

ACCOUNTS FOR YEAR END 2015

RECTORIAL BENEFICE OF LLANTWIT MAJOR



INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

I report on the Financial Statements of the Parish of : Benefice of Llantwit Major
for the year ended 31 December 2015

Respective responsibilities of Parochial Church Council and Examiner:

As the Parochial Church Council, you are responsible for preparing the Financial Statements: you consider that the audit requirement of section 43(2) of the Charities Act 1993 (the Act) does not apply. It is my responsibility to state, on the basis of procedures specified in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners under section 43(7)(b) of the Act, whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of Independent Examiner's report:

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the Parochial Church Council and a comparison of the Financial Statements presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the Financial Statements, and seeking explanations from you as Parochial Church Council members concerning any 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 Financial Statements.

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
- (a) to keep accounting records in accordance with section 41 of the Act; and
 - (b) to prepare Financial Statements which accord with the accounting records and to comply with the accounting requirements of the Act
- have not been met: or
- (2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the Financial Statements to be reached.

Independent Examiner:

Signature: *SS Stone* Date: *23.4.16.*
Name: *Sheron Stone*
Qualification: *BA Management & Business, AAT Technician Level.*
Address: *22 Mayflower Way*
Rhodes CF62 3NR

Benefice of Llantwit Major

Receipts and Payments Accounts for the year ended 31st December 2015

		General Funds	Restricted Funds	2015 Total	2014 Year
Incoming Resources/Receipts					
Voluntary Income	Planned giving	55,925	1,081	57,006	62,880
	Loose Collections	18,063	383	18,446	16,217
	Donations	11,917	4,887	16,803	10,859
	For Mission	1,908	310	2,218	2,082
	Tax Refunds	18,329	0	18,329	6,574
	Legacy gifts received	33	0	33	55
	Grants	3,000	150	3,150	13,498
Generated Income	Money Raising	9,447	4,360	13,807	14,563
	Fees	11,126	9,849	20,974	16,195
Investment Income		12,075	387	12,462	9,707
Other Incoming Resources		22,118	3,608	25,726	35,651
Total Incoming Resources/Receipts		163,940	25,014	188,954	188,281
Resources Expended/ Payments					
Support for Ministry	Parish Share	76,655	0	76,655	81,820
	Parochial Expenses of Clerics	6,429	0	6,429	7,308
	Other	1,595	0	1,595	2,753
Parish Activities	Maintenance of Services	3,170	0	3,170	4,268
	General Parish Expenses	38,610	40	38,650	27,665
Church Property	Maintenance of Churches	18,447	11,672	30,119	53,377
	Maintenance of other property	8,524	11,194	19,718	7,770
	Exceptional expenditure	2,627	600	3,227	12,414
Grants and Financial Support	Parish	640	20	660	1,399
	Home/World	4,250	1,355	5,605	4,146
Other Resources Expended	"Capital Payments"	719	0	719	381
	Cost of Money Raising	38	0	38	19
Total Resources Expended/Payments		161,704	24,881	186,585	203,320
Net Movement in Funds		2,236	133	2,369	-15,039
Total Funds brought forward		153,899	35,110	189,009	204,048
Adjustment to Balance brought forward		3,374	0	3,374	
Total Funds carried forward		159,509	35,243	194,752	189,009

Rectorial Benefice of Llantwit Major

Statement of Assets and Liabilities as at 31st December 2015

Cash Funds

Cash balances
Bank Current accounts
Bank Deposit accounts

General Funds	Restricted Funds	2015 TOTAL	2014 TOTAL
		0	23
		156414	59651
		38338	129332
157725	37027	194752	189006

Other Monetary Assets

TAX Reclaimable
Other debts receivable

0		0	8090
7916		7916	10069
7916		7916	18159

Investment Assets

Quoted Stocks and Shares

		275227	280417
			280417

Assets retained for own use

Benefice Office (freehold property)
Stocks

		56985	56985
		1150	1150
		58135	58135

Liabilities

Sundry creditors payable

		0	0
		0	0

Endowment funds held

79797	81240
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Non - Monetary Assets

Kitchen and Toilet Buildings (St Illtud's)

Treasurer

Name MICHAEL PETERS.

Signature



Rectorial Benefice of Llantwit Major

Notes to Accounts for the year end 31st December 2014

1. Accounting Policies

The Accounts have been prepared in accordance with the Charities Act 1993. Section 42(3) using the Receipts and Payments basis, and the Church in Wales Accounting Regulations.

2. Analysis of Fund Movements for the Year

a) **General Funds** may be used by the PCC for any of its ordinary purposes.

b) **Restricted Funds** represent either income from trusts or endowments which may be expended only on those restricted objects provided in the terms of the trust or bequest, or donations or grants received or invited for a specific purpose. The funds may only be spent on the specific purpose for which they were given. Any balance remaining unspent must be carried forward as a balance on that fund and cannot be absorbed into general funds.

Church Name	Fund Purpose	Bal 1 Jan £	Receipts £	Payments £	Bal 31 Dec £
St Illtud	Furnishing & restoration	5202	9754	5413	9543
St Cattygs	Restoration/Maintenance	15053	6046	11672	9427
St James	Youth Work/Charity/Churchyard	8390	3843	1375	10858
St Athan	Roof Resoration	663	5268	5142	789
St Giles	Cemetary	2219	253	420	2052
St Donats	Churchyard	2405	755	600	2560
Marcross	Churchyard	40	450	280	210
Monknash	Churchyard	1132	450	0	1582
Totals (per Receipts & Payments Account)		35110	26819	24902	37027

c) **Endowment Funds** are funds whose capital must be maintained: only income arising from the investment of the endowment may be used, either as restricted or general funds, depending on the purpose for which the endowment was established.

Church Name	Fund Purpose	Bal 1 Jan £	Receipts £	Payments £	Bal 31 Dec £
St Cattygs		5572			6006
St Donats		75234			73885
Totals		80806			

3. Valuation of Assets and Liabilities

Quoted investments are valued at mid-market prices at the 31st December. All other assets and liabilities are valued at cost or as indicated in any subsequent note relating to such assets and liabilities.

4. Church Buildings

Church buildings, including churchyards and Rectories are vested in the Representative Body of the Church in Wales; such property forms no part of the assets of the Parish. Moveable contents require a faculty for disposal so are considered to be inalienable property and are not recognised in the Statement of Assets and Liabilities.

5. Non-Monetary Assets

Assets and property which are retained for or are occupied for the Church purposes and which are not investment assets, but whose value cannot readily be ascertained are recognised on the Statement of Assets and Liabilities as non-monetary assets.

The Rectorial Benefice of Llantwit Major
Parochial Church Council Report and Financial Statements
for the year ending 31st December 2015

Team Vicar's Introduction

There may not have been any grand openings or Royal Visits to report, but 2015 was a year that was notable for the sense of journey that it enshrined: busy and event-full, but also a year in part more settled but at the same time, one where the Benefice rose to challenges, doors opened and God beckoned all of us into new adventures.

In lots of ways the year was shaped by Rector Huw's sabbatical and the things that preceded and followed it, not least of course, Huw's own announcement at the end of November that he was to set sail for pastures new in St Asaph.

