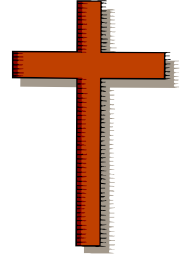
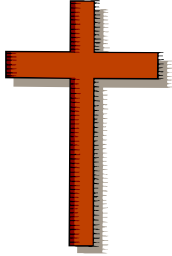


**ANNUAL REPORT
AND
FINANCIAL STATEMENT**



**OF THE
PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE
ECCLESIASTICAL
PARISH OF ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH CHORLEY
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER 2010.**

INCUMBENT:

The Revd. T. D. Wilby,
St. George's Vicarage,
Letchworth Place,
Chorley.
PR7 2HJ

BANK:

The Royal Bank of Scotland,
Market Street,
Chorley.

CURATE:

The Revd. P. Mason
email: pollymason@qualitas.fg.co.uk

READER:

Mrs. J. Mercer
email: jenny@mercemail.co.uk

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER:

Mr. S. Gardiner, A.C.A., C.T.A.
25 Langdale Grove,
Whittle-le-Woods,
Nr. Chorley,
Lancs.

CHARITY REGISTRATION NO:- 1130528

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

St. George's Church is situated in the town of Chorley: it is part of the Diocese of Blackburn within the Church of England. Its governing documents are the Parochial Church Councils (Powers) Measures 1956 as amended and the Church Representation Rules (contained in schedule 3 to the Synodical Government Measure 1969 as amended). The correspondence address is St. George's Vicarage, Letchworth Place, Chorley, Lancs PR7 2HJ.

The Church is a fine example of a Waterloo Church, built by the Church Commissioner's money and opened for worship in 1825. It has an active, enthusiastic and hardworking Parochial Church Council (PCC) which has become a Charity, constituted as an incorporated association under the Act of Parliament dated 2nd January 1957. The PCC, in co-operation with the incumbent, the Reverend Tim Wilby, and the Curate, the Reverend Polly Mason, actively promote the mission of the Church pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical as expressed by:-

“IN THE NAME OF CHRIST WE SEEK TO LOVE AND SERVE GOD AND HIS PEOPLE”.

As well as the Parish Church, the PCC has responsibility for the Vicarage, St. George's Church Hall, Red Bank Mission hut and St. George's Aided Primary School.

MEMBERSHIP

Members of the PCC are either elected by the Annual Parish Church Meeting (APCM) in accordance with the Church Representation rules, or are co-opted.

PCC members who have served from 1st January 2010 until the date this report was approved are:-

Incumbent: The Reverend Timothy D. Wilby (Chair)

Curate The Reverend Mrs. Polly Mason

Wardens:- Mr. Geoffrey Armstrong (until April 2010)
Mr. John Bradley
Mr. Brian Addison (from April 2010)

Representation on Deanery Synod:-

Mr. Brian Allman
Mrs. Kathleen Allman
Mr. Stephen Pollard

Representation on Diocesan Synod:-

Mr. Peter Wilding

Elected Members:-

Mr. Brian Addison	(Church Warden from April 2010)
Mrs Freda Armstrong	(re-elected April 2010)
Mr. Derek Beaumont	(re-elected April 2010)
Mrs. Victoria Birkett	

Mr. Gordon Blackledge	
Mrs. Mary Edwards	(re-elected April 2010)
Mr. Alan Fairclough	
Mr. Alan Gibson	
Mrs. Netta Gill	
Mrs. Elaine Heartfield	(from April 2010)
Mrs. Barbara Horsfield	(up to April 2010)
Mr. David Horsfield	
Mrs Jackie Hunter	(from April 2010)
Mr. Peter Jackson	
Mrs. Catherine Jolly	(re-elected 2010)
Mrs. Jenny Mercer	(co-opted from April 2010)
Mrs. Pamela Ragsdale	(from April 2010)
Mrs. Janice Roberts	
Mrs. Pamela Walker	(from April 2010)
Mrs. Elizabeth Wilding	
Mr. Andrew Purcell	(co-opted from May 2010)
Vacancy	

The agreed number of elected members to the PCC currently stands at 17.

