

Parish of Saint Lawrence, Skellingthorpe

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ANNUAL REPORTS AND ACCOUNTS

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

Tuesday 22nd April 2008

Parish Mission Statement

As those called to be God's people in this parish, we seek —

- firstly, to express our relationship with God in Worship, Prayer, and Christian Fellowship, seeking to know our Heavenly Father's blessing;
- secondly, to follow our Commission, to bring the Good News of God's Love for all, through the Saving Death of His Son Jesus on the Cross, to the people we encounter in our lives.

We trust in the Spirit of God to motivate and empower the life and mission of our Church, as we seek in turn to follow God's Word in loving obedience.

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1 Statutory Reports

1.1 Church Electoral Roll (of lay persons in the parish)

The Roll is open to baptised people over 16, who are either regular worshippers with us, or members of the Church of England living in the parish.

Every six years a fresh Church Electoral Roll has to be prepared, and this was last done in 2007. This year an annual revision has been carried out, during March 2008.

Last year's roll stood at 102. Five names have been removed, and eight added, making this year's total 105, including 61 from within the parish, and 44 worshippers from outside. There are two further names to be added during the year as the applicant becomes 16.

A copy of the revised roll is available for inspection in church.

Frances Clarke, Electoral Roll Officer

1.2 Proceedings of the Parochial Church Council

At the beginning of the PCC's year in May, we welcomed Barbara Crichton and John and Ellie White to the Council. Our six meetings a year are well-attended, and receive regular reports on all aspects of church life, including finance, youth and children's work, and church and churchyard maintenance, which are covered elsewhere in this report.

There was an "incident" early in 2007 concerning the upkeep of one grave in the churchyard, which made the local press and TV. The Diocesan guidelines for management of churchyard graves and memorials were a bit vague. As a result, the PCC has agreed some detailed Churchyard regulations, to make the position clear for interested parties.

In June, we welcomed a new activity to church life, as Alison Cooke started up the "Toy Box" Mothers and Toddlers group, which has gone from strength to strength. We revised the list of Missionary support, bought some new hymn books, replaced most of the church PA system, provided the church office with two new computers, and commissioned a new video projection system for church, which has yet to be installed. We also planned the church's presence at the village Gala Day, and continued to support the Potters Village project in Kisoro.

We have been vexed all year by failure of path lighting in the churchyard. It is part of good practice for Child Protection, and Health and Safety, to have good path lighting in the churchyard as people come and go from church after dark. We were also taxed by the problems that arose when some of the church children began to attend an adult home group. We have tried to resolve this by introducing one mixed youth and adult group into our home group structure.

Following a visit by Richard and Frances to the “New Wine” Celebration at Newark, we have tried to “connect” more with this network, (which is more appropriate for us than the “Ground Level” network of New Life churches), and this has resulted in putting on the “Road to Maturity” course, with the help of another “New Wine” church in Nottingham.

As well as managing the practical aspects of church life, the Church Council also shares in overseeing the spiritual aspects of our church, and under the guidance of our two ministers, Richard and Frances, we have introduced a few changes to keep our “spiritual focus” when we meet together Sunday by Sunday.

Richard Billingham, Rector, and PCC Chairman

1.3 Proceedings of the Graffoe Deanery Synod

Graffoe Deanery Synod represents nine groupings of parishes, the Branston Group, the Hykeham Team, the Metheringham Group, Skellingthorpe Group (including Doddington), the Swinderby Group, the Graffoe Group, the Washingborough Group, Waddington Parish, and the Withamside United Parish (the Bassingham Group). The Lay representatives from Saint Lawrence’s are currently Frances Clarke, Andrew Cook and Kingsley Pace. The Synod meets normally three times a year, when members share a time of prayer, consider current issues, and hear news and views from other members.

In **February**, we were visited at Waddington by **Mr Keith Halliday**, from the Diocesan Resources Team, to speak on “**A Generous Church**”, and to offer help from the Resources Team for “balancing the books” in the parish, so that we can engage in mission and growth with more confidence.

Dr David de Verney, ecumenical chaplain to “New Arrival” communities, spoke in **June** to the Synod meeting at Temple Bruer. He spoke in “**A Window on Modern Slavery**”. Migrant workers suffer low wages and high rents, yet do jobs most of us would avoid, and keep our food costs down.

In **October**, our meeting at Skellingthorpe was addressed by **Bishop Tim**, who gave us an overview of the report “**Faithful Communities**” which updated the 1980’s report “Faith in the City”. He introduced the concept of “faith capital” and looked at the great changes in our society since the 1980’s.

We have been asked to revisit our “Deanery Plan” for deploying ministry in the Deanery after 2008. Cluster groups are meeting to talk, including all in licensed ministry, and churchwardens.

In 2008, the Synod will take “Communities” as the theme for its meetings. This year a new Synod will be elected, to take office from May, for three years.