During the months from May to August, Huw travelled to a number of Celtic regions and holy sites in Ireland, Scotland, Northumbria, Brittany and Wales. In doing so he not only developed his own personal experience and interest in Celtic Christianity and the notion of pilgrimage, but he also established – and in some cases, enhanced - links between our Benefice and these sites. For anyone who thought "sabbatical" equalled rest or a long-term break, Huw set about redefining things and, in addition to building on our continuing links with Sigtuna and with Caldey Island, he not only broke new ground and formed connections between Llantwit and other highly recognised places of Celtic interest, but also wrote a study course on pilgrimage which was duly delivered shortly after his return.

It goes without saying that being without the Rector for several months was a big challenge and asked a lot. In Huw's absence however, we – as a Benefice – also undertook a journey of our own, pulling together as ministry team and across all of the churches, to sail the seas of being Rector-less, even if it was just for a relatively short time.

What was most encouraging and uplifting during this time, was the profound sense of many people responding to the needs of the situation, and indeed of many hands making light work.

As such, we not only continued in our worship and witness on both Benefice and local levels, but also – on a social and fund-raising level – it was business as usual: no mean feat when you consider that the Benefice of Llantwit Major is a very active Benefice of nine, diverse, churches.

So it is with a great sense of achievement – and of moving with God's spirit – that I believe you should all look back on a year where the Benefice has quite literally walked together, worshipped together, drunk – and sampled - wine together and even gathered in barns together – and all with a view to continuing to share God's good news and good grace in the communities in which we find ourselves.

We hear much the in the church today about collaborative ministry and the ministry of all the baptised. But this is not just a response to having fewer clergy to go around, and indeed clergy everywhere should be encouraged to take a lighter hand in order to allow the members of the church to grow into the offering of their own gifts and talents. We do well I think to remember that church and mission are not really about ordained ministers, nor even the buildings – which in our Benefice are magnificent – rather, it is about you...each and every one of you...and about your own belief that you have already and will in the future rise to and be equipped for whatever challenges may come your way as you sing the Lord's song in this place.

So, from Rogation Walks, Benefice services and Carols in the Barn all the way through to soggy – but enormously successful – afternoon teas at Gileston, sun-kissed wine tasting evenings near Llanmihangel and beautiful garden party's in Wick I hope that you will all take enormous encouragement from the journey you travelled in 2015 and that you will use the lessons learned to move you into a bright new future.

In saying thank you to so many people, I have – of course – to start with Rector Huw who in the last five years has given his all (and then some) in shaping the Benefice for its ongoing journey but also in bringing to fruition the long-held dream of a restored Galilee Chapel at St Illtud's and all of the accompanying activity that it has created. I think it's fair to say that Huw has left magnificent and indelible fingerprints on Llanilltud Fawr and whilst we were sorry that he felt it was time to go, and wish him God's blessing for the future, we are above all most grateful for having had the chance to journey with Huw for a little while and to benefit from his deep sense of spirituality combined with great organisational skills and a fulsome appetite for work.

Having thanked Huw, I'm also sure that he himself would quickly point out that this busy Benefice simply could not function without the dedication, generosity and hard work of so many, something which was again borne out last year.

The Ministry Team – and in particular our readers and retired clergy – have continued to ensure that the Benefice has provided an enormous number and range of services.

The Parish Office too has become established in its Galilee Chapel home and Alison has flourished in her role as Benefice Administrator proving to be the heartbeat of the Benefice and a great asset both to the ministry team and to all. Huge thanks must also go to the Benefice "Team" of Jodie Taylor and John Richfield (Wardens) and Mike Peters (Treasurer). It's fair to say that theirs is a unique role within the Benefice and one not always appreciated because of its collective – rather than specific – nature. However all three of them have been vital and tireless servants to the Benefice throughout the year and each has brought distinctive qualities which have added to our rich and varied tapestry. As many of you know, John has now stepped out of his role – a decision forced upon him because of his involvement at the Representative Body in helping find a successor to Huw. I would like to thank John for all of his wisdom and guidance over the years of his holding office, but would also like to thank Geoff Semmens for accepting Huw's invitation to replace John and we are delighted that Geoff has taken the role.

The Parish magazine continues to provide much thought provoking material and general information and is now integral to communication throughout the Benefice as well as providing a valuable link to the local community. Grateful thanks to Eric Sparks, Bill Henderson and our distributors.

The new website also continued to develop through the year (www.llanilltud.org.uk) and by the close of the year was beginning to download service rotas and the monthly magazine by way of extending the information we share with a wider global community.

Looking back over a whole year's worth of life in the Benefice, I have to admit it becomes rather dizzying when you consider so much activity in so many areas. These – of course – include our worshipping life together, our mission and ministry to people of all ages within our immediate church fellowship and extending out to the wider community, social and fundraising events, working towards future plans and developments and administering the nitty-gritty, day-to-day life of the church. As I have already indicated, for all of this to happen takes a huge amount of energy, hard work and commitment from lots and lots of people, something which is ably demonstrated within the body of this report.

It is fitting to celebrate the fact that the diversity of mission and ministry throughout the nine church communities in our Benefice is still one that easily relates to the Christian notion of journey and pilgrimage.

We therefore give thanks to God for His continued faithfulness through hills and vales and in times of joy, sorrow, excitement and uncertainty. It is also hugely important to thank so many individuals who work to ensure that God is worshipped and his love proclaimed as we share our common life together.

As the Body of Christ in this Benefice I offer my thanks to you all and commend this report as we look back over the events of 2015. Most importantly however, I commend you as brothers and sisters with whom it's a humbling privilege to travel as we look forward to the unfolding of 2016, safe in the knowledge that we have the most marvellous companion, and trusting in God's strength and guidance, and in the liberating spirit of faith, hope, love, journey and adventure.

Diolch yn fawr iawn i chi gyd,

Yours in Christ,

Anthony Beer (Team Vicar)

1. Description of the Benefice.

The Rectorial Benefice of Llantwit Major is situated in the Vale of Glamorgan, South Wales. It is in the Vale of Glamorgan Deanery Diocese of Llandaff.