EX-OFFICIO (Co-opted)

<i>Vice-Chair</i>	Mr. Geoffrey Armstrong	(from April 2010)
<i>Secretary</i>	Mr. William Greenwood OBE	(from April 2010)
<i>Treasurer</i>	Mr. Maurice Totham	(from April 2010)

ELECTORAL ROLL

Mrs. Irene Haworth	(from April 2010)
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COMMITTEES

The PCC operates through a number of committees which meet between full PCC meetings, both regularly and frequently: these are supported by “task” oriented activities led by individuals or small groups within the purview of the committee structure. During the year 2010, the PCC met on eight occasions, with an average overall attendance of 78%.

Standing Committee

This is the only committee required by law and comprises the Vicar, Churchwardens, Secretary and Treasurer. It has the power to transact the business of the PCC between its meetings, subject to any directions given by the PCC. (Chaired by Reverend Timothy Wilby)

Finance and General Purposes Committee

Responsible for financial matters and for the day to day running of the Church and the management of its resources. (Chaired by Alan Gibson)

Fabric Committee (formerly known as the Property Committee)

Responsible for the care, maintenance and repair of Church plant and the essential practical aspects of property in the medium and long term. (Chaired by David Horsfield)

Mission and Worship Committee

Responsible for the spiritual aspects of Church life both inside and outside the Church building. (Chaired by Revd. Polly Mason)

REVIEW OF THE YEAR 2010

Rev'd Timothy Wilby – St George's in 2010

If we look around us we see the signs of economic hardship from the steps of St George's: shops have closed and businesses are struggling. It is marvellous, though, that we at St George's are able to continue our particular mission as 'the town centre church'. This year, for example, we offered our building for two large-scale funeral services, allowing more people to attend than would have been possible otherwise. This was in addition to our own very busy parish ministry of occasional offices – baptisms, weddings and funerals.

Probably the most notable 'event' of the year was the repairs and alterations to the interior of St George's. We had to spend in the region of £100,000 making the aisle ceilings safe, and installing the new level-access entrance and facilities. Together with the upgrading of fire alarm equipment, we can be confident that we have made our superb building 21st-century-compliant – I hope.

Our good friend (I speak for everyone, here) Geoff Armstrong laid down his 38 year ministry as Church Warden, the same number of years as the incumbency of the great Revd John Stock in the nineteenth century. His wisdom and experience are still in use, of course, as Geoff has taken on the role of PCC Chair., as well as 'Minister for Holes', sorting out the problem in the church drive. Wardens Brian Addison and John Bradley have given sound advice and leadership over the year and I can say without reservation that I have never worked with such an admirable PCC team in all my ministry. Long may it continue!

It is always dangerous to give a list of thank-yous, in case of missing someone out, but I must single out all those involved in the music of the parish. Yes, of course I am biased as a musician myself, but we are incredibly fortunate to have some of the best music available anywhere, with the Chorley Evensongs one of the hidden gems of the liturgical year. Biased again, I will never forget the sun on Easter Eve shining directly on the Resurrection picture behind the altar as we began the vigil service.

We strive to be a Christian family, with the worship of almighty God our principle task; thank you to everyone who has prayed, worked and given this year. Amen.

Rev'd Timothy D Wilby
April 2011

CHURCH ATTENDANCE

There are 212 Parishioners on the Electoral Roll, of whom 88 are resident within the Parish and 124 non-resident: the Electoral Roll is revised and reported upon at each PCC meeting. The current position shows an increase of 4 persons from that reported at the last APM about which we are delighted: removal from the register is due to death or because people have moved away. All Church attendees are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and stand for election to the PCC. The average weekly attendance as submitted to the Diocese was 200, made up of 50 children and 150 adults: this number increases significantly at the monthly "Parade" services, at festivals and other special services.