Richard Billinghamurst

Based on notes provided by the Synod Secretary, Jill Wilson.

1.4 Treasurer’s Report

Our total voluntary giving, including appeals for TEAR Fund and the Potters House in Uganda, increased again from the previous year, but only slightly below the rate of inflation.

Once again our giving to mission was over £7,000. Giving to mission at this rate or above, as well as paying all our bills, now requires an income of over £1,000 per week.

During the year 35 church members gave through the Gift Aid scheme, as well as one or two visitors to the church. Fortunately in the recent Budget speech, we have been promised no reduction in the amount we can claim through the Gift Aid scheme, but we still need to increase our level of giving to keep pace with inflation.

New computer equipment, and a replacement sound system and a long-focus video projection system were purchased during the year. These were paid for with money from the “Bungalow” fund.

J R Hill, Honorary Treasurer

1.5 Church Fabric Report

The church appears to be generally in good repair, but there are a few items that require attention, most of which have been in previous years' reports. There are several small panes of broken glass in the North-facing windows and vestry. The gutters and gullies need cleaning out, and the gutters and pipes of the chancel need painting. One slate is missing on the Northern roof slope. The crack in the wall to the top right of the chancel screen and noted in the last report does not appear any worse. The shed requires creosoting and re-felting.

There have been some recent acts of vandalism to church windows, which will no doubt appear in next year's report. Also Andrew Cook has taken over responsibility for the buildings for the future in the latter part of the year.

Hugh Mansford, PCC Buildings Officer

2 PCC Accounts

2.1 Balance Sheet at the year end 31st December 2007

<u>Previous Year</u>	<u>LIABILITIES</u>	
	General Fund	
£850	Balance at 1 st January	£767.88
-£82	<i>less</i> excess of Expenditure over Income	<u>£273.90</u>
£768	Balance at 31 st December	£1,041.78
	Restricted Income Funds	
-£5,323	Howden Memorial Fund	-£2,038.45
£50,286	The Bungalow Fund	<u>£44,146.43</u>
£44,963		£42,107.98
	Restricted Capital Funds	
£2,000	Baxter Memorial Fund	<u>£2,000.00</u>
£2,000		£2,000.00
	Other Funds	
£276	Sundry Creditors	<u>£91.94</u>
£276		£91.94
<u>£48,007</u>	<u>TOTAL FUNDS</u>	<u>£45,241.70</u>
	<u>ASSETS</u>	
	Cash in Bank Accounts	
£80	A&L Girobank Current Account	£111.54
-£382	CAF Current Account	-£1,080.82
£853	CBF Deposit Fund (H)	£544.22
£22,794	CBF Deposit Fund (B)	£22,051.63
£20,000	CBF Fixed Interest Fund ^{Note 1}	£20,000.00
£2,000	CBF Investment Fund (Baxter) ^{Note 2}	<u>£2,000.00</u>
£45,345		£43,626.57
	Other Assets	
£181	Bookstall & Bible Notes stock	£80.13
£2,480	Payments in advance, and debtors	<u>£1,535.00</u>
£2,661		£1,615.13
<u>£48,007</u>	<u>TOTAL ASSETS</u>	<u>£45,241.70</u>

Note 1

The investment in the CBF Fixed Interest securities Fund was valued as follows:

1st January 2007	£19,483.71
31st December 2007	£19,210.81

Note 2

The Baxter Fund investment in the CBF Investment Fund was valued as follows:

1st January 2007	£5,498.36
31st December 2007	£5,636.14

These accounts were approved by the Parochial Church Council on 11th March 2008.

2.2 Income and Expenditure Account, for the year ended 31st December 2007

<u>Previous Year</u>	EXPENDITURE	
£ 7,408	Mission Gifts & Special Appeals	£ 7,259.00
£ 5,853	Special Gift	£ -
£ -	Rector's Discretionary Fund	£ -
<u>£ 13,261</u>		<u>£ 7,259.00</u>
<u>£ 33,676</u>	Diocesan Share	<u>£ 34,518.00</u>
£ 33,676		£ 34,518.00
£ 1,911	Insurance	£ 1,991.09
£ 1,130	Heating & Lighting	£ 984.21
£ 2,474	Clergy Expenses	£ 2,478.11
£ 754	Cost of Services	£ 1,026.64
£ 901	Sundry Repair & Water rates	£ 507.97
£ 1,495	Information Media	£ 1,903.41
£ 490	Stationery & Postage	£ 481.98
£ 154	Pastoral & Instructional Media	£ 279.69
£ 1,212	Young People	£ 1,217.03
£ 51	Presentations and Donations	£ 50.00
£ -	Equipment Purchase	£ -
<u>£ 10,572</u>		<u>£ 10,920.13</u>
£ 57,509	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£ 52,697.13
£ -	Excess Income over Expenditure	£ 273.90
<u>£ 57,509</u>		<u>£ 52,971.03</u>
	INCOME	
£ 33,023	Giving through Gift Aid	£ 31,878.52
£ 10,685	Tax Refund on Gift Aid	£ 11,467.13
£ 1,615	Other Planned Giving	£ 2,252.19
£ 3,456	Cash Collections	£ 3,579.42
£ 474	Wedding and Funeral collections	£ 550.61
£ 1,127	Designated Gifts and Appeals	£ 1,978.00
£ 5,853	Special Collection	£ -
£ 186	Other Donations	£ 343.64
<u>£ 56,419</u>	Total Voluntary Income	<u>£ 52,049.51</u>
£ 272	Wedding & Funeral Fees	£ 176.00
	Bookstall Account	
£ 410	Income	£ 505.29
-£ 192	less: purchases	-£ 415.22
<u>£ 218</u>		<u>£ 90.07</u>
£ 240	Stones Charity & Youth Dividends	£ 259.73
£ 166	Income from the James Baxter Trust	£ 179.51
£ 112	Interest on CAF Bank Account	£ 216.21
<u>£ 518</u>		<u>£ 655.45</u>
£ 57,427	TOTAL INCOME	£ 52,971.03
£ 82	Excess of Expenditure over Income	£ -
<u>£ 57,509</u>		<u>£ 52,971.03</u>