2. Dedications of the churches within the Benefice and their locations.

St Illtud	Llantwit Major
St Donat	St Donat's
St James	Wick
Holy Trinity	Marcross
St Mary Magdalene	Monknash
St Cattwg	Llanmaes
St Michael and All Angels	Llanmihangel
St Tathan	St Athan
St Giles	Gileston

3. Object and Constitution

The mission of the Benefice is to advance the Christian religion through local and worldwide activities. The object of the parochial Church Council (PCC) is to ensure that the life and work of the Church within the parish helps to fulfil this mission, both locally and more widely. It is regulated by the Constitution of the Church in Wales. The Benefice holds an Annual Vestry Meeting and ensures that every member of the Council signs a declaration that they will be bound by the Constitution. The PCC is responsible *inter alia* for promoting the mission of the Church, the parochial budget and all expenditure there under, the care and maintenance of the Church fabric and of the churchyard and for action on any other matter referred to in accordance with the Constitution. The PCC is also the normal channel of communication between the parishioners and the Bishop of the Diocese

4. Names and addresses

Incumbent: Rev'd Huw Butler
The Rectory, High Street, Llantwit Major. CF61 1SS

Bankers: National Westminster PLC, Westgate, Cowbridge
Vale of Glamorgan

5. Names of all persons who were PCC members during the financial year and any Parochial Office held.

Revd Huw Butler	Rector & Chair
Revd Anthony Beer	Team Vicar
Revd Rachel Simpson	Curate
Mr Geoff Semmens	Rector' Warden
Mrs Jodie Taylor	People's Warden
Mrs Ceri Thomas	Head Teacher Wick & Marcross Primary
Ms Daphne Townsend	Reader
Mr Keith Brown	Reader
Mrs Sue Moll	Reader
Mrs Jude Peters	Reader
Mr Mike Peters	Benefice Treasurer
Mrs Alison Weston	Benefice Administrator & Benefice PCC Secretary
Mr Eddie Williams	Representative: St Illtuds, Llantwit Major
Mrs Gail Davies	Representative: St Illtuds, Llantwit Major
Mr Patrick Hart	Representative: St Illtuds, Llantwit Major
Mrs Louise Edwards	Representative: St James', Wick,
Mrs Penny Ayres	Representative: St James', Wick,
Mr Philip Davies	Representative: St James', Wick,
Mr Jeffrey Robinson	Representative: St Cattwg's, Llanmaes,
Mr Kerry Veale	Representative: St Cattwg's, Llanmaes,
Mrs Jan Drye	Representative: St Cattwg's, Llanmaes,
Mr Stan Gilbert	Representative: St Donats
Mrs Lynda Clarke	Representative: St Donats
Mr Bob Smith	Representative: St Donats
Ms Hilary Evans	Representative: Holy Trinity Marcross,
Mrs Jaci Harries	Representative: Holy Trinity Marcross
Vacant	Representative: Holy Trinity Marcross
Miss Winnie Davies	Representative: St Mary's, Monknash
Mrs Marie Sheppard	Representative: St Mary's, Monknash
Vacant	Representative: St Mary's, Monknash
Mrs Catherine Jewell	Representative: St Michael's, Llanmihangel
Mrs Anne Ford	Representative: St Michael's, Llanmihangel
Vacant	Representative: St Michael's, Llanmihangel
Mrs Diana Robinson	Representative: St Tathan
Mrs Eleanor MacNamara	Representative: St Tathan
Mr Philip Dukes	Representative: St Tathan
Mrs Lynette Thomas	Representative: St Giles
Mrs Carol Harrington	Representative: St Giles
Mrs Sharne Williams	Representative: St Giles

6. General Pattern of Sunday Services in the Benefice

Time	1 st Sunday	2 nd Sunday	3 rd Sunday	4 th Sunday	5 th Sunday
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St Illtud's, Llantwit Major

8.15am	Holy Eucharist	Holy Eucharist	Holy Eucharist	Holy Eucharist	Holy Eucharist
10.00am	Holy Eucharist & Sunday School	Holy Eucharist	Family Eucharist	Holy Eucharist & Sunday School	Matins & Sunday School
6.00pm	*****	Sunday @4	Holy Eucharist	Evening Prayer	Holy Eucharist

St James', Wick

8.30am	*****	*****	Holy Eucharist	*****	*****
10.45am	Morning Prayer	Holy Eucharist	*****	Holy Eucharist	Holy Eucharist

St Cattwg's, Llanmaes

11.00am	Holy Eucharist	Holy Eucharist	Holy Eucharist	Matins	Holy Eucharist
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St Donats, St Donats

11.15am	Holy Eucharist	Prayer & Praise	Holy Eucharist	Matins	Holy Eucharist
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Holy Trinity, Marcross

9.30am	Holy Eucharist	Shared service Monknash	Morning Prayer	Shared service Monknash	Holy Eucharist
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St Marys', Monknash

9.30am	Shared Service Marcross	Holy Eucharist	Shared Service Marcross	Morning Prayer	Shared Service Marcross
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St Michaels, Llanmihangel

10.00am	Holy Eucharist	Matins	Holy Eucharist	Matins	Matins
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St Tathan, St Athan

10.00am	All Age Worship	Holy Eucharist & Sunday School	Family Eucharist	Holy Eucharist & Sunday School	Holy Eucharist & Sunday School
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St Giles', Gileston

9am	Matins	Holy Eucharist	Matins	Holy Eucharist	Holy Eucharist
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7. Description of the way the PCC is organised and its aims

The PCC is organised with the representatives from all nine Churches.

There is a single treasurer for the Benefice dealing with the Parish Shares, the reimbursement of clergy expenses, insurance, etc.

Each individual Church has its own Church Council which meets on a regular basis to manage its affairs, together with a treasurer and secretary.

The day-to-day running of each Church is managed in this way with an overall figure deposited into the Benefice Account each month for maintenance of ministry the Parish Share and insurance- paid by standing order.

Large items of expenditure in excess of £1,500 must be put before the PCC for ratification but otherwise each Church is free to conduct its own business.

A Gift Aid Secretary coordinates the Gift Aid Giving in the Benefice and manages the Inland Revenue rebates, etc.

8. Individual Church Reports

Benefice Report for Ministry to Children & Young People

This year has seen a continuation of the provision of youth and children's ministry throughout the Benefice. Our contact with local Primary and Secondary schools has remained strong, and Sunday attendance has remained steady with a few new families attending worship. Having volunteers willing to run this work continues to be a challenge, however the existing volunteers remain committed and enthusiastic, and working ecumenically has been a relief in the wider community. Overall the direction of provision in this area is very positive, and we look forward to seeing how fresh insight can move this ministry forward.

Wick

Youth Work

SPLAT took a break in the early part of the year, principally because of difficulties in maintaining the staffing but various meetings were held to discuss its future and it was decided to trial it in a slightly modified form. This reorganised version proved very popular and it was decided to continue to run it on alternative months (to alternate with Sunday Break).

It will now run on alternate months from Feb 2016.

Many thanks go to all those from our congregation and those from other churches who give up so much of their time to keep this going.

Sunday Break continued in 2015 with a small but regular attendance.

It is important to remember that both of these activities bring new families into church and help to involve young people in the life of St James'.

As such they are all members of our Church family and mean we are extended beyond the numbers who attend faithfully on Sunday mornings.

The playgroup also visited the church twice and was keen to develop their own connection to St James' by joining in our window decoration rota. They provided a lovely widow display for Ascension Day which was much admired- hopefully this is a tradition which will continue!

Admission to Communion

Following a seven week course, Rev'd Huw admitted four boys to Communion on the first Tuesday after return from Easter holidays. The boys, Cory, Ellis, Emrys and Callaghan had all played a part in constructing their Admission to Communion service which took place after they had spent time with Fr Anthony, considering what it is to belong to Church and what is so special and meaningful about communion, as well as learning about how to pray and use the bible.

