

PITCHCOMBE PCC

ANNUAL CHURCH MEETING

1st APRIL 2009

CHURCHWARDENS' REPORT FOR THE YEAR 2008

Last year we reported that the year 2007 had been a very eventful year in the life of our church. We think we can say that the year 2008 has continued in the same vein. We have continued to divide our responsibilities, Mary ensuring that the worship runs smoothly and Rosemary looking after the building and churchyard.

During the year we have had services on four Sundays every month. However, having had many joint discussions with Edge and Harescombe PCCs, it was decided that we would all benefit from having one Sunday in the month when we would have a combined service, rotating round the three parishes. This new pattern of services commenced in 2009. During the year we also discussed the possibility of formally uniting the PCCs of the three parishes. However, after much discussion, all three parishes decided against such a move, but agreed to cooperate as closely as possible...

During the year we had 1 wedding, 2 baptisms, & 3 interments of ashes. Wilmar Morris, who had lived in the village for many years, and whose grandson, James, played the organ for us on several occasions, died. Her Thanksgiving Service was held in the church and her family asked that a collection should be made and the proceeds put towards the repair of the organ.

John Turkington has continued his studies in the Readership course.

Our Easter services included a vigil on Easter Saturday. We were very grateful to Ken Rooke for making a superb Cross to erect in the churchyard on Palm Sunday. The Harvest weekend was once again made very special by a concert arranged by Georgina Mann which took place in the church prior to the Supper in the Village Hall. The Christmas services were well attended. A Christmas card and details of all the Christmas and New Year festivities was delivered to every household in the parish. We had a very special Carol Service, which took on a different format this year. In the absence of a choir, which we have been lucky enough to have for the last two years, we put together a miscellany of readings, both biblical and secular, interspersed with carols and a special arrangement of 'Silent Night', composed by Olivia Brown and performed by her and her two sisters, Amy and Camilla. We were grateful to Sally Goodman, who helped put the service together and to the many readers who took part. This service was followed by the Christmas party in the Village Hall. This year we did not have a midnight service on Christmas Eve, as Edge was keen to have one.

During the year we obtained new hymn books, which have made a huge difference to our services. Our organist, Marjorie Bettley, who admits to being very conservative, has been quite wonderful in trying out new hymns every week, as well as playing old favourites. We are so grateful for all she does for our church.

During the year we circulated another newsletter to every household in the parish to update everyone in what we were achieving.

We have continued to support anyone in the village in trouble, be it bereavement or illness and have used the George Cox charity to fund this.

Moving on to the Church building, restoration and refurbishment have continued apace. We were most fortunate to receive a most generous legacy from Peggy Webb, which made the changes we have made possible. (More details of this will be included in the financial report.)

The wet rot was treated to a certain extent, joists being replaced in areas most used and vents being put in along the nave to increase the air flow.

Pews have been removed from the rear of the church, carpet has been laid and chairs have been bought, together with a small Victorian table. We now have a comfortable area for refreshments after services and for meetings. We are, of course extremely fortunate to have the use of the Village Hall, free of charge, for larger gatherings.

We applied for a faculty to have the tablets in the vestry, recounting the Ten Commandments, the Creed and the Lord's Prayer, restored and moved into the body of the church. We were denied permission to move them, much to the disappointment of the majority of the PCC, but were encouraged to have them restored. Donald Smith, who restored the mural behind the altar returned to do the work.

Extensive work was carried out to the exterior of the church, by our builder, Mike Chambers. The guttering, drain pipes and all the wrought iron gates were removed, sand-blasted and powder-painted before being replaced. The rotten eaves were replaced and all the woodwork, including the doors was painted. The rusty grilles over the windows were removed and the stonework was cleaned. The pointing on the chimney was repaired. Extra vents were put into the walls on the north side of the church to help increase the airflow. The soil was cut back from that side of the building, exposing the original path leading to the vestry door. This was resurfaced. The notice board was re-painted and re-signed. All in all, the recommendations of the Quinquennial report have been carried out and it just remains to have the inside of the building redecorated.

We have been most grateful for help in the churchyard given by Tony Coles and Geoff Jones. We are lucky to have the services of Bob Smith to do the mowing and of Paul Cooke to trim the yew trees and cut the holly hedge. We are also most grateful to Jackie Bartlett for her work in keeping the church clean.

Finally we must thank Lilian Hauting for all she has done for our church over very many years. She has been responsible for organising the flower rota and for doing wonderful flower arrangements herself. She has looked after all the linen and the altar cloths. In the last year she has supervised our coffee sessions after services. Lilian has now moved into Painswick and we wish her all happiness in her new home. We are grateful to Mary Slinger for taking on the flower rota and to Margaret Court for washing the linen.

Rosemary Jones & Mary Morse

Churchwardens