The PCC continues to be committed to enabling as many people as possible to worship at our Church and to become active members of the parish community at St. George's. The PCC maintains an overview of worship throughout the parish and makes suggestions as to how the services can involve the range of people that live within and beyond the parish. The services and worship put faith into practice through prayer and scripture, music and sacrament.

This year we have again been successful in welcoming more families into the church: it is extremely pleasing to see the growth in the number of young persons attending Sunday School. All, young and not so young, are welcome to attend our regular services.

The PCC, incumbent and curate are ever mindful of the Commission's guidance on public benefit and, in particular, the specific guidance to charities for the advancement of religion. In particular, St. George's tries to enable ordinary people to live out their faith as part of the parish community through:

- worship and prayer, learning about the Gospel, and developing their knowledge and trust in Jesus
- provision of pastoral care for people living in the parish and for those associated with St. George's who live out side the parish
- missionary and outreach work.

To facilitate this work it is essential that the fabric of all the buildings for which we have responsibility, is maintained to the highest possible standard.

ACHIEVEMENT AND PERFORMANCE

The PCC are keen to offer a range of services throughout the year that our community find beneficial and spiritually fulfilling. The regular Wednesday (10.00a.m.) and Sunday (8.00a.m.) said Eucharist continue to provide a quiet, intimate and reflective environment for worship, while the normal Sunday Family Communion (10.00 a.m.) provides a more outgoing form of worship: the monthly parade Sunday activities provide the opportunity for the young people from the uniformed organisations to express themselves while "evensong", a joint venture by the Anglican churches in Chorley enables St. George's to act as the host for the service on a rotation basis. An "Early Birds" service for parents and children attending primary school is well established, providing worship for a range of people who may be outside of the regular church worshippers.

This week in week out provision is further supplemented by a range of services designed to celebrate the special occasions of the church year – Easter, Christmas, Harvest. The PCC in general and the Mission and Worship committee in particular, are ever mindful of the need to provide opportunities for the people of Chorley, not just the parish, to experience worship in ways which will meet their needs and not just through the regular patterns of Sunday worship: the “In Loving Memory” service and the Santa Lucia Christmas service are but two examples of the way that the desire to provide for the wider community have previously been met: It was unfortunate that the Santa Lucia service could not be held during 2010.

As well as the regular and special services, St. George’s enables the community to celebrate and thank God at the milestones of the journey through life: in marriage public vows are exchanged with God’s blessing and through funeral services friends and family express their grief and give thanks for the life which is now complete in this world and to commend the person into God’s keeping. We have celebrated 54 baptisms, 5 weddings and held 31 funerals in our church during the year in question. The increase in baptisms has been particularly pleasing.

DEANERY SYNOD

St. Georges has a full complement [4] of representatives on the Deanery Synod: one of these continues to serve on the Diocesan Synod. While this should provide the PCC with an important link between the wider organisation of the Church and the Parish, the lack of a Deanery Synod secretary has meant that the assiduous reporting back by the representatives has been curtailed. The financial stability of the churches within the Diocese has continued to be a major concern: that, and the concerns about the available number of clergy to staff the existing needs of the Diocese will continue to be a major challenge both in the short and medium terms. Thinking “ outside of the box “ will be an imperative for St. Georges as it moves through the next decade.

The problems outlined in the previous report have not gone away although there was some good news in respect of the financial pressures conjured up by United Utilities, the short term solution for which we should thank the House of Commons.

CHURCHES TOGETHER 2010

At the AGM in January 2010 Andrew Mashiter from Park Rd. Methodist Church was elected Moderator with Tim elected as the Deputy Moderator. Street Pastors had been commissioned and were out on service at the “ Christmas Lights “ switch on.

Church Leader’s lunches were to start at St. Laurence’s..

The week of Prayer for Christian Unity Lunchtime Prayers were held on 18th-22nd January at St. George’s Chorley.

In April, due to unforeseen circumstances, only an informal meeting took place. St. George’s hosted the Lent lunchtime services. The Easter advert was considered and a stained glass window in St. Peter’s was pictured in the Guardian as part of the advertising.

In July, Steve Hughes the Inter-Faith Development Officer for Churches Together in Lancashire, told us of his job working with Christians, Muslims and members of other faiths towards a peaceful society. His remit involves FE colleges, Universities and the Lancashire Forum of Faith. A review of the role of Churches Together in Chorley was undertaken by a small group of members. This concluded that little in the way of "real" Churches Together activity was taking place and that a sense of purpose, together with a statement of aims, ought to be pursued.

In October, Debbie Peatman asked us to consider the role of Churches Together in Chorley at an open meeting. This focussed on how we see the body in the light of Jesus as the vine and we as the branches. Were our branches withering or flourishing? We concluded that some activities were flourishing such as Church Pastors. However it was thought that the best way forward was to have less formal meetings and more fellowship.

To follow this up our, A.G.M. took the form of an informal get-together at the Secretary's house with tea/coffee and cakes and a quick appointment of officers. Tim is the new Moderator (Chairman).

St. George's continues to play an active role and provides leadership in the endeavour to make Churches Together in Chorley a dynamic community with its sense of purpose based firmly "in the name of Christ". The year saw St. Georges hosting the Holiday Club, the Lent lectures and playing a lead role in the organisation of the annual Walking Day.

THE CHURCH, CHURCH HALL, MISSION HUT AND SCHOOL

The year in question, 2010, saw the completion of the two major projects- the ceilings on the side aisles and the re-development of the South entrance. It is difficult to see any tangible reward for the large investment of ensuring that the side aisles are safe and watertight but the job is complete. The South entrance presents a different picture altogether. Not only does the completed project facilitate entrance to the Church for the physically handicapped, the whole facility is both aesthetically pleasing as well as being functional. While the monies to pay for these large scale projects came from the special reserve fund, it is only right and proper to celebrate the endeavours of Mrs.F.Armstrong as a significant contribution to the overall costs of the South entrance. Both projects will contribute to the maintenance of the fabric for the years to come.

Home visits to those who are sick or incapacitated remain an essential feature of life at St.Georges: the indisposition of Jenny Mercer towards the end of the year led to the increased use of David Horsfield on the rota.such visits are one more means of keeping people in touch with church life.

The Church Hall continues to be a warm and welcoming place, accommodating a wide range of users; on the one hand are the Church organisations, while on the other are those external bodies, mainly from the field of education, who hire the facilities. From the large, the Christmas Fayre, the pantomime, the table top sale, the Sunday School, to the small, all who use it recognise its place in the life of the community of St. Georges and that of Chorley. During the year the Hall was used by a range of different bodies, a very similar number to 2009, with the support of the University of the Third Age and Lancashire College remaining strong. In total,Monday

to Friday, the Hall accommodated 1202 booked hours of activities of which 448 were Church oriented and 1202 by other bodies.

This facility, situated in the centre of town is but one more example of the way in which the Church makes itself available to the wider public and how the wider public benefits from that which the Church has to offer. The first signs of the difficult economic climate were felt towards the end of the year when bookings made by Lancashire College had to be cancelled. Let us hope that any lost ground can be made up as we move into 2011.

As part of its duties, the newly named Fabric Committee carried out a survey of the Red Bank Mission hut concluding that the interior is fine but identifying the need for the pruning of the surrounding external trees. North West Electricity were contacted and the task duly completed. The Red Bank Mission hut has continued to carry on providing for the spiritual as well as the social well being of the various user groups. The annual bonfire brought in the normal very large crowd of people from the local community, bringing them into contact with St. Georges via its Red Bank outpost: yet another example of the outward looking approach which is at the heart of the Church.

St. George's is a brilliant Primary School – a busy school, where children thrive. Over recent years the school has evolved and modernised, without losing any of its strong foundations, or traditional qualities. The children in the school are without exception amazing – all 247 of them – perfectly behaved, and with a positive attitude towards their learning. They have such potential – it would be criminal if together we didn't do our best to help the children achieve their best.