Llantwit Major

The monthly Sunday@4 service has been running a couple of years now, and is still proving to be a popular event. We have looked at topics such as Armistice Day, a Bring and Share picnic, a trip to Slugs and Bugs with the local Baptist church, a celebration of baptism, and a Christingle service

among many others. There is a core group of 7 or 8 families who come every month, in addition to a number of other families who are there frequently. The time of 4pm was suggested as it is the time that children engaged in Sunday afternoon sport have finished, but does not interrupt meal or bedtime. The service attracts families with children from 3-10, and families do tend to invite friends along.

We're very grateful for the work put in by all involved, particularly as the clergy team are rarely involved in the planning and running of the services. Thanks go particularly to Rachel Hillier, Vicky Bailey, and Jo and Olly Leonard.

Toddler Church

Although some of our long-term toddlers moved up to school in September, we were so pleased that more new families joined this year. Mums, Grandmas, nannies and occasionally Dads & Grandpas appear with their youngsters (from baby up to school-age) at 1.30pm on Wednesdays in St Illtud's 'when the bell rings.'

Singing with percussion, storytime, prayers, craftwork & play are all a part of the weekly format. We meet every Wednesday during term-time. There is a party at Christmas and at Easter (with Easter Egg Hunt) and at the end of the summer term, the Annual Trip to Amelia Trust Farm with Teddy Bears' Picnic takes place.

The grown-ups have as much fun as the children, so do spread the news to anyone who may be interested. The Mums and Grandmas have tea or coffee whilst the children are playing: lots of friendship and fellowship. Many lasting friends are made and the toddlers feel welcome in Church.

We are delighted to have been led by Rachel who always comes up with some brilliant ideas and we have appreciated her baking even more this year! We shall miss her very much indeed when she leaves in the summer. We wish her and Steve every blessing and happiness in their forthcoming marriage. A big 'Thank you' to all the leaders and helpers.

St Athan

In 2015 we enjoyed a successful trip to Spree. To share resources, we decided to go again as a joint group between St Athan and Swansea and Brecon Diocese. We ended up taking 33 young people to Ffos Las Racecourse in the first weekend of July, 4 of whom were from St Athan. Being part of a larger group brought its own challenges, particularly with regards to organisation and discipline, but it was good to see the young people interacting with members of the group they didn't know before coming, and developing a level of independence for themselves. It was also very positive to see the young people having fun and growing in their faith over the weekend, with a number of them responding to invitations to make a commitment to following Jesus.

We have had to take the decision not to take a group in 2016, partly due to the challenges of trying to organise a group this size over such a large geographical area, to the problems of organisation with Spree Wales themselves, and due to the additional pressures facing the leaders at the same time in 2016. Many thanks to all who gave their time and resources to make this year's trip possible, particularly Diana Robinson the treasurer, Derek Lockhart who helped with the tents, Phil Dukes with transport, and Steven Bunting and Rachel Simpson the main group team leaders.

We have continued a good relationship with The Gathering Place Methodist church in St Athan, and leaders Rev Pete Taylor and Deacon Sam Taylor. Our key youth work with them is the holiday clubs that have run on Good Friday and in the summer. These are always very popular events with local children, many of whom are not members of either church. They are very well planned and prepared by the Methodist leaders, and members from St Athan enjoy going to help out each year. As our relationship between leaders has grown, the increase of input with planning has also grown. We're currently looking forward to a jointly planned Good Friday session.

The sessions tend to be attended by between 20-30 children, and are from 10am-12pm on Good Friday and for 3 consecutive days at the start of the school summer holidays. They are always faith based, and teach the children through a combination of stories, memory verses, songs, crafts and games.

We always look forward to these sessions and the opportunity of engaging with so many children we would not otherwise have the chance to.

We were also privileged to have three young people from the parish request to be confirmed at the deanery confirmation at St Nicholas church in June 2015, and so were able to run weekly confirmation classes at the Rectory.

The three girls, Emily Simpson, Eva Ellis and Niamh Cummings-Jones, completed the course, which used a combination of Youth Alpha and Urban Saints material, and were all confirmed along with a number of other young people from the deanery.

Primary Schools

We continue to enjoy a good relationship with Wick and Marcross Church in Wales Primary School. We have a very privileged relationship due their status as a church school, and we're very proud of them. The school are facing new challenges with the growth of both the village of Wick, and other building projects throughout the benefice, which will impact on the size of the school.

The head teacher, Ceri Thomas has a positive vision for the future of the school, which we're looking forward to exploring with them over the coming months.

The school have collective worship in various forms every morning, which one of the clergy team leads once a week. The Rector and Rachel, as well as other church members, are on the Governing Body of the school. Anthony has also been running admission to communion courses for some of the older children in the school, if they choose to take them. In 2015 four children were admitted to communion at the school's Easter Eucharist.

The clergy are actively involved with the spiritual life of the school, leading termly Eucharist's and being involved in special seasonal services, such as Mothering Sunday, End of Term and the Christmas Carol Service, in addition to collective worship. We continue to support the school and look forward to seeing where their strengths will take them this year.

We don't have as much contact with the primary schools in Llantwit Major.

Anthony is on the Governing Body of St Illtud's Primary School, while Rachel is on the Governing Body of Ysgol Gymraeg Dewi Sant, both of which have been on visits to the church and taken part in bilingual services.

For much of 2014 both Rachel and Deacon Sam were going into St Athan Primary School taking assemblies, but on discovering this have decided to combine resources and go in together. They are now taking assemblies together most weeks, using the Open the Book material. This involves

dramatic retelling's of bible stories, which sounds very simple but they have found that most of the children don't know these stories, so it seems to be worthwhile. Children from the school have also been coming on regular class visits to St Athan Church to talk about various aspects of their syllabus, including Baptism, special places, and signs and symbols. Our relationship with the school has also improved to the point where clergy are invited into the school to speak to the children in class. This is a positive improvement in this area, and is something which already happens in St Illtud's Primary School, and we hope it continues in 2016.

Llantwit Major Comprehensive

Our work with the school in 2015 has hugely increased compared to previous years. We have been able to set up an ecumenical Christian Union in the school for the year 7 and 8s in their lunch break. This is run between Rachel, Deacon Sam from the Gathering Place, and Phil Hibbert from Bethel Baptist, with the support of Marged Williams, the RS teacher at the school. Working ecumenically allows us to run the session every Thursday lunchtime. The school has split lunch breaks for years 7-8 and 9-13, so we are starting it with the younger group and moving up through the school with them. There is a currently a core group of 8 or so students who come every week, with a wider group that occasionally gives us up to 12. We develop a programme on a termly basis, depending on what issues and questions have come up in the previous weeks. We are excited to see where this ministry will develop. We have also, with the support of Marged, joined with the initiative Prayer Spaces in Schools. Rachel and Deacon Sam set up an interactive, alternative prayer station in the make-shift chapel outside the RS classroom. This gets changed every 2 weeks and aims to be in line with the school's theme of the week. Different stations have had different responses, some of which have been very positive. The most popular have been Cardboard Home in Fairtrade week, where students were given a large cardboard box and asked to consider what it would feel like to live in it. The other was The Chest, where students were given the opportunity to drop a prayer into a chained and padlocked chest, and know that they were forgiven, and that their prayer is safe with God.

We're excited by our growing relationship with this school, and we look forward to seeing how it develops as the students we are getting to know make their way through school. Mrs Williams will be on maternity leave in early 2016, so we're hoping to be able to continue our work in the school based on the foundation she has helped us build during her absence.

St Illtud's Church Report

This year at St Illtud's has been a demanding yet successful year with the continued leadership and stability being provided by Rev Huw Butler.

During 2015 the clergy undertook 20 Baptisms, 23 Marriages and 24 Funerals at St Illtuds.

Three regular Sunday services, Sunday school, daily morning prayer, Wednesday morning Eucharist, monthly Sunday@4 worship, Wednesday

afternoon Toddler church, a house group, and the monthly healing service continued throughout the year.

Numerous activities were held within St Illtud's including concerts, carol services and Civic Services of the Town Mayor. There were 27 guided tours, 5 tours asking for Pilgrims Prayers.

There were many educational visits as well and there doesn't seem to be much time that the church is empty.

Links with the local schools continues with 3 weeks of assemblies a year at Llantwit Major Comprehensive School.

Rachel Simpson has ecumenical involvement which has resulted in prayer spaces being made available to the students where they can find some quiet in their busy life. Anthony Beer has links with St Illtud's Primary school as a governor, occasionally going into school to speak and hosting the school when they visit St Illtud's church for services at Easter, Harvest and Christmas.

Our Rector Huw Butler had a sabbatical for 10 weeks.

He used this to create linkage with a number of Celtic Christian Sites as well as producing and delivering a pilgrimage course on his return.

As in previous years there was an organised trip to Caldey Island.

As expected the group made it to Tenby and the chapel on the harbour for a celebration of the Eucharist but weather again and tide times prevented the journey to the island.

The fabric of the church has become less of a challenge with general maintenance being the order of the day. After much detective work, the heating is fully serviceable having had pipes and heating controls replaced. The Galilee Chapel project is completed. The future of the West Church is the next phase of development with the plans being drawn up for the location of storage and the Church shop.

Dedicated volunteers continued to serve through cleaning the church, providing coffee mornings, after service refreshments, bell ringing, choir, arranging flowers and the church shop. The key holders also ensured that the church was open to visitors every day. The Ambassadors provided a much needed service to the increasing number of visitors that visit the church. All within the congregation provided a different but important service to God and the family of St Illtud's.

There is much to be thankful for.

Gail and Eddie

Choir

St Illtud's Church Choir sings at 10am Morning Service, weddings and special occasions such as the Town Civic Service, Inductions and Farewells.

Choir practice is on Wednesdays at 6.30pm in St Illtud's (with occasional breaks during inclement weather or some holiday times; check in Pew News) New members are most welcome: have a word with anyone in the choir for more information, we actively seek more members of any age. You do not have to be able to read music, as long as you can sing in tune.

We have had a fair number of choir weddings this year. It is always a joy to sing at such a wonderful service at the beginning of the couple's life together

(as long as the bride is not late!) and the choir always has a good view! On many occasions we are pleased to be joined by Friends of the Choir who augment our numbers and add to the goodly sound, praising God.

Choir and Friends also form the basis of the Ecumenical Choir for the 9 Lessons & Carols on Christmas Eve when all the churches and chapels of the area come together to celebrate Our Saviour's Birth. Rehearsals begin after October half-term on Wednesdays at 7.30pm There is a warm welcome for anyone wishing to give it a try.

Shop Committee

The Galilee Chapel project has now been absorbed into the Church and the first flush of visitors has subsided and hence the shop has not enjoyed such a successful year this year.

However, our income as a result of the support of the congregation and our visitors who are ably looked after by the ambassadors continues to be a significant contribution to the upkeep of St. Illtud's.

The shop committee are to be thanked for what is now our eleventh year of trading and our variety of books and small items still seem appropriate. It was hoped that once the Galilee Chapel was complete that the West Church development would proceed at pace and indeed the architect has put forward some ideas.

One of the proposals for the shop is to locate it opposite the main door adjacent to the arch recess in the north wall. This however, is just a proposal at this stage and subject to discussion by those who avail themselves of the West Church space and of course the new Rector.

We are conscious that the shop can do with a facelift and as there is little prospect of moving to our new location in the immediate future the committee will consider how best we can make it more attractive to the visitors who enjoy our wonderful church.

Wednesday Ladies

We meet every Wednesday after the 10am service and welcome anyone for coffee and a chat in the West Church. Our fundraising has been successful again this year.

Our first fundraiser was our Lenten lunch on the 10th March which was well attended and enjoyed by all, with a very successful raffle and we banked over £200.

We held our Easter chocolate raffle on 25th March which everyone enjoyed and we collected £261.

Our Christmas Hamper raffle was held on 25th Nov and raised £286.83

Our thanks to all our friends and supporters who we can always rely on to turn up and contribute to our success, we always say we couldn't do it without your help.

St James' Church, Wick Report

We have continued to have another busy and productive year both in terms of services and fundraising activities.

Services

Our monthly pattern of services continued unchanged with Morning prayer on the 1st and 5th (where applicable) Sundays at 10.45, Eucharist on the 2nd and 4th Sundays at 10.45, and 8.30 on the 3rd Sunday.

We did in addition host a number of "extra" services, notably a benefice Rogation service in May, and services for the School who have a service in St James' every term and join in our decorating rota at Harvest time and Christmas. The School also hosted the refreshments after the Benefice Advent service which was held in St James'. Thank you!

Playgroup, Young farmers and Mother's Union have also held regular services. Sadly the Mother's Union held their last official service in St James' in July and have now transferred their regular 1st Wednesday meetings to St Illtud's because of changes in numbers and location of those attending particularly in the winter months.

We had our usual "travel around the Western Benefice" in August which again gave us the opportunity to join our fellow congregations at St Mary's Monknash, Holy Trinity Marcross and St Donat's. This is an enjoyable tradition and it is a pleasure both to visit other churches and to welcome them to ours.

We also had additional services over the Christmas period with the Christingle service on 20th December, a Nativity service (with Christingles) on Christmas Eve and a Midnight Mass. This was very well attended and we had many visitors who expressed their pleasure at being able to join us for this service. Unfortunately this meant there were no services in St James' on Christmas Day but there were plenty of alternatives available in nearby churches.

Although not actually in St James' we also hosted two "Carols in the Barn" services, one for children and one for adults, by kind permission of Gill and Dave Powell. Again these were Benefice wide and proved hugely popular! Our huge thanks should go at this point to Iori Powell who never fails to provide the much needed boost from the organ for both our regular and all the extra services- Thank you Iori!

Also a big thank you to David Powell who provides the music for Sunday Break and helps with the Christingle and Nativity services - again the music really lifts these services!

Clergy

A huge thank you to all our clergy for their help and support Anthony (and Elaine!) has done an awful lot of hard work behind the scenes as well as in front.

We are delighted that Jude has achieved her ambition to train as an ordained priest though we are sorry not to see her regularly on the first Sunday any more. Our thanks go to Keith for so cheerfully filling the gap and also to all the other readers and retired clergy who venture out this far!

We were really sorry to hear at the end of the year that Huw Butler would be leaving us for pastures new - we have really appreciated all that he has done for us in his time here and our prayers for his future go with him.

Weddings, Funerals, Baptisms

We had 1 wedding this year in August.

We had 5 Baptisms throughout the year-it was a pleasure to welcome new members of our church and many of them continue to be involved in Sunday break, SPLAT and toddler church (in St Illtud's)

Sadly we had 3 funerals - Donald Styck, Margaret Deary and Graham Bayley.

Church Fabric

There has been little change in the situation this year.

Anthony and Elaine (in consultation with the architect) worked extremely hard to put in an extremely detailed application to the Listed Places of Worship fund. Unfortunately this was turned down on this occasion but we hope to try again when it opens again early in 2016. The results are due to be announced in late June.

We undertook a trial of dehumidifier in the vestry and this proved to be very successful in that it certainly proved very successful in making the vestry much more usable. It was felt that the extra expense of the electricity was well worth it and we will continue to use it intermittently. This is obviously not a cure for the problem and we will continue to look into further grants for more extensive fabric repairs. (A number of members of the congregation have undertaken to attend a workshop on how to apply for such grants in 2016).

Outreach

Thanks to all those who visit the sick on our behalf- I know their work is invaluable, largely unseen and very much appreciated!

We have been involved with the Community Council in helping to set up the Wick Community Web- an idea to disseminate information through the village in times of difficulty. By now hopefully every house in the village will have received a fridge magnet with contact numbers of those who keep a list of everyone who has volunteered.

Churchyard

Many thanks to Frank for all the time he spends keeping the churchyard looking so wonderful - we really do appreciate it. Thank you!

There is some tree work that needs doing (cutting back of overhanging branches etc.) and we will be getting estimates from various companies to see who is the most competitive.

Fundraising

We had a very successful year raising funds both for our church and for many other charities both local and further afield.

These included a popular "Curry and Quiz" night in May, a cake and tea stall at the village fete in June as well as a village tea party also in June.

We held a very successful Garden party in August kindly hosted by Phil and Ann Davies at Green Isha.

In September we held a Macmillan coffee morning and in October the Harvest Supper.

Carols on the Green was again sponsored by the Community council and was a thoroughly enjoyable evening thanks to the RAF voluntary band and Anthony's implementation of their "carol competition" theme! Money raised

from this was donated at the request of the Community Council to the First Responders to help support their work and training programmes in the area. The Community Council have indicated their Christmas sponsorship may take a different form in 2016 to try and include the new housing development but we will continue to liaise with them and keep you informed.

The other charities which we supported with our fundraising were

- Wales Air Ambulance,
- Foodbank,
- Macmillan and the Farming Community Network
- A collection taken at the Rogation service and again the following Sunday was sent to the HORAC orphanage in Nepal after it suffered damage during the earthquakes that hit the region in April/May.
- We continue to make a small regular donation to Water Aid.

Barbara Savidge our wonderful hard working treasurer has decided to stand down from her role as of the next AVM. After 35 years of meticulous book keeping we know she deserves a rest but we will miss her and her shoes will be very hard to fill!

We are still looking for a replacement so any volunteers would be gratefully accepted.

Finally we would like to thank the entire congregation for their unfailing support and hard work throughout the year- we couldn't do it without you!

Lou Edwards & Pennie Ayres

St. Cattwg's Church, Llanmaes Report

Restoration Projects

A. Quinquennial Report: Our (updated) resubmission to LPOWF was turned down in November due to it not meeting the criteria of the Roof Repair Fund. We are formulating an application through the HLF system. Meanwhile we have received grants from 2 sources to the value of £3000.

B. Plinth to the Preaching Cross: This work was successfully completed in June 2015. We were fortunate to receive a grant from the St Andrew's Conservation Trust in the sum of £500 to help us on this project. We were unfortunate however in not being able to claim the VAT as this structure was not part of the structure of the Church.

Other Matters

- Church Organ. Our present organ is still managing to provide us with music and we have been offered an electronic machine which we need to check out.
- Our Annual BBQ and the Harvest Lunch were once again a success and raised £672 for the Restoration Fund and £375 for Nepal
- The Bingo night and the Military Whist Drive held in the church hall in the winter raised £1300 some of which will go towards the hanging a bell in the tower and the rest to our Restoration Fund.

- Windbreaker mesh has been fitted to the openings to the bell chamber of the tower to exclude the ingress of birds.
- Churchyard. The problem of the non-payment of burial fees in the ashes area is still outstanding.

We must not forget and thank all those whose hard work over the past year has kept the church and the churchyard looking good both inside and out.

Kerry Veale

St. Donat's Church Report

Church Family

We have a core of committed members boosted by Atlantic College students and wedding couples.

We had 5 weddings last year, all from out of the area so couples attend in the months before the wedding (and very occasionally afterwards).

We have fewer students this year but those who come are committed, a few attending the RC church immediately before joining our service.

Tibha Rai, a Nepali-born intern at the college, and students led the prayer and praise service in February.

Small tables and chairs at the back of the church continue to cater for children during the services. Our valued youngest members enjoy ringing the bells, taking the collection and blowing out the candles.

Lovespoons were presented to leavers in May.

The Principal and students took part in the Advent Carols service in November, and a collection was taken for Medecins sans Frontieres.

Social/fundraising

Bob and Sheila Smith continue to minister to students in hosting monthly lunches, supported by members of the congregation, and they keep in touch with past students. Shrove Tuesday fell in project week so a pancake lunch was held on the preceding Sunday instead.

In April a group of us visited the National Museum of Wales at the invitation of the Chief Conservator to see the progress being made on the restoration of the Stradling Panels. It was fascinating to see the detail emerging and the care being taken to construct frames which will allow for movement.

Bob Smith organised a concert in the Glass Room featuring the Colughkelele Band. We are very grateful to them for continuing to give their time and talents to support the church.

Chris Davies organised another student concert in February. Unfortunately numbers attending were low (possibly because it followed on Huw's final benefice service) but those who came were most appreciative.

Maintenance

The quinquennial inspection is due in 2016.

We are hoping to replace the storage in the Lady Chapel/vestry shortly.

General

Alan Davies was appointed Rector's Warden shortly after our last Easter Vestry.

Heather March continues to supervise weddings with occasional help.

These involve several hours each including rehearsal and service so we are very grateful to her for overseeing them.

Bob and Sheila Smith as joint secretaries, Stan Gilbert as treasurer and organist, John Morgan as churchyard overseer and Kath Davies as chief cake baker all do sterling work.

I have now completed 14 years as People's Warden and will be planning to pass on the baton after 15 years, coinciding as it will with a big birthday, so that we can spend more time with distant grandchildren.

Lynda Clarke

Holy Trinity Church, Marcross Report

2015 has been another pretty quiet year.

As in 2014 we had no fund-raisers and so it was really just Sunday worship, festivals and the lovely wedding of Louise and Mitch to speak of.

As reported last year, the normal service pattern as one that is shared with Monknash, seems well established and the fact that often there are more visitors than residents not only means that we are greatly indebted to the faithful few from Monknash, but it also highlights that without them, ongoing services would not be sustainable.

This situation also makes the contributions of Jaci Harries and Sue and Joe Brooks very significant. It also means – if we are honest – that the primary use of the building now is for tourism, something which should shape the way we look at and present the building for the future but which also raises questions about how we set about securing the manpower and funding needed to address the building/grounds issues.

Where attendances have been significant – notably harvest, it was a joy to have the buzz of people fill the building and it's been uplifting to feel the building throng to song. Again I must extend a big thank you to Jaci for all her hard work here.

Sadly, progress in relation to important issues such as those identified in the Quinquennial Review, the outreach activities which are intended to generate interest and a sense-of-connection to the church and making the church more welcoming for tourists, didn't happen.

What I think is still clear that people want the church to be there in the midst of them (see following paragraph), but getting beyond that is much more difficult and we have to think seriously about how we can get more contact with them, and create a greater sense of connectivity than is currently the case.

I must note however, that there have been two occasions this year when the church has – quite literally – overflowed...and this is what supports my previous observation.

The one occasion was a day filled with enormous joy (August 28th), when we celebrated the wedding of Alex Mitchell and Louise Evans, the other was the opposite really a day when the church again overflowed, this time in sadness over the all-too-soon death of Michelle Harris.

Accounts-wise, I want to offer enormous thanks to Hilary Evans for her continuing care and preparation of the accounts for Holy Trinity, and also for her précising what happens at PCC meetings and circulating it.

Finally for 2015, I can't wrap up the year without noting the sad death of Brian Penney in December. Our love and prayers remain with Carol and Brian's family.

Anthony Beer

St Mary's Monknash Report

2015 has been a quiet year for St Mary's. With our normal services (combined with Marcross) and attendance numbers static. The subject of our Lenten meeting was our patron saint Mary and we also hosted the Benefice Ascension Day service.

We had a full house in April for our Eastertide celebrations combined with an adult christening (without the usual protesting baby wails) when Tim Jones was welcomed into the family of the Church and supported by family and friends.

Our Harvest and Carol services were well attended by locals and from other churches in the Benefice, and our regular 'mouse catcher' has had a quiet autumn with mice seeking alternative accommodation.

In 2016 we will be sorry to lose Rachel who will be getting married and our Rector, Huw and we wish them well in their parishes. Anthony, our retired clergy, our Lay readers and office staff will require our prayers and support during the months ahead before we again have a full team.

Our thanks to those in the Ministry and the Benefice Office for all they have done in 2015 to keep the Christian faith alive in our parishes.

Winnie Davies

St Michael and All Angels, Llanmihangel Report

We are pleased to report that we had a very successful 2015. We received a number of covenants which means that we now have a steady monthly income every month which is a great help.

We held a very successful evening at Glyndwr Vineyard which included a tour of the Vineyard followed by Wine and Canapes and was very well attended.

As usual our Harvest Supper and our Carol Service were very well attended.

Our congregation is still the same with average attendance being between six and eight people.

Cath Jewell

St. Giles Church, Gileston

Statistics: 0 Funerals; 0 Baptisms; 1 Wedding; 0 Confirmations.

<u>Church Attendance:</u>	<u>Adults</u>	<u>Children</u>
Easter Sunday	11 (11)	0 (0)
Pentecost	5 (15*)	0 (0)
Harvest	21 (7)	1 (0)
Christmas Day	12 (15)	0 (1)

The figures in brackets refer to 2014

*The Pentecost service in 2014 was a Pimms and Hymns

Key Points of 2015

- Holding one of the Benefice Lenten Devotion services in church.
- Pimms and Hymns service in June.
- Cream tea at the Manor in July- unfortunately not as successful as previous years due to the weather, but a lovely afternoon nonetheless.
- Harvest service led by Lance Clark in October.
- Carol Service the Sunday before Christmas, a full church with mulled wine and refreshments.

Report

There has been a lot happening in the Benefice over the last 12 months. The figures show that the number of regular attenders has remained constant, and that attendance at occasional services and major festivals remains good. The services that have happened outside of our usual Sunday morning time of 9am have been well supported by the church community, and those who have attended have welcomed alternative forms of worship, for example, the Pimms and Hymns service which took the form of a Songs of Praise.

There was one wedding in St Giles in the year, on the 5th September between James Hartley and Danielle Williams, at which Lance Clark officiated. It is always a wonderful experience to celebrate a wedding in Gileston church, and we hope that many more people will choose to be married in this beautiful church in coming years.

Thank you to everyone for your dedication this year. Particularly to Lynette and Sharne in their roles as treasurer and secretary; to Dilys for her dedication to her role as church warden and in playing the organ; to Lorraine for hosting the cream tea event in the summer, and for her commitment to the running of the church; and to the church councillors; all those who create such beautiful flower and window displays; and all involved in the life of the church.

Although there are many changes facing the life of the benefice in the coming year, I am confident that we can continue to look forward in hope, and with the resurrection joy that we celebrate at Easter, but which permeates the life and worship of the church throughout the year.

Rachel Simpson

St Tathan Church, St Athan Report

Statistics: 9 Funerals; 2 Baptisms; 1 Wedding; 3 Confirmations.

Sunday school Attendance: Average of 5 regular children on Sundays.

<u>Church Attendance:</u>	<u>Adults</u>	<u>Children</u>
Easter Sunday	20 (25)	6 (8)
Pentecost	8 (18)	0 (9)
Remembrance	60 (108)	20 (52)
Harvest	17 (6)	5 (7)
Christingle	30 (60)	30 (40)
Midnight Mass	49 (46)	2 (0)
Christmas Day	7 (7)	1 (3)

The figures in brackets refer to 2014

Key Points of 2015

- Coming to the end of our first Big Bake Competition with Richard Simpson as the Bake Off champion, raising £165 for Tearfund's No Child Taken Campaign.
- Following through 40 Acts of Generosity through Lent.
- Saying goodbye to Carole Cox, who had been playing the organ in St Athan for 30 years, as she became more involved with her church in Barry.
- Welcoming John Richfield to play the organ on Sundays.
- Comic Relief coffee morning raising £51 for Comic Relief.
- Our Passover Supper at the Community Centre on Maundy Thursday.
- Joint Frozen themed Good Friday workshop at the Gathering Place, and Good Friday Reflective service in St Athan Church.
- Plant sale and coffee morning.
- Taking a group of young people to Spree, including 4 from St Athan church.
- Songs of Praise and Picnic in church.
- Holding our second Big Bake Competition, involving the young people and Sunday congregation as well, with Rachel Simpson winning this time, and raising another £100 for Tearfund's No Child Taken campaign.
- Harvest Supper and Quiz night, the first time we've held this event which was well supported.
- The continuation of our Breakfast Club service, celebrating key times of year together, including All Saints day.
- CAOS Musical Society giving a concert in church for the first time.
- Holding a Macmillan Coffee morning.
- Village Christmas light switch on with the church open and busy serving refreshments and providing activities for the children.
- Christingle service following the light switch on, with make your own Christingles in the service.
- RAF Voluntary Band Christmas Concert in church.
- Holding a monthly coffee morning following the midweek Eucharist.

There has been a lot happening in the Benefice over the last 12 months and in particular in St Athan. The figures show that there has been a general decline in numbers, partly due to some of our older church members passing away, or no longer being able to attend church regularly. We have also seen some new faces worshipping regularly in church. Our congregation on a Wednesday morning has remained at a steady level, and it's been wonderful to see people coming to the monthly coffee morning following the service.

There have been nine funerals in church this year- Emmy Allbrighton, Paul Tipples, Marion Barcello, Marian Howe, Monica Haswell, Emily Thomas, William Thomas, Gordon Churchill, and David Rogers; as well as the funerals of Elsie John, Natasha Robinson and Michael Harrison from the community. Many thanks to Eleanor and Richard for assisting at these, and to Michael Wishart for taking many of them.

On a lighter note, two children were baptised in St Athan last year- Lydia Protheroe and Tyler Bell; and three young people from the church, Emily Simpson, Eva Ellis and Niamh Cummings-Jones, were confirmed at St Nicholas Church in June. There was also one wedding, of Chris Reed and Kezia Pitt, and it was wonderful to welcome them and their family into church for this important occasion.

We have maintained our links with the community throughout the year, primarily with our schools work. Rachel regularly goes into St Athan Primary school with Sam Taylor to deliver assemblies. They are working through the Open the Book series, which involves dramatic and involving retelling of bible stories. Many classes have also been into church as part of their curriculum, learning about baptisms, signs and symbols, and special places; and Rachel has been into school to speak to classes about her role as clergy. The school have also been into church for their Christmas carol and crib services again this year, where they continue to enjoy the teddy bear nativity.

Owing to a number of factors, it has not yet been possible to confirm an agreed course of action in relation to the Bell Tower. We have received assurance that – with the bells no longer being rung – there is no imminent danger but there still remains work to be done so that when a new Rector arrives, he or she is able to engage with the issue and all of the options that are open in relation to it.

Thank you to everyone for your dedication this year. Particularly to Diana as treasurer, and for being willing to stand for another year for the parish accounts; to Richard and Eleanor as church wardens; to John for his musical support; the Sunday school leaders- welcome to Nathan and Shannon to the team; and to the church councillors; flower ladies; and all involved in the life of the church.

Rachel Simpson

9. Mothers' Union Report

During the past year this branch of the Mothers Union has been very active in many ways, we began in March last year with a group of things all together, attending the Women's World Day of Prayer at the Bethel Baptist

Church on the Friday, then on the following Monday we were attending our Deanery Eucharist in the Cathedral. Within a week we were back in the Cathedral for the Mothers' Union Diocesan Quiet Day – all of which were well attended by members of this branch. Luckily we had a slight reprieve in April, we had no Mothers Union meeting as our meeting night fell in Holy Week and we always use that opportunity to support the Holy Week services within the Benefice.

As a branch we have been lucky to have a variety of speakers over the year, talking about a great range of subjects. We have also attended deanery events including the annual skittles match which this branch is very proud to say we won (only just...but we won!!), a deanery outing to Dewstow Gardens and Eucharist's.

We have also supported Diocesan led events and the Mothers Union Wheels Appeal.

July was a sad month for our members, as it was the last time we were to hold a meeting in the school out in Wick, but our members decided to keep in contact and support the school in any way they can. At a time when many organisations are struggling, this branch of the Mothers' Union is doing well and that is all due to the friendship and support the members give to one another it is a pleasure to be part of it, long may we continue

Jodie Taylor

10. Parish News Magazine Report

Overview

The Parish News started, in its present format, in September 2012 as a 24 page A5 size magazine. Eric Sparks and Bill Henderson divided the responsibilities, Eric being Editor and Bill handling the Commercial side including the printing and distribution. This arrangement is working most satisfactorily. The magazine is proof-read by David Brunning.

Situation

The colour photocopier has made a considerable difference to the ease of production requiring little more than correct feeding to proceed from original to printed, collated and stapled finished product.

We still produce, and distribute, some 400 copies per month.

Finance

It would be comforting if the magazine could be self-supporting.

I understand that its outreach aspect is sufficient to justify its existence but a modest increase in the number of advertisers would be beneficial.

Perhaps members of the congregation could find potential additions.

Future

We seem to be moving, at last, towards getting some dialogue with readers. More frequently an article produces a response, either as a letter to the editor or as another article. This is most encouraging as it indicates that we are managing to be thought-provoking.

11. Fair Trade Report

I have been a representative for Traidcraft in the area since 2004 and have regularly sold fairly traded produce at a number of local events. Our Lady and St Illtud's Church, Llantwit Major continue to buy their catering packs of tea, coffee and sugar from me and have set up a stall on the 1st Sunday of the month after morning mass. I'm very grateful for this support.

Tyann Leonard, and Sue Hewitt are doing sterling work running a stall after morning service at St Illtud's on the 3rd Sunday of the month. The 10% profit taken on these occasions is now going into St Illtud's Church Fund. The amount for 2015 is £85.

I look forward to continued support from Parishioners and if anybody would like to buy supplies on a regular basis then please contact me through the Benefice Office.

May I respectfully remind everybody that we are a Fair Trade Parish and as such should use fairly traded products at all of our events! Our suppliers across the world are very grateful for our support which enables them to have a higher standard of living than before Traidcraft's help became available to them.

Eleanor MacNamara

12. Wick & Marcross Church in Wales Primary School

We Work, We Play, We Care, We Pray.

As our school prepares to welcome new families as they move into the development here in Wick we are confident that our strong Christian ethos will enrich the lives of those who begin both their academic and spiritual journey at the school. We continue to foster an environment in which all pupils, with their families, can grow and flourish. Every year at Wick is filled with opportunities for pupils to develop their individual skills and talents in an environment where each individual is cared for and nurtured.

Worship continues to be central to the life and work of the school. This year we have a new problem - our community worship is now so well supported by families and friends that we no longer fit, as a school, into St James' Church! We are strengthened by remembering that 'wherever two or three are gathered...' and continued to be moved by the worship that is planned by our children. Again this year our Service of Remembrance was a very moving occasion with poetry written by the children bringing tears to many eyes. Sustaining links with MoD St. Athan is very important to us as a school and we were delighted when our children were once again invited to take part in a special Service of Remembrance at the base.

With Easter falling early this year, it means that a further two groups of children have completed the 'access to communion' course with Father Huw and Father Anthony (April 2015 and March 2016). On both occasions and it was wonderful to welcome them to communion at a special service in school.

Academic standards remain consistently high. We are very proud of all our pupils in terms of their achievements, not only academically, but also through the twelve core values that underpin the life and work of the school.

Following the highly successful Section 50 Church Schools' Inspection last year, we have welcomed school leaders, governors and Diocesan Advisors from church schools throughout Wales. It has been a privilege to share and celebrate the work of the school with such a wide audience.

Ceri Thomas

13. Faith & Fellowship

Faith & Fellowship continues to ebb and flow between the homes of our members. Currently we are looking at a collection of sonnets by Malcom Guite called Sounding the Seasons. We continue to share a short act of worship in the form of Compline or Night Prayer at the end of our meeting and include prayers for friends in the community who may be in need of God's strength and peace.

The group is a valued source of support for those who attend.

I offer my own thanks for the support and prayer of the group in my everyday life and at this time as the ministry I have had begins to alter during ordination training.

Jude Peters