2.3 Missionary and Charity Giving, during the year 2007

<u>Previous Year</u>				
£ 1,666		<u>OVERSEAS RELIEF</u>		
£ -		TEAR Fund	£ 926.00	
		TEAR Fund Zimbabwe Appeal	£1,012.00	
	£ 1,666			£ 1,938.00 26.7%
		<u>OVERSEAS MISSION</u>		
£ 900		South American Miss'y Society	£ 470.00	
£ 300		Missionary Aviation Fellowship	£ 470.00	
£ 900		Open Doors	£ 470.00	
£ 622		Bible Society	£ 470.00	
£ 681		Uganda (CMS)	£1,341.00	
	£ 3,402			£ 3,221.00 44.4%
		<u>HOME RELIEF</u>		
£ 550		Nomad Trust	£ 600.00	
£ 300		St Barnabas Hospice	£ 100.00	
	£ 850			£ 700.00 9.6%
		<u>HOME MISSION</u>		
£ 500		Lincoln Youth for Christ	£ 300.00	
£ 550		Church Pastoral-Aid Society	£ 300.00	
£ 300		London City Mission	£ 300.00	
£ -		Scripture Union	£ 300.00	
£ -		School Foundation Governors	£ 100.00	
£ 84		Women's World Day of Prayer	£ -	
£ -		Evangelical Alliance	£ 80.00	
£ 35		Lincoln Christians in Mission	£ -	
£ 20		Churches Together in Lincoln	£ 20.00	
	£ 1,489			£ 1,400.00 19.3%
	£ 7,408			
		<u>TOTAL GIVEN</u>		£ 7,259.00 100.0%
12.7%	Excluding designated gifts, the giving was 10.5% of the total voluntary income for the year.			
14.6%	Including designated gifts, the giving was 13.9% of the total voluntary income for the year.			

2.4 Howden Memorial Fund, for the year ended 31st December 2007

<u>Previous Year</u>			
-£6,606		Opening Balance of Fund at 1st January	-£5,323.33
		<u>Add</u> Income during year	
		Dividends received	
		- Equity Investment fund for	
£2,477		Charities	£2,757.38
£1,514		- CBF Investment Fund	£1,636.41
£0		War Graves Commission	£0.00
£386		Churchyard Fees	£646.00
		Interest from CBF deposit	
£16		fund	£54.68
£4,392		<u>TOTAL INCOME</u>	+ £5,094.47
		<u>Less</u> Expenditure during year	
£138		Church Maintenance	£0.00
£1,500		Churchyard maintenance	£1,229.59
		<u>less:</u> Parish Council	
-£200		payment	-£250.00
£0		<u>less:</u> Donation	-£200.00
£130		Howden grave maintenance	£0.00
£0		Baxter grave maintenance	£0.00
		New grass cutter	£1,030.00
£1,541		Other expenditure (last year)	£0.00
-£3,109		<u>TOTAL OUTGO</u>	-£1,809.59
-£5,323		Closing balance of Fund at 31st December	-£2,038.45

2.5 The "Bungalow" Fund, for the year ended 31st December 2007

<u>Previous Year</u>			
£49,477		Opening Balance of Fund at 1st January	£50,286.23
		<u>Add</u> Income during year	
		Interest from CBF deposit fund	£1,081.76
£1,082		Interest from CBF Securities fund	£1,276.02
£1,014		<u>TOTAL INCOME</u>	£2,357.78
£2,095		<u>Less</u> Expenditure during year	
		Administrator	£1,306.50
£1,286		Office computers	£2,293.05
		Sound & projection systems	£4,898.03
-£1,286		<u>TOTAL OUTGO</u>	-£8,497.58
£50,286		Closing balance of Fund at 31st December	£44,146.43

3 Mission and Outreach Activity

3.1 The “Alpha” Course

As planned, we held an Autumn *Alpha* course. We tried a different format this time, holding it in someone’s home (Andrew and Alison Cook’s), rather than at church, hoping the less formal environment might attract different people. The course started with eight members, of whom two did not complete. Although course members benefitted from the sessions together, sadly no new members were added to our congregation.