The school successfully prepare children for their future rather than for our past: every member of staff in the school is instrumental in this. Each member of staff adds tremendous value to children's lives, and helps them push the boundaries of their successes. With such fantastic support from the parent body of the school, there is absolutely no reason why the school shouldn't be seen as 'outstanding' by the inspection team, OFSTED. This must be our goal within the next 5 years. We continue to be a very popular school in the local area, with all year groups full or oversubscribed. We regularly have requests for places in all year groups which we cannot accommodate.

As a school it would be easy to rest on our laurels, and coast. But again that would be wrong. There is over £800,000 of public money given to the school each year, and that money must be used to improve the quality of provision. To help us improve further we have a development plan.

- A focus on standards in **Literacy remains a school priority**; - each classroom now has a working wall in it, used to support the teaching and learning of writing.
- Cross curricular Literacy throughout the school is good, yet remains a focus for the school – and is of a much higher standard than that suggested by the government (2 hours a fortnight cross curricular work.)
- The continuation of Assessment For learning throughout the school remains a priority – specifically
 - Objective setting for each lesson
 - Sharing the success criteria for each lesson with the children
 - Talking Partners to answer questions
 - Response marking by teachers

This whole programme is based upon involving children more in their own learning, and assessment

- To liaise with Buildings and Finance to prepare for the extension of the Year 5 Classroom, following the successful extension of Year 3, and the creation of an outdoor area for reception.
- To improve our links with people from different communities.

I could write about the qualities of the school all day but the written word can only express so much.... for a superior review of the school, call in and see us in action.

I must be brief – so I will finish by offering an open invite to you all to visit us in school. Don't believe all that you hear, or read in the press about falling standards, poor discipline in schools and de-motivated children that are tested to the limits – to be fair it's rubbish. And I'll prove it to you.

MISSION AND EVANGELISM

In our report for 2009, as a demonstration of our faith, it was mentioned that the Mission and Worship committee oversaw the distribution of some £2350 to a wide range of charities. That has been the case again for 2010, with the amount raised and distributed by many of the individual groups more than doubling this amount. The social interaction through the wide range of activities devised to raise money is but one more example of the place of fellowship within the life of St. Georges.

The parish magazine continues to be produced monthly: the fee to those who receive it has remained at the 2009 level. Spare copies of the magazine have been made available to the Tuesday morning coffee club: some of the customers are not regular attendees at St. Georges, so this is another way of spreading the word.

The magazine continued to flourish during 2010 with the number of advertisers enabling the venture to remain profitable. The inclusion of the insert prepared by the Diocese enables the recipients to be kept informed of things beyond the parish as well as developing our knowledge and understanding of the faith.

CHURCHWARDEN'S REPORT

The responsibilities of the Churchwardens at the Annual Parochial meeting are to report on any additions or subtractions to the Terrier and recording of the goods and chattels in the church building. In the year covered by this report there have been additions in the form of two oiled filled candles for the main alter, kindly donated by St George's Dramatic and Musical Society.

Last year two large building projects were reported on, one of which is still ongoing, that is the repairs to the collapsed drive, and this has been a very frustrating project for all concerned, with numerous meetings between representatives from the Diocese, Chorley Borough Council and members from our own Church. At last a way

forward has been agreed and the investigation work into the cause of the collapse will be starting in the near future.

The other major project, the repairs to the ceiling panels in the galleries was completed on time and without any major problems; the builders did a very good job. Following on from the ceilings the builder carried out alterations to the South entrance, to create an accessible entrance into church along with much improved toilet and storage facilities.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

There was an increase in income from planned giving of 2.7% compared with 2009 but a decrease in donations for Church Expenses, included within Sundry Donations, of 49.1%. We also saw an increase in cash collections of 15.6%. The tax refund of Gift Aid giving increased by 7.4% from 2009, now being £12,525.

The net proceeds from fund raising were £5,347. A decrease of £423 on the previous year; contributions being received from the Christmas Draw, Christmas Fayre and the Bonus Ball.

The PCC received donations from St. George's Institute totalling £1,785

Fees received by the PCC, excluding fees assigned to the Diocese, increased by 0.2% to £7,255

Our total annual contribution to the Diocese for 2010, calculated by the Parish Share Assessment, was £57,802, an increase of 6.7% over the year 2009 figure. This annual total for 2010 comprises the Incumbent's Assigned Fees of £2,400 {which were remitted to the Diocese} plus the PCC contribution of £55,402, which was an increase of 8.3% over the comparable figure for 2009.

Payments to Barchester, included within training and education expenses, increased by 0.5% to £3,219.

The Church maintained its principle of giving annually to charities by donating £2,763, on top of which a further sum of £1,527 was donated by special collections, making a total of £4,290. We also contributed a sum of £2,000 towards the cost of a Youth Worker.

Payments totalling £10,580 were made to PCC members for services performed during the year.

The spend on General Maintenance of Church Buildings increased to £6,915 { up by 2.6% } and reflects work done during the year on organ tuning, general repairs and Churchyard Architect's fees.

During 2010 we incurred major costs of £56,912 on Church ceiling repairs and the improvements to the Church south entrance cost £39,863.

The amount spent on Administration increased from £1,748 to £2,827 and includes general printing, stationery and other sundry items.

Legacies received in 2010 totalled £60,091, being from the estates of the late Mrs. A. Hilton, Mr. T. Hilton, Mrs. E.A. Zimmer and Mrs. D. M. Roger.

The overall effect as shown in the Statement of Financial Activities, and which reflects the major works detailed above, means that our expenditure in 2010 exceeded our income by £52,024. However, investments were sold during the year which produced a gain on disposal of £21,069 but the movements in the Stock Market meant a reduction in the value of our investments of £3,514 which produced a net reduction for the year in total of £34,469.

In the Notes to the Financial Statements, it is recorded that the total value of our deposit and investment funds as at the 31st. December 2010 was £169,424 and this reflects the level of the Stock Market at that time.

Reserves Policy

Reserves are held on short-term deposits and investments to ensure that they are readily available to meet the financial requirements of the Church activities. Designated funds for use in future building projects are set out in the notes to the accounts.

REPORTS FROM CHURCH ORGANISATIONS

MOTHER'S UNION

The aims of the Mother's Union are still to support and improve family life within the community.

It's pleasing to report that we are continuing to steadily build up the membership of our branch following on from the very fruitful sermon given by Jenny last year. During the period up to 31st December 2010 we have enrolled a further 2 members but unfortunately at the same time we have lost Ida Heald. Our membership now stands at 23 (including 2 Indoor Members).

During the past year we have held 14 meetings made up as follows:

4 speakers including a representative from Greenhalgh's Bakery (and his wares)

6 social evenings (including enrolments)

2 services in Church

2 joint meetings with Thursday Ladies

And on top of that Marjorie and Gloria have attended Deanery and Enrolling Members meetings.

We were the host Church for the Mother's Union Deanery Festival held on 27th May which was very successful. This was in no small way due to the help from the Vicar for arranging the Order of Service, Alan Gibson for arranging the printing, the Choir,

Freda for flowers and the Men's Fellowship for providing the multitudes with refreshments afterwards.

A prize was given for the Xmas Fayre and we ran a Mother's Union stall: a cheque to the value of £100 was donated to Church.

Members still continue to help run the Tuesday coffee morning in the Church hal, whilst others help in local charity shops. We still support the emergency hospital wash bag project which is ongoing and has a huge demand. Sunday School teachers, lay readers, pram service, pastoral visitors are just some of the other activities in which our members are also involved.

Our thanks go to Carol McWhinnie, who stepped down this year, for her work as Treasurer: the appointment was taken up by Marjorie Gagan (who volunteered in the absence of anyone else!!). There were no further changes to the committee and we continue to work hard to keep our branch viable and to meet the needs, wherever possible, of the community beyond the Church.

SOCIAL COMMITTEE – We continue to combine Church social events with donations to Charity. In 2010, we had a Lent Lunch raising £170 for Water Aid, Carol Singing around our Parish raising £140 for Preston Samaritans, our ever popular Parish Dinner which donated £100 to SENSE, and our well attended Christmas Social which financed one of the star prizes in our Christmas Draw (Luxury Food Hamper worth £50.)

The highlight of 2010 was undoubtedly the St. George's Day celebrations, held at the Institute: as an individual activity this occasion reflected the spirit of Fellowship for which St. Georges is renowned.

MEN'S FELLOWSHIP GROUP

It is possible to look back over the past year with some degree of satisfaction: hopefully members will feel that it has been a busy as well as a varied year. Thinking about the St. George's Day evening, the word eventful springs to mind. Hopefully, the programme of activities will have been seen as providing a range of events with something for everyone. We have held six formal meetings together with a bowls evening with colleagues from Euxton parish, a canal trip, the St. George's Day extravaganza [pantomime ?], the plant sale, the sunflower competition and helping the Mother's Union via our waitress service. No doubt individuals will have their own highlights but collectively we hope they are seen to the life at St. Georges. In addition to the programme of activities the group has contributed to the upkeep of the Church through financial contribution.

Thanks need to be expressed to Derek Beaumont for his (and Margaret's) organisation of the plant sale; to Maurice Totham for, once again, taking us through the mysteries and machinations of helping to ensure that we had a winner on the bowls evening and to Brian Addison for his work behind the scenes at the Institute in making the green available.

Most of all, however, the sincerest of thanks to those 12 - 15 people who make up the Fellowship Group on a regular monthly basis. The companionship is a real joy.

From the outset we were clear about identifying and using the talent from amongst our own people: this has proved to be very successful with top class inputs from Gordon Blackledge, Peter Jackson, Derek Beaumont and Victoria Gibson.

And so ends another year, not with sadness but with the expectation/anticipation that 2011 will prove as enjoyable as 2010.

HERITAGE GROUP

In a kinder, gentler age, a British prime minister asserted that, "We are all but members of one another". A team effort such as that mustered by the cheerful and efficient St. George's squad for the Heritage Open Days in September was a splendid illustration of this tenet.

Warm thanks are due to all those who planned, researched, prepared and displayed the exhibitions, guided and stewarded, and provided or purveyed refreshment. There are also the performers; the continuous bellringing experience proved a real hit (*ouch!*). A recital "fully demonstrated the range of the organ and its music", as one qualified observer put it. We were also treated to what may be the first synthesised lecture on a famous son of St. George's, the English choral composer Thomas Wood. Three joyful piano duets topped this off.

Possibly it is the little unexpected "goodnesses" emerging which gladden us. Ian "Mad about Chorley" Bagshaw lent a prepared exhibition on all the Chorley churches, including the first published postcard in the town; no, it was not of St. George's but was indeed taken *from* St. George's formidable tower. Almost incredibly, builder Miles Thomas "paid" for his tour by replacing the troublesome holds on the bell sallies (*ask Victoria!*) complete with an adjusting tool. New gifts of evidence appeared, not least Christine Burgess' fascinating depiction of the old school buildings as they were in 1960.

We must also thank our visitors who totalled around seventy. This was not the highest number ever but it contained real quality. All showed extensive and intensive interest; a significant few from as far as Kent and, indeed, Yorkshire, had selected our site from the Open Days website. St. George's is known nationally. More importantly it furnished a useful service to the community with thoughtfulness and charm.

A stimulating programme is being planned for 2011 Open Days to be held, as always, on the second weekend in September.

Elsewhere members of the group have assisted the Chorley Heritage Centre Support Group and one volunteer, Peter Jackson, has worked assiduously in identifying the subjects contained in the mass of photographs comprising the Birtill Collection at the Library.

Heritage Group



“A Scene From An Exhibition”. Garth Edwards’ sketch for the Mothers Union banner next to the finished article and a pedestal from the Flower Guild.

THURSDAY LADIES CIRCLE

The group continues to meet on the first and third Thursday of the month, except in July and August, usually in the Church Hall. During the last year we have enjoyed a varied programme of speakers, activities and outings – quite a number, it has to be admitted, involving food! Membership has held steady, but we are now a relatively small group and would welcome any new members.

Our support for the work of International Aid continues, with items of toiletries etc., collected at every meeting. During Advent we also decorated and filled shoe boxes with Christmas gifts for that worthwhile charity. Last year, following the Haitian earthquake, the group bought an Aquabox, and filled it with a selection of warm clothing, household and hygiene goods, in a scheme organised by Rotary International. With a filter cartridge and water treatment tablets the box, once emptied, would also provide a family of four with water safe to drink for four months.

We always look forward to our Autumn fundraising event, to which we invite our congregation and friends from other churches. The weather is usually wet and blustery, and 2010 was no exception, but the warmth of the fellowship in the hall is so evident. We had a wonderful evening of glorious singing from Rachel Little, and were able to send a cheque for £400 to St Catherine’s Hospice.

ST. GEORGE’S BELL RINGING GROUP

It has been a very good year for the Bell Ringing Group. The number of bell ringers has increased to twenty and the children have shown great enthusiasm and dedication to learn. For the first time, the Tower Room was open to the Public during the two-day Heritage Weekend and a short presentation was given and the bell ringing was demonstrated. This was a huge success and led to a member of the public providing funding and expertise to improve the robustness of the rope grips.

The kind gift from the P.C.C. of £40 was used to purchase new rope coverings, a new clock and helped towards buying Christmas presents for the children as a thank you for their hard work. My thanks to the Social Committee for their help towards the cost of the Christmas presents.

The bells are rung regularly every Sunday morning before and after the 10am Service and the children are practising new peals. Despite a number of the bells requiring repair and attention, the bell ringers remain committed to play the bells to the best of their ability.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the P.C.C. for their continued support of the Bell Ringing Group and the part these children play within the Family of St. George.

FLOWER GUILD

This has not been the easiest year for the Flower Guild, in so much as several of our very kind subscribers have sadly passed away, leaving many vacant dates on the Flower Rota.

Several notices have been printed in both "The Messenger" and "The Way" with, to date, no new subscribers. However, we shall, on vacant dates, use Flower Guild funds as we have during the past year: it could be that we shall keep flowers on the Altar for two weeks if they are looking fresh or, alternatively, arrange foliage in the Altar vases. We do assure the PCC that we shall do our best at all times to enhance the beauty of our church.

PARISH MAGAZINE – In 2010, there was a range of contributors and subjects. Our Magazine, The Messenger, continues to contain The See from the Diocese. Despite this now costing 13p a copy, we have managed, through good housekeeping, to keep the cost of The Messenger at 40p. We show a profit in the 2010 Accounts of nearly £200.

BADMINTON GROUP

The Monday evening meetings have continued during the year with a break for the summer period. Attendance fluctuates, especially when the PCC holds its meetings on the same evening. The make up of those participating is a mix of our own congregation together with others who may not have a faith or who worship elsewhere. We see the Club as both an opportunity for St. George's congregation to engage in social fellowship as well as to provide a platform for others who may not be committed, to engage with those who have, in the hope of attracting people back into a faith community. The commitment to look beyond St. George's is fundamental to what we are and how we operate.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Sunday school continues to grow in numbers with over 70 children now on our register, we enjoyed taking part in our annual procession of witness in June and in December despite the adverse weather we managed to entertain the congregation with our nativity play. The children also enjoyed the belated Christmas Party. At the

moment we are looking forward to Easter and a number of our older children are preparing for their confirmation in June. A big thank you to the Vicar and PCC for all their support, to the volunteer parents who help out on a rota basis, and to Elizabeth Wilding for her continuing help with singing.

“I am the way, the truth and the light”
(John, Chapter 14, V6)