

St Michael's Church, Galleywood

Reports for the Annual Meeting of the Parochial Church for the year ended 31 December 2010

Incumbent:

Revd Andy Griffiths
450 Beehive Lane,
Chelmsford CM2 8RN

Report on the Electoral Roll

As of 27 March 2011, the number of members stood at 143. Of these, 99 reside in the parish and 44 reside outside of the parish.

Parochial Church Council

The Parochial Church Council held 9 regular meetings during 2010/11.

Membership of the PCC 2010-2011:

Incumbent	Revd Andy Griffiths	(chair)
Curate	Revd Stephanie Gillingham	
Churchwardens	Mrs Ann Gardner and Mrs Jackie Sigournay	

PCC elected members:

Mrs Sally Bevan	
Mrs Sue Kitson	
Mrs Rosemary Lister	
Mr Steve Mack	(treasurer)
Mrs Veryan Wilson	(secretary)
(2 vacancies)	

PCC co-opted member (from Jan 2011):

Mr Phil Preston	(lay chair)
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Representatives on the Deanery Synod:

Mr Roy Bishop
Miss Beryl Moss
Mr John Fowler

Report on the Year

For St Michael's Church in Galleywood, Essex, 2010 was the most momentous year since the '70s. It brought the "death" of two congregations, the birth of Rolling Worship, new life among young people and a new sense of each person's gifts.

In January and February, the church members “listened to God” together about what their future should hold. Over a hundred people – some of whom had been members for over 50 years, some of whom were under 10, and some of whom were not regular worshippers at all- gave their views in writing, and many more were part of conversations. A blog, a suggestions box, a graffiti wall and special open evenings were part of the strategy of listening to everyone. “When the same idea came from 8-year-olds and 80-year-olds, we knew we were on to something”, says a report on this process.

At the end of February the leadership team met, expecting to have a difficult job – “but actually”, writes Andy Griffiths, the Vicar, “our decisions were so clear that we were able to be unanimous very quickly.” The decision was that both the congregations needed to “die”, and one new church needed to take their place.



So in May, *Rolling Worship* began. Since 1975, there had been two Anglican congregations, in two worship centres, in Galleywood. Now everyone got together to worship at the Junior School. In place of 75-minute services, they now began at 9.30 and continued till 12. “But no one is expected to come to all of it!” writes Andy, “it’s ‘come when you can, leave when you like’, and we have refreshment breaks every half an hour to make coming and going even easier.” There is one theme every Sunday, and it is followed in a variety of ways – from formal 1662 worship, through conventional sermons and discussion groups, to very liturgically free band-led segments and “messy church” style all-generation worship. “If we are a parish church”, says Andy, “we simply do not have the luxury of deciding we will reach only one generation, only one class or only one lifestyle group.”

Rolling Worship expresses three main principles which emerged from the 40 days of consultations, which St Michael’s knows in shorthand as the *window*, *ordinary glory*, and the *family*.

- The *window* refers to the idea that Sunday morning worship is to be easy for all in the community to “glance through”, get a taste of the gospel and maybe even a glimpse of God. A survey of baptism families who had not continued to attend suggested that a fixed hour-and-a-quarter long service was an obstacle to their regular attendance; a conviction was growing that instead of expecting people to modify their lives to attend church, St Michael’s needed to adapt itself to their lives. Seeing Sunday mornings as the guest-friendly window for the village helped focus the whole life of the church – so for example homegroups, instead of trying to do too many things at once, were defined as support and discipleship training for the already committed.
- *Ordinary glory* refers to an understanding of everyday life as the place where God’s glory is to be manifested. During the “40 days of discernment” a church member brought a copy of Millet’s painting *Angelus*, and suggested that it summed up many of the things that God seemed to be communicating.



In the painting, there is a church building – but it’s in the distance. God’s glory is falling from heaven

on the two figures in the foreground, in the middle of the potato harvest. So Sunday worship, for St Michael's Galleywood, takes the form of encouraging and inviting people to trust in Jesus, who will enable them to live their ordinary lives gloriously in the power of the Spirit. In order to get the sense of "living ordinary lives, gloriously", there are frequent links to what the members will be doing "this time tomorrow" and a chance for anyone with new job or home responsibilities to tell everyone and be applauded and prayed for.

- The *family* refers not to nuclear families but to the sense that the church members wanted to spend time with each other. The "listening to God" process revealed a need for tearful repentance for superior attitudes on both "sides", and disquiet with a "spiritual apartheid" which divided the (generally) older generation from the (generally) younger. Many members felt their attention drawn to the book of Galatians, with its denunciations of a "two-tier church". In order to preserve the sense of "one family", whatever other slices of worship they go to most worshippers are present from 10.30-11am for "The Core".



St Michael's is not the first church to adopt Rolling Worship for its principal service. St John's Hillingdon in West London is the church that has pioneered Rolling Worship for the Church of England. In the words of their website, "Before, people had to come to church on our terms. Now, they can come on their own terms. We hope that, in time, we will all become more familiar with God's terms." More recently, a church in Dorset has contacted us; in May 2011, they plan to become the third church to follow a Rolling format, with Galleywood cited as its model (they even use the terminology of "the Big Sing"!).

Change is tough! By summer 2010, all sorts of people were threatening that they'd leave the church – or that there were large numbers of other, anonymous people who would leave. The leadership team was on edge.

In August, St Michael's said a sad farewell to the school building and Rolling Worship moved up to the historic parish church, which dates back to 1874. Portable screens were erected so that youth and children's activities could go on along with adult worship in the main church space. "It works," says Andy. "Well, it sort of works".

"I've never known this building to have so much noise and joy in it", said one longstanding member. And far from losing people through the changes, attendances are now running higher than the sum of the two previous congregations, and it's now uncommon to hear people "wishing we were back at the school", "wishing we didn't have to spend half an hour talking to each other" or "wishing we didn't have all these people in the building"! Increasingly, regular members are learning to "build a balanced diet" of worship, teaching and fellowship.

In September, an anonymous donor gave over £1000 and, with the parable of the talents in mind, Andy distributed it in mixed-denomination banknotes to a very surprised congregation! A book will be produced about all the creative ways the money has been put to use. In the autumn, the pews were replaced by chairs.



It was a year of sad goodbyes. Among others, we will not forget Tony Barnard, Doris Evans, Myrtle Tabor, Evelyn Fox, Mavis Cox, Gwen Bright, Brian Bevan, Alan Legg, Linda Saunders, Joyce Bartram and Jean Saunders.

Fiona Selden has started training as a Reader (lay minister) in the Church of England, and we have several other members exploring vocations of various kinds. At the beginning of 2011 we followed "SHAPE" together as a whole church – a programme designed to help each person discover their personality and gifts. As a result of this, a number of people have decided to take a "next step" in Christian ministry.

Meanwhile, our mid-week youth programme has been going from strength to strength. There was almost no youth work of this kind in Galleywood a few years ago – except for the children of church members. Now there is a small group of older youth; an average of 12 aged 11-14; and a weekly lunchtime "Fusion" Club. All of this has benefited greatly from the contribution of our youthworkers, Polly Kersys and Caroline Speed, and their teams. On May 8 as we celebrate the baptisms, confirmations and first communions of many of our young people, we will not forget the contributions of many.

Rolling worship hasn't been easy for our Sunday youth and children's workers. Thank you to Caroline, Catherine and Jenny and their teams for all they have done, and for being so patient in giving up the far better facilities they were working in previously with such good grace. Thank you to the choir for sharing the choir vestry and for giving such a clear lead to our new musical programme, to Ruth our triumphant choir director, and to Bernard, Paul, Chris, Giff, Philip, Philippa, Hannah, Emily, Rachel, Clare, Jenny, Roger and Catherine as they lead music on various instruments. Rosemary coordinates our pastoral care team, and we're very grateful to her and to them for all the work they've done on prayer and healing ministry, and with the bereaved this year. Thank you to Melanie for many years of service with the bookstall, and for Suzanne for taking that on from her; to Chris and her bellringers; and to Sally, Helen, Barbara, Sheila, Jean and others for seeing so graciously to our catering requirements. Thank you to all those who have made the building beautiful (including Josie and her flower team, Derek and his maintenance team, Roger and his team working on the kitchen, Beryl and Ann endlessly Hoovering and cleaning, and Jason who's redecorating the toilets). Thank you to Paul, Steve, Martin, Colin, Felix, Keith, Geoff and others for running our audio-visual systems. Friendship Plus and Wednesday Fellowship remain the two most impressive outreach and service projects in mid-Essex, which is thanks to Sue, Edith and their teams. The holiday clubs (for children and for the over-50s) were both exceptional, and "Messy Church" – both at church and at local residential homes – is greatly appreciated. Thank you to Pam for taking care of the churchyard, Ann and Artin for making sure everything in the building is where it needs to be, Beryl for seeing to so much of the administration, Beryl for doing the noticesheet, Alison for producing endless rotas, Hilary and her team for launching our welcome ministry, and Jamie for always being there ready to do whatever is asked of him with a smile. Thank you to Mike for radically increasing our media profile this year, Veryan for performing the tasks of secretary to the PCC so well, Jane for all her organizational input, Hilary for her work on the website (as well as our very successful "proms on the common") and Travers and Roger for chairing the Rolling Worship Team and insuring that we all learn and have our hearts warmed by their preaching. Thank you to Clare and David for their work on Viewpoint, which will have its last issue this summer before we launch Galleywood Magazine, and Janette and all those who've delivered it. Galleywood Theatre Group has started up, and is more than an independent tenant – we're partners with them in their project. That's 68 names – if yours should have been on the list and we've forgotten you, we're truly sorry, and we do appreciate your contribution. At the heart of all this are our wardens Ann and Jackie, and the staff team – we're grateful to Andy, Caroline, Stephanie and Sue.

Report on Fabric

Anne Gardner writes:

A faculty was granted for the removal of pews from the two side blocks of seating and replacement with chairs.

The floor area was made good/painted with wood stain.

Electrical

Chelmsford Electrical have replaced 12 high level bulbs, removed diffusers to stage lights and fitted a new transformer.

We have a maintenance contract for the oil boiler with Blue Flame Services. The boiler was inspected and tested and new parts ordered.

Organ tuning and repair work to the organ pedals was carried out by Andrew Stevens.

The vestry was painted and generally tidied.

The ladies and gents toilets are being painted and a new floor is being laid.

Kitchen

This is being enlarged, new work tops are being fitted and the equipment updated by Roger Gillingham and his team. Thanks for their hard work.

Churchyard

We have a contract for grass cutting, general tidying and tree surgery with Ian Allston.

Financial Report

The treasurer writes:

A little while ago, as preparation for a talk she was to deliver, our Curate, Stephanie Gillingham, asked me: "Why do we need money?"

Ultimately, a Church has two responsibilities - to bring the Good News to as many people as can be reached, wherever they are, and to nurture and support those people in worship as they grow in following the Lord.

To do either of these things, a Church must be part of the world we all inhabit. It needs to provide space for worship for all types of people; in all types of styles. It needs to address the needs of all age groups, and, in a society that increasingly takes account of other cultures, a wide variety of approaches to God. All these things need to be done to ensure that the Word of God is available to everyone and anyone in our community - not least the people who haven't heard, or have, for the present, set their face against it.

We need to raise money, and to spend money, and to do both wisely and prayerfully.

In terms of raising money, we have had a mixed, but on balance, good year. Some things have worked in our favour. We had a sizeable legacy, of £10,000, which always makes the figures look better. We raised, in the second half of the year, £9270 towards the chairs and the Big Project, and we have matched that already this year.

Less good, though, is the regular giving. Giving through the Bank Standing Order system was £50,156 - down by £3500. Giving through the envelope system was £8,223.54 - down by £2000.

This is the giving that maintains the Church, and allows us to be confident in the actions we take.

It is natural that it falls from time to time. People move away, or retire, and in poor economic times people feel, and are, less able to give money. We have to recognise this, but also rise to the challenge that implies. The Church stands in as much need of money as do the members of its congregation.

The Big Project is an example of the kind of problem we face. We have begun to show new and inventive ways of raising donations towards it. There is a very long way to go, but people are working on it.

However, there is so much money to raise that single, one-off, donations won't deliver what we need. Nor will saying "I'll just pay a little extra each month only to the Big Project". The Church still needs to run, we still need have services. The Church needs to generate a surplus each year to fund the Big Project AND our other activities. That surplus needs to grow, and keep growing, through the next 5 - 10 years. Giving a little bit each month is, in some ways, preferable to a large single gift.

What about spending?

Well, this is how we accomplish our remit - both in terms of nurturing and supporting our local community, and bringing our faith to the wider world. Let's look at three examples.

* We paid £90493 to the Diocese last year, but £9925 of that was the final payment for 2009, making a contribution of £80568. This paid our Parish Share in full.

For that money we got Andy and Stephanie - worth every Penny. Indeed, we must always remember that our Parish Share contributes to 328 ministers in the Diocese, of which 307 work directly in Parishes. What seems like a large sum of money is brought into focus by the fact that each one of those incumbent ministers is at a total cost of just over £41000.

That means that, at the least, our Parish Share is helping other, poorer, Parishes spread the Word of God their people, and keep their people together.

Does that deliver our responsibility? Yes it does.

*We also gave £6061.22 to our supported Charities last year, and will add just over a further £1000 when the accounts are finalised. Let's just look at some highlights around what our money has supported in 2010.

From Crosslinks, and the Ounate-Lara family, serving the Lord in Togo - who have increased the cell groups serving the community, brought 20 people to Christ, and grown the Youth Group.

From SASRA we learn that EVERY serving soldier below the rank of Sergeant in the Guards Division, the Infantry of the Line, and the Paras have been given a copy of the New Testament and Psalms, or spoken to personally about the Lord Jesus Christ. That's every single one.

St Michael's Junior School appointed a new Head - who is also an ordained minister - replaced their boiler system, and expanded their library, as well as redecorating two classrooms.

The Bible Society supplied 55 UK prisons with over 5,000 bibles. They launched websites to assist a variety of groups, including politicians and RE Teachers. They printed 1,282 million Bibles in China.

The Leprosy Mission has treated 4,700 new cases of leprosy; provided 3,050 mobility aids, corrective surgery for about 200 people with disabilities or eye conditions, AND supplied primary medical services through their missions for 1.85 million people living below the poverty line.

Without our help, and people like us, many of these things would not happen.

Do these projects support our purpose? They do.

I left the Church in Poland aside, because we should take it as inspiration for our own Big Project. What did it do? It kept going and growing.

The Church in Pyotr'kow had a huge vision - to build a church, children's centre, old peoples flats and to support their community. Are they finished - no? Are they continuing, after many years - Yes. The vision has not gone, and the work continues.

We need to have that vision, that resolve, and to remember that however poor we think we are, they have been poorer.

*The last example I have is our Youth Worker. We paid £5975 in 2010 for Youth Worker Wages - Polly in the first part of the Year, and employing Caroline for the longer term in last quarter.

Has this been worth it? Yes. We just need to look at a Youth Group growing both in numbers, enthusiasm and activity to know this, but we also need to look to the future. I was most impressed with Andrew Hawkins talks a couple of weeks ago. He said that it took 5 to 7 years to get beside people, and bring the Word to them. That is our timescale for Youth and Community work, and we should judge the annual successes on that basis.

Has this supported our mission? Yes it has.

We have spent money in the last year, but we have achieved the results we need. The challenge we have is to grow this effort, in the same way as our Polish brothers and sisters.

The Hymn "Here I am, Lord" has this line: "I will speak My word to them, whom shall I send?"

It's us - and we are rising to the challenge.

A detailed financial statement is available at the back of the church (we've printed 50 copies) and the treasurer will be available for questions on this and future weeks.

Proposed independent examiner: Independent Examiners Ltd, Sovereign Centre, Poplars, Yapton Lane, Walberton, West Sussex, BN18 0AS

Report on the Deanery

The main item of business this year was the creation of "pastoral communities" – groups of parishes supporting one another and sharing gifts. Galleywood is thrilled that in early June it will be joining in a pastoral community with the churches of Moulsham St Luke and Moulsham St John. Meanwhile, we are embarking on a joint project with the Chelmsford Vineyard, Boreham and Meadgate churches to launch an expression of church on the Boreham Car Boot Sale site, and Sue Kitson will shortly be commissioned as our team leader for the project.

Looking Forward to 2011-2012

When we look back on 2011, we'll probably see it is the year where the Big Project (to update the church building) became more precise, with a clear brief to professionals, a clear budget, and a clear fundraising strategy. We're very aware we don't have any of these things yet, but a lot of hard work is going into it, especially from Phil Preston and his Big Project steering group.

In China, 2011 is the year of the Rabbit. The Chinese state is putting tremendous energy into helping its population develop three supposedly rabbit-like qualities, and coincidentally, these are also the qualities I am hoping we develop as a church this year.

1. Sociability.

In 2010, we discovered some big things about what God is calling us to as a whole church. At the beginning of 2011, through SHAPE, we discovered that each of us is unique and has a particular call and set of gifts. For the rest of 2011, we're going to be learning how we fit together. Expect:

- social events to spend time with each other
- a more coherent structure, in which every ministry in the church is carried out by a ministry team
- support for homegroups and their leaders, and other ways of linking church members together
- an emphasis on learning what it means to pray together (because we never really pray apart)
- and the first fruits of our "pastoral community" with St John's and St Luke's churches in Moulsham (and perhaps another local parish too).

2. Gentleness.

Unfortunately one of the things the SHAPE course highlighted was a sense that sometimes in church life people are discouraged from trying to do something new because they're afraid they'll be criticised or attacked for it. "Be patient with me, God hasn't finished with me yet", goes the saying. That certainly goes for St Michael's Church, Galleywood!

3. Humble Affirmation.

"When someone does something good, applaud! You'll make two people happy." – Sam Goldwyn.

Like Paul in his letters, we need to become Christians who are always affirming one another. In the words of Proverbs 11.28, "those who refresh others will themselves be refreshed." For more ideas, I can recommend *Practicing Affirmation* by Sam Crabtree – I think there are some copies on the church bookstall. The blurb on the back from American mega-Pastor John Piper, who bought a copy for every leader in his church, puts it like this:

"Sam's book is a healing balm for cranks, misfits and malcontents who are so full of self that they scarcely see, let alone celebrate, the simple beauties of virtue in others. Or to say it differently, I need this book."

I'm not really sure how this relates to rabbits, but this is not just a nice wish – it is a real objective for the year, and at next year's AGM I intend us to evaluate how well we've done it.

Andy Griffiths, Vicar

10 April 2011