easter Sunday, Rogation, Harvest, Carols Candles and Crib and Christmas Day.  
There are also occasional offices such as baptisms, weddings and funerals.*

## **Review of the year**

### ***Reverend Barbara's retirement***

*We would like to record our appreciation of all the work that Barbara has done for and with us over the past nine years. She will be greatly missed. She will continue with her role as Diocesan Rural Life Officer and Agricultural Chaplain. We wish her well in this work and all the other activities she will no doubt be involved in during the next phase of her life.*

## **WORSHIPPING GOD**

### ***Mothering Sunday***

*The church looked lovely with many decorated baskets for this special service. Special thanks to Gaynor for drinks and delicious pastries. The donated floral arrangements were distributed around the village with our love.*

### ***Palm Sunday***

*Sadly the usual donkeys were not available and the procession from the war memorial to the church was cancelled due to very heavy rain. For once the service therefore was wholly in church.*

### ***Rogation***

*Thanks to Wallace and Josie we were once again able to have our first benefice service at Bondon Farm. In warm sunshine a large congregation was surrounded by pens of livestock some of whom joined in, in their own inimitable way!*

### ***Pet Service***

*Thank you to all who supported this service, outside The Birbury and a special thanks to all who brought their four legged friends.*

### **Harvest**

*The church was decorated beautifully by the ladies of the Altar Guild, as we met to celebrate Harvest. The gifts of tinned and dried foods were to Rugby to the charity Hope 4 and its sister charity The Rugby Foodbank. It was lovely to be able to walk down to the Birbury for a country lunch afterwards.*

### **Remembrance**

*A large number of people met to remember those who have lost their lives in conflicts for their country. When we processed to the village war memorial we were joined by several more villagers. We were also joined, once again, by a cycle group from Nuneaton, who have us in their diary as a regular visit for the act of Remembrance.*

### **Remembering Service**

*This annual service is held at All Saint's, Stretton and we remember those we love whom we no longer see. It is followed by tea in the village hall. Many Birdingbury villagers had names of loved ones read out during the service.*

### **Carols, Candles and Crib**

*This year's annual service featured a nativity play written and organised by Karen involving children and adults dressed suitably for the occasion. As usual the church the flowers, tree and crib looked wonderful.*

### **Christmas Eve**

*By popular demand we repeated last year's 'Midnight Mass'. Those walking up the hill, in the dark, were offered a lantern to guide their way. The service has a special quality, appreciated by all who attended.*

### **Christmas Day**

*The informal Christmas Day morning service was a relaxed and joyous occasion. A special thanks is owed to Revd David Shaw for his excellent leadership of the service. As usual we were joined by families from other villages, as well as many friends and their families from Birdingbury. All of the three Christmas services were very well attended.*

### **Morning Praise services**

*We are blessed that we have a number of volunteers who are prepared to lead this 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday service. Attendance is usually good. We try to support those kind enough to volunteer to lead it. At these services we got to hear a number of interesting ideas from our own congregation in the 'Thought for the day' slot rather than a sermon.*

### **Baptisms**

*We were pleased to welcome Bella, Joe and Elsie Malin and Fletcher Cunningham to our church family in 2013.*

### **Funerals**

*Sadly several Birdingbury friends died during 2013. Our love and prayers go to the families and friends of John Hall, Amy Worrall, Peter Shepherd, Mary Merrick, our retired vicar Revd Beth Smith, Jean Jones and Frank Walker and Alex Johns.*

### **Home Communion**

*This is held monthly, either in the Birbury, or the homes of villagers. It comprises a short act of worship including communion, followed by refreshments. Attendance varies but can be as many as 10. Jackie Westcott, Loen can give you details if you are interested.*

### **Children's Ministry**

*We are blessed to have volunteers across the benefice willing to help with our children's ministry. During 2013 we continued, until September, with our regular monthly programme of Saturday afternoon activities and organised additional workshops for Good Friday and Christmas. Our Saturday activities have ceased but we continue to discuss how the benefice, and individual parishes, may better meet the needs of families and children.*

## **TRANSFORMING COMMUNITIES**

*We continue to support other village organisations by sitting on committees, attending meetings and offering practical help and involvement.*

*We try to support villagers in time of need through cards, prayer and visits. We are an informal group who are seeking to provide additional pastoral care support around the village.*

*We held our Church fete in June, in the grounds of St Leonard's. All members of the PCC took responsibility for an activity and we were delighted with the support given to it by the village community. We raised over £1120 for church funds. The 2014 fete will be on Saturday 21st June.*

*The PCC has committed itself to giving 3 % of our unrestricted income to a Tearfund 'Connected Church' Kenyan, farming development project. This is a benefice initiative, which we are pleased to support. Additionally we continue to try to meet our objective of donating a figure of 10% of unrestricted income to charities.*

*We enjoy leading the annual carol singing around the village which has become so successful in terms of singers we were worried it would affect our donations. About 20 Birdingbury residents joined in this year and we decided to collect for Save the Children's Fund.*

*We have been grateful to Eira and Aileen for their 'Church Cafe' initiative which has been very well received. Despite the lack of kitchen facilities they have treated us to cakes, soup, bread and quiches. Thank you to them. We look forward to further Church Cafes in 2014.*

*We continue to support Hope 4's work in supporting the homeless. Please continue to leave suitable 'in date' food and warm clothes in the box at the back of church.*

*The portable Posada set travelled around the village during Advent, joining village meetings and gatherings and seeking window sill homes, where they could be seen the roadside. The final journey was to the church on Christmas Eve.*

*We continue to have a prayer board in church. If there is anything or anyone you would like to pray for please leave a 'post it' message. There is always someone available to pray with you if you wish. Just contact a church warden*

### **MAKING NEW DISCIPLES**

*As a benefice we organised Soul Space, an Alpha course, and a series of talks held in various village halls over the period of Lent. Whilst these meetings are not usually held in Birdingbury you are very welcome to join in. Details are regularly highlighted in Church News, in Birdsong. If you are interested please talk to Dick or Karen who can also offer a lift.*

### **ADMINISTRATION AND BUILDING MAINTENANCE**

*We remain very grateful to our team of mowers who keep the grass well cut during the summer and autumn months. We had an autumn blitz which included cutting and pruning in the churchyard and an extra dust and polish in church.*

*The ladies of the Altar Guild continue to provide us with beautiful floral arrangements for both for special occasions and regular services. We receive many favourable comments of the obvious love and care given to our church by everyone. Thanks to those who regular give up their time to dust, vacuum and polish the brasses We remain vigilant regarding security. The building and its contents are protected by passive movement lights and an alarm.*

*Thankfully the church building is in a good state of repair presently. The cracks in the apse are being monitored by 'tell tales'. Our architect and the surveyors believe this movement is related to a very long spell of dry weather and is not serious. There has been no further movement during the very wet weather of the last year.*

*New archive cupboards are in place at the far end of the balcony. They are to store church, Parish Council and village records. The village history group are doing a great job preparing these archives for storage.*

*We are very grateful to Mel Palmer and Liz Ellis for their work in producing a new electoral roll for the next 6 years.*

*We now have a lightweight ramp to ease access into the church. This will be put in place before the start of each service.*

## **2014, Looking Ahead**

*We are now into an interregnum.*

*This will be a time of reflection and decision making, as we consider carefully the issue of appointing a new ordained leader. We need to think about what kind of successor we want to Barbara and what kind of outcome can we reasonably expect. In Birdingbury, we have lots of experience of interregnums and they bring both opportunities and challenges. We are facing this one with optimism, as we seek to identify the qualities we will need in a future leader.*

*Meanwhile it is the churchwardens responsibility to 'keep the show on the road' whilst developing strategies to enable St Leonard's to grow. At the same time it is crucially important that we work closely with our friends in the other parishes in the benefice.*

*We are excited to be involved in a diocesan initiative '8 Essential Qualities of a Healthy Church' which we hope will provide us with the tools to develop our church. We are in this together and if we are to fulfil our responsibilities we hope you will feel motivated to become involved in the demanding and exciting challenges we face. If you feel you could make any contribution to this process we would love to hear from you.*

*Overarching all this will be the need to listen to and act on what God wants of us in the coming months and years.*

### ***Provision of a cloakroom and servery. Are we nearly there yet?***

*Following the positive recent visit by members of the DAC and their subsequent monthly meeting, we have received an e-mail encouraging us to submit a formal faculty application, to install a toilet in the current vestry with a kitchen server unit alongside, approximately where the hymn books are stored.*

### ***Being Good Neighbours***

*We see this as one of our strengths but there is always room for improvement! 2013 has been a challenging year for some of our much loved neighbours and many of their multiple needs will continue through 2014. This work is a crucial part of our being a church in the community. If you feel you could support us in this work in any way we would appreciate your help, or indeed if you have any ideas about how we could do better please do get in touch.*

*Thank you to the many members of our community who are on the Churchyard Maintenance and Altar Guild, flower arranging, brass and cleaning rotas.*

*Every five years an approved diocesan architect inspects our site and building. Work to be undertaken is tackled according to urgency. Our last inspection was in 2010. We are fortunate in that there are no major urgent works to undertake.*

*The PCC accept the diocesan 'Guidelines and Rules for the care and management of churchyards' and to this end, apart from permissible memorials in the guidelines, relatives have been asked not to place artificial flowers and foliage on graves.*

*The Terrier, Inventory and Log Book are available for inspection at the APCM.*

#### **Thank you**

*We would also like to record our appreciation of the work of:*

- *All fundraisers.*
- *Andrew Armbrister, the Independent Examiner.*
- *Aileen Withington, for all the work she undertakes in editing and producing Church News, in Birdsong. A publication of a consistently high quality.*
- *Bryan Tompkins, our organist.*
- *Jackie Westcott, for her loving care and management of all church linens and vestments.*
- *All volunteers who serve on rotas.*

*We are also very grateful for the loyal and continuing support of so many members of the village community.*

#### **Licences and agreements**

*The P.C.C. is a party to the following licences and agreements:*

##### ***The Recreation Field***

*A licence made the 28<sup>th</sup> of April 1980 between the parties –*

*The Coventry Diocesan Trustees*

*The Parochial Church Council*

*The Coventry Diocesan Board of finance*

*The Parish Council.*

*'For the purpose of the Parish Council to use the plot of land as a recreation field, the Parish Council to pay £1 per annum to each of the other three parties'.*

### ***The Allotment Field,***

*There is a lease agreement between the Parochial Church Council and the Parish Council for the purpose of the plot of land, to be used as allotments by the Allotment Association.*

*For the period April 2103 to April 2015 rent for the plot will be £85 and from April 2015 to April 2018 £90. The Parish Council pays this amount to the PCC.*

*The rent is to be reviewed by the two parties at least every five years. We therefore need to do so again in 2018.*

### **Charitable Giving.**

*We will aim to make charitable donations in support of our Christian mission, to a level of a minimum of 10% of our unrestricted income\*. This will be achieved through collections at special services, specific fund raising activities and may be enhanced from unrestricted income reserves.*

*\*Unrestricted income is that which has not been donated for a specific purpose.*

*During 2013 through Special Collections and Fundraising we gave:*

<i>Missionary</i>	<i>£</i>
<i>Tear Fund Connected Church Kenya [Plant sale]</i>	<i>239.59</i>
<i>Leamington Hastings PCC [Church Organ repairs]</i>	<i>100.00</i>
<i>Tear Fund Connected Church Kenya [1/2 of Harvest collection]</i>	<i>91.70</i>
<i>Hope 4 U [Church Café]</i>	<i>134.25</i>
<i>The Children's society [Collection Carols, Candles and Crib]</i>	<i>197.20</i>
<b><i>Total</i></b>	<b><i>762.74</i></b>
<i>Secular</i>	
<i>Farm Community Network [Rogation Service]</i>	<i>166.20</i>
<i>PDSA [Pet Service]</i>	<i>50.00</i>
<i>Royal British Legion [Donation poppy wreath]</i>	<i>40.00</i>
<i>Farm Community Network [1/2 of Harvest collection]</i>	<i>91.70</i>
<i>Save the Children Fund [Carol Singing]</i>	<i>287.68</i>
<b><i>Total</i></b>	<b><i>635.58</i></b>