Please continue to pray for our outreach work and our follow-up work with new members.

Richard, Rector

3.2 Hope08

There is a national initiative this year, for Christians up and down the country to show their communities, by acts of social care, that God loves them.

We are putting a programme together, starting with some of our young people helping out at a local nursing home with gardening help, and including our Youth outreach, Coffee Cup, toy Box etc. Sharon Morrell and our church “youth” are heading this up.

Watch the press for news of other activity in the area.

Richard, Rector

3.3 Coffee Cup

Coffee Cup has been open every Tuesday morning from 10 until 12, and on the third Tuesday each month at the Methodist Church Hall from 10.30 until 12. Small gatherings have met for friendly chat and biscuits, with an occasional busy morning.

We have been blessed to have some elderly residents from the White Gables Nursing Home visit us whilst they had transport, and under the care of their new activities organiser.

It has been encouraging that we are getting friendly links with members of the Methodist Church and other unexpected visitors that come in for a random variety of reasons.

Coffee Cup has been a good place to talk and to share friendship.

SallyAnn Constable

3.4 Toy Box

This new toddler group began on Thursday 7th June 2007 with four parents from the community attending with their children. Since then it has grown considerably, with numbers as high as 15 adults with their children, although most weeks numbers average around twelve. (There are about 25 registered in total). We meet between 10.30 and 12 noon, and provide free refreshments, although donations are always received.

The adults always enjoy a good chat in a warm and friendly atmosphere, whilst the children have fun playing with the many toys and taking part in craft activities (which try to incorporate a biblical theme, such as Noah's Ark, etc). At Christmas we had a party with food, drink, music and games such as "pass the parcel" which everyone seemed to enjoy. A number of the siblings from this group attended the Christmas Fun Club which was held in church in December, and one or two also came to the Christingle service and the Carol service, which was very encouraging.

I would like to thank members of the congregation who have supported this venture over the last few months and ask for your continued prayer for the ongoing growth of this group.

Alison Cook

3.5 Wednesday Youth Club

Our Wednesday Youth Club for the "unattached" young people of the village continues to meet. Between 15 and 30 young people come to us between 7 and 9.30 for a safe and wholesome environment, with a committed team of regular youth workers. The young people come not just from the village, but from Birchwood, Doddington Park, and even from Hykeham and beyond, and are aged from 13 to 20.

The Council-run clubs on Monday and Thursday continue to suffer difficulties, mainly due to staffing shortages. We have good links with

them, but cannot quite keep up with the staff changes. Andrew and Richard are also actively involved in the management of the premises, working with other trustees on the Youth Centre Committee.

We are still looking for ways that we can share not just our love, but our faith also, with this very needy group of people. We have been encouraged recently by demonstrations of “respect” for us by some of the young people; so perhaps, very slowly, we are getting somewhere.

Please pray for God’s blessing and protection over what we are doing.

Richard, Helen, Andrew, Suzie, Graham, Sharon and Simon

3.6 Other Mission Plans

We continue with the Prayer boxes around the village. We invite friends to occasional social events, and we are reaching out through Toy Box and Coffee Cup. We have an ongoing rolling *Alpha* programme. And we are getting involved in the Hope08 programme. All these are reported elsewhere in this document.

Our mission statement makes it clear that our coming together as a church is part of the process by which we take the gospel message out to the world. Without mission, our worship and fellowship is just selfish. However, our mission activity continues to be “hopeful” rather than “effective”. But never give up.

Richard, Rector

4 Midweek Activity

4.1 Monday Night Prayer Meeting

We meet almost every Monday night at 7.30 pm, only missing meetings at Easter and Christmas. We start with a little chat to bring ourselves up to date with prayer needs, and then we ask God to lead and guide us in our prayers. We pray for all aspects of the church, the world events and personal requests and anything that comes to us from the Prayer Boxes in the village. We have been privileged to see many answers to prayer and we always feel uplifted as we go home. Our meetings are totally confidential. At present we have 2 – 5 people who come regularly, but we would love to have more join us; so if you feel God may be calling you to this ministry (and it is the powerhouse of the church), please come and join us.

IN ALL THINGS GOD HAS THE GLORY!

Jacky Pace

4.2 Home Group R – Terry Rimen’s Group

Our group seem to have enjoyed the last year and have been supportive of me and of each other. The recent Sermon on the Mount study we found to be very challenging, encouraging us to live Christian rather than “churchy” lives; i.e. to be wary of becoming a self righteous huddle and thereby missing the point. As usual we are most grateful to Pat and Tony and the warm hospitality they provide.

Terry Rimen

4.3 Home Group S – Graham and Sharon Morrell’s Group

During the past year we have studied the prescribed material, but after Easter also used a Spring Harvest video on Philippians. The Sermon on the Mount dominated the rest of the year and by way of further encouragement some of us have been reading “The Purpose Driven Life” by Rick Warren, which we discussed after the Bible Study. This also taught us many things about our journey on the Christian life and many of us found it very helpful.

We were joined in September by two more teenagers, making our group possibly the youngest by average age – especially since Charles left!

These girls have been a refreshing addition to us and given us fresh insight into spiritual things from their perspective. Their prayers have also been a great encouragement.

Graham and Sharon Morrell

4.4 Home Group T – Jacky’s Group

We have continued to meet at Shelia and Brian Wray’s home. They have always made us very comfortable with a warm drink and biscuits on arrival. I took over leadership of the group when Teresa’s other commitments made it difficult for her to continue as leader. The latest study Sermon on the Mount has proved the best study of the year and I hope we all learnt something from it. Brian and Sheila are moving away soon, so I would like to say a big thank you from all of us who have enjoyed their hospitality over the last couple of years or so, and wish them well in their new home. We look forward to the new study and new groups after Easter.

Jacky Pace

4.5 Home Group X - Non Home-Group Members

No report has been received.

4.6 The Men’s Group

The group has had a programme of activities during the year, including some family activities, organised by Simon Brown and Derek Edge, but no report has been received.

5 Church Young People and Children's Work

5.1 Sparklers and Crèche (0's to 4's)

Another year has flown past in the busy life of the crèche. We give thanks to the Lord for the safe delivery of our two youngest church members, Harry and Michael, who have boosted our numbers up to seven. We have continued to meet during term time to share a time of free play and craft activities, appropriate to the age and stage of development of the children. It has been a real joy to be able to spend time with these young people and to watch them grow in God's family. Many thanks to everyone who has helped us in the crèche throughout the past year.

Amanda Allam, Carole Marlowe, Sally Ann Constable

5.2 Sunday Club (5's – 11's)

Sunday Club now caters for the children of Primary school age, from 5 to 11 and we meet in the school hall. I have mainly taught this group on my own during this year with help from Simon, Elaine, Susanne and Emma. We welcomed two new members in September, James and Deborah, and now sometimes can have as many as twelve children enthusiastically taking part in re-creating bible stories, games, craft, videos, and prayers. One really popular activity took place on the week when we were discussing "FAIR TRADE" which involved testing chocolate from different sources. We have had to repeat this on several occasions by special request!

We have been using the Roots material based on the Lectionary. Our weekly prayer time is amazing, encouraging and a great blessing to me, the children are encouraged to pray for each other and the needs of the world during the session.

Thank you once again to the faithful and committed helpers and of course thank you to the children with whom it has been a privilege to be able to share our love of Jesus.

Christine Billingham

5.3 Sunday Morning Youth Group (11's to 17's)

This group continues to grow from strength to strength, and since September we have had a change in material from Roots and used the CYFA/CPAS material on the theme of Discipleship. This focussed on characters from both Old and New Testaments who may take their place as heroes of the Christian faith, i.e. Rahab, Deborah, David, Esther, the Samaritan Woman, Mary Magdalene and Stephen. We are currently dipping into 1 Corinthians, which coincidentally the soon-to-be-formed Youth Home-group will be studying alongside the adults.

As well as good Bible-based teaching, we have learned new songs and encouraged one another through prayer - especially through the Prayer Night and sleepover last November. This was a particular highlight in the church year and brought about a sense of closeness. Several teenagers also helped on the two Saturdays of the Children's Fun Club in December.

The second Youth Service in February this year was another highlight which they took themselves and focused on the theme "Just like Jesus", which emphasised not only their many gifts and talents but also their love for Jesus. They continue to inspire us as leaders.

Sharon & Graham Morrell

5.4 Saturday Children's Fun Clubs

On two Saturdays in December, we held some all-day Fun Clubs, on the theme of "The Real Christmas", in which, amidst a context of fun and activity, we tried to put over the true meaning of Christmas.

52 primary school age children enrolled, with up to 40 present at each session, mostly from outside our normal church families. And they left wanting more.

Well done, Christine and the team, for an important piece of work.

Richard, Rector

5.5 Children's Prayer Club

The Children's Prayer Club met a few times earlier in the year, but owing to a change in church membership no longer meets.

If anyone feels that maybe God is calling them to take up this important work, please talk with Richard and Frances.

Richard, Rector

5.6 Children's Presentations

Throughout the year we keep a register of children's attendance and present them with a book when they reach a certain figure. We start this from their first visit to Saint Lawrence's and continue until their sixteenth birthday. Younger children receive a gift every 25 attendances and the older ones every 50 attendances. We hope the children enjoy these biblical books or gifts and are encouraged in their Christian walk.

Amanda Allam

5.7 Sunday Night Young People (CYF at Moorland Park)

We have had another fun-filled year with this group of young Christians who are at different stages in their walk with God. About nine or ten of our young people meet at Moorland Methodist Church on a Sunday evening between 7.15 and 9pm, with teens from a couple of other churches, for themed bible study and games. This group also caters for a couple of teenagers linked to the church who feel they don't fit in with the other teen activities that we provide. We have had a teenager from an un-churched family join this group who has made new friends.

This year we have completed the Emmaus course, and looked at the book of Philippians using "A Life Worth Living" and parts of the Youth Worker magazine as a framework. This group have lead a youth service at Moorland's and supported other youth groups in Lincoln in the same way, as well as attending the "Live" service put on for teens in the Lincoln area by Lincoln Youth for Christ.

Some of this group have had lots of fun mixing with other teens from various churches, taking part in a sports marathon around Lincoln.

Andrew Cook

5.8 Lincoln Youth for Christ

The young people of the church have continued to meet on the second Friday of each month, from 7.30 to 9 o'clock. Clara from LYFC has returned to lead another year's fun and guidance.

Fun has included a fashion parade, with teams preparing a model to walk the cat-walk in a newspaper outfit, and guidance has included an evening where the youngsters shared some of their fears, and Clara talked frankly about how she had overcome some of her own.

We have enjoyed the company of a group from Swinderby on occasions, and the youngsters have always felt free to bring friends and visitors who are not regular attenders of Saint Lawrence's Church.

These evenings had been a safe, fun and uplifting place for young people to be.

SallyAnn Constable and Sally Turner

6 Other Church Links

6.1 Skellingthorpe Methodist Church

We continue to share the Tuesday "Coffee Cup" one Tuesday a month. We work together with Sunday night youth work, and the Women's World Day of Prayer, and we are looking forward, hopefully, to showing a united front to the village through the Hope 08 project.

Richard, Rector

6.2 Women's World Day of Prayer

The annual service returned to the village again this year, after last year's excursion to the Cathedral. The service was held in the Methodist Chapel in March, with contributions from both churches in the village.

6.3 Kisoro, Uganda Trip follow up

At the beginning of the year, back in January 2007, Graham and Sharon and Christine made a trip to the Potter's House project, Kisoro, in Uganda. This was reported in last year's reports.

When we returned, we prepared at church a typical Ugandan meal with lots of beans, cabbage and a little meat and showed some slides of our visit. The money made on this occasion was sent to Jenny Green to buy mugs and plates for the youth camp and other diocesan events.

£100 was made at the village Gala with "lucky dip", decorating cakes, and games, which was sent to support the work of the Potter's Village.

In September, a calendar was produced for 2008, with a picture of the Kisoro children each month. The money raised was also sent to the Potter's Village. Graham and Sharon have organised the University sponsorship for Peace.

Many thanks for all the prayers and continuing support for the Potter's Village project.

Christine Billingham

7 Services to the Congregation

7.1 Parish Office

The Parish Office continues to be a very busy place with the weekly notices sheets, Sunday sheets, home group material, posters, leaflets, letters, photocopying, quarterly rotas and annual reports written and processed. We get through a lot of paper and stationery, so it involves regular trips to Staples to stock up on supplies. Particularly this past year, we have designed and produced a variety of leaflets and posters involving our outreach projects.

Some work is also done for the Parish of Doddington.

Frances Clarke, Parish Administrator

7.2 Sunday Sidesmen

I would like to say a big thank you to all those who have assisted me during the past year; in particular to the Sidesmen and assistant wardens for looking after the books and the welcome at Sunday morning services. One of the Sidesmen usually assists the duty warden also to count the collection after the service, before it is handed over to the Treasurer for banking, and this help is much appreciated. I would like to thank also Tony and Pat Hay for their work preparing the Communion table, and clearing it up after the service.

Kingsley Pace, Churchwarden

7.3 Prayer Circle

The Prayer Circle continues its unseen ministry. Urgent requests for prayer are passed around the circle by telephone, within a very short time, and members pray immediately for the concerns that have been referred. It is completely confidential to the members of the circle and the Rector. Any member of the congregation who has an urgent prayer need is encouraged to contact the prayer circle, but please keep the message simple and concise, so it can be passed on accurately. There is an information leaflet in church, with a list of the current members, available for contact.

Richard, the Rector

7.4 Music Group

The Music Group continues to provide music for worship at Saint Lawrence's. We try to meet for practice once a month, although sometimes, due to work commitments this is not possible.

This year has seen Kimberley join us occasionally on the piano, accompanying us about once a month. This means we now have three pianists in the group (quite a luxury!) who play on a rota. They all have very individual styles, which is good for the rest of us, as it keeps us on our toes!

Playing a musical instrument can be great fun, and we in the music group have the added blessing of being able to worship God in a unique way, giving our God-given talents in an offering back to hm. Wow!!

I would like to thank everyone in the group for their commitment during the past year.

Teresa Garrod, Music Group co-ordinator

7.5 Puppet Ministry

The puppets have made their appearance on special occasions during the year, and at the Children's Fun Club in December.

Thanks to the various puppeteers, adult and teenage, for their work. It is not as easy as it looks.

7.6 Coffee Rota

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my little band of loyal coffee-makers. I think the rota has run smoothly with everyone co-operating when rota changes need to be made. I would like to thank everyone who has stepped in to help out for one reason or another when we have had a "gap" in the rota. At present we run on a five-weekly rota, but of course the more we have helping, the less often our turn comes round, so all offers of help will be gratefully accepted.

Jacky Pace

7.7 Church Cleaning

Currently, the church is cleaned fortnightly (two people per team). We urgently need more people for this rota so if you could give an hour or two each every now and again this would ease the work on the current

teams. We have planned a church cleaning day on Saturday 19th April to give the building a much needed Spring clean! Please come and help.

Frances Clarke

7.8 Flower Arranging

Sally Ann continues to bring inspiring ideas for interpreting our relationship with God through flowers to celebrate our church festivals throughout the year. This always a very special time for those involved, including the ladies who, though not church members, contribute so willingly and enthusiastically to these events. If you love flowers and would like to come along, please do so. Many thanks to those who donate so generously to the Church Flower Fund.

7.9 Social Activity

We do not have a formal Social Committee, but the organisers of the Men's activities planned several family events during the year, including a long walk, and a very long walk, and most of the events took place.

7.10 "Dorcas" Ministry

This ministry involves sending cards and/flowers to those who are ill and providing the same for those who are celebrating special occasions. Flowers and cards were sent when the newest member of our fellowship arrived – Harry and Michael. The ministry has provided cards for a few members who celebrated their big "0" birthdays. I hope I will now find more time to visit when and where there is a need. This ministry is only as good as the information we receive, so if you know of anyone who would benefit, please let me or one of the Leadership know.

Jacky Pace

7.11 Transport Rota

The four drivers on the rota continued to pick up our two passengers who are unable to get to church independently. If anybody else needs help getting to church, please contact me. We are happy to offer assistance with transport to church for people from within the parish, and to a few others who have worshipped with us for many years.

Julian Hill

7.12 Bible Study Notes

Sadly since 18th February, the SPCK shop that supplied the study notes has not re-opened. Thankfully The Unicorn Bookshop in Central Market, Sincil Street will supply our study notes. We have a steady number taking notes, mainly Every day with Jesus” with a few others. If you would like sample notes there are some at the back of church – just help yourself, otherwise please ask me. reading god’s word is an essential part of our Christian life.

If you are interested in trying some out, or placing a regular order, please contact Mel on 567714.

7.13 Bookstall and Lending Library

Having taken over the bookstall reins from Caroline Brown in September, we sadly saw not one but both of our suppliers (Advance Book Shop and SPCK) go out of business. However, in spite of this, we have continued to try and stock a wide range of books to cater for all ages and interests.

This was rewarded by an increased level of book purchases over the Christmas period, and some significant uptake of sale items in January and February.

Through the new book supplier, Unicorn Tree Books in the indoor market off Sincil Street, we will carry on supporting key events in the church’s calendar, and responding to the needs of church members.

Sara Wright

7.14 Mission Secretary

In June last year we had a visit from the SAMS missionary link, Ian Meldrum, from South America who was home on furlough. This March we had a visit from Paul Winter from London City Mission, who talked about his work amongst the homeless and travellers of London. Otherwise it has been a quiet year on the mission front.

Sharon Morrell

8 Leadership Team Reports

8.1 Reader

The routine of church life continues – there have been some encouragements and some discouragements, but always the awareness of God’s love and guidance.

One of the greatest encouragements this past year has been to see the young people in church putting together their own Youth Services, and to see many of their friends attending, hearing about Jesus and hopefully eager to hear more and even to meet with Him themselves. The Night of Prayer in November was also a wonderful evening; we have some great “pray-ers” among us and I was personally blessed through them that night.

It is good to see that our monthly Prayer for Healing and Wholeness continues to bless members of the fellowship – perhaps we should have it twice a month? The “Road to Maturity” course, which we discovered at New Wine last year, took a few months to arrange, but for those who attended it was well worth it. We will run it again in the not too distant future.

I have attended some “Continued Ministerial Education” days in the Diocese – one on healing services, on Bereavement and a (compulsory) seminar on Responsibility for Children and Vulnerable Adults. This reminded us that we live in a very different world from just twenty years ago, and we now have to be very mindful of our dealings with vulnerable groups if we are to stay within Diocesan guidelines and even within the law.

There continue to be regular Clergy and Readers’ meetings as we seek to find ways of being church in the 21st century – it is not easy! We look to find ways of sharing ideas and resources across the Deanery (Alpha, Confirmation courses, Road to Maturity, etc), but people are very reluctant to leave their own parish and venture in to another for any reason. I have recently begun attending an Evangelical Clergy and Readers’ group in the south of the diocese. It’s good to meet others from the same tradition who stretch my thinking and broaden my experience.

I continue with funeral ministry, in church and at the crematorium, and this summer I will be conducting my first blessing of a married couple at St Peter's Doddington.

At this Easter time I am reminded of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane when he asked the few who were with Him to "Watch and pray". As we look to see where God is leading us in the next year, this would be a good place to start for each one of us, that we may all grow in the love and grace of Jesus.

Frances Clarke

8.2 Rector

Our Mission Statement is, in short, to be blessed, and to be a blessing. I think it is safe to say that we have fulfilled the first part. A faithful congregation meets at Saint Lawrence's week by week, as it has for hundreds of years, to meet together as God's people, to hear God's word and be moved by God's Spirit, and to respond in joyful worship and obedience. We do that, and so week by week we are touched by God, and we know his blessing.

When people come into our church building for the first time, often, after an initial brief gasp, people make some remark that indicates that they feel it is a holy place. Saint Lawrence's Church is a place where God's people meet to pray and worship. And you can tell.

But are we a blessing? We are called to take our faith out into a hostile world, and by our words and manner of life, to challenge the strangle-hold Satan has on our world, and to challenge others to draw close and to meet with God. To be that challenge is our daily call, as the people of God; this is something every individual Christian has to work out for himself or herself. Church can prepare you and motivate you. It cannot do its mission without you. So at this time of year, when we focus on Jesus on the cross, and ponder our response, I invite you to look at yourself and ask "Can I do more to spread the love of God among those I meet day by day?" We can always do more.

And are we a blessing to one another? We should be praying for one another, openly and spontaneously, as we discern each other's needs. This also is a ministry for every member of God's church. It is something perhaps that we need to grow back into. It requires a confidence that

comes from our own bible study and prayer time. And every one of us needs this ministry from those amongst whom God has placed us.

The wider church in the Anglican Communion sometimes seems to have lost its way, and lost its message. We have not. God loves you, and he wants you to know. Jesus died for you, and he wants you to respond. God reaches out with his Spirit to bless us, and through us to bless others. He calls us to walk in the power of his Spirit step by step through our lives, every day, every encounter.

Let this awareness of the place of God in our lives permeate the whole of your being. And so may our world, or at least the little bit that we touch, become transformed into the Kingdom of God.

Richard Billinghamurst

8.3 Confirmations and Baptisms, etc

As well as preparing people for Confirmation by the Bishop, we also do a range of “initiation” services as occasion demands. We offer infant baptism (or dedication) for new tiny members of the congregation. We arrange immersion baptisms as needed (and sometimes, reaffirmation of baptism vows with water), often around the time of a confirmation service.

The fact that every year we have a number of baptisms, reaffirmations and confirmations is a welcome indicator that we have growth in the congregation, as well as people being added from time to time. This is a part of our ministry (quite time-consuming in the preparation) that we both take very seriously. And it is most rewarding.

This might be a good place to remind ourselves, that although we welcome Christians from many traditions and other denominations into our worshipping fellowship, those who serve on our Church Council need to be fully admitted communicant members of their denomination, and to go further (e.g. Deanery Synod, or any sort of accredited ministry) you need to be a confirmed member of the Church of England. If anyone needs to discuss this, please talk to Richard.

Richard and Frances.

9 Annual Meeting and Elections

9.1 Choosing of Churchwardens

Two to be chosen every year. They may serve for a maximum of six years unless the Annual meeting resolves otherwise, and then must stand down for at least one year. Churchwardens must be at least 21 years old and must worship at the Parish Church, or reside in the Parish. Signed nomination forms and declarations have to be in before the meeting. Nominations for Churchwarden also need the approval of the Rector.

Currently: Frances Clarke and Kingsley Pace.

9.2 Choosing of Sidesmen

These are chosen each year, any number, to assist the churchwardens with door duty, and to keep order in church during times of worship. If anyone on the Church Electoral Roll wishes to be added to the list of Sidesmen, please do volunteer; see the churchwardens before the Annual Meeting.

Present list (14): Simon Brown, Colin Clarke, Pam Connock, Alison Cook, Andrew Cook, Julie Haw, Julian Hill, Hugh Mansford, Graham Morrell, Sharon Morrell, Norma Sharpe, John White, Ellie White, Enid Wormald;

and vergers (2): Tony Hay and Pat Hay.

9.3 Deanery Synod Election

Three members are elected each three years. Candidates must be at least 18 years old. This year we elect three members to serve until 2011.

Currently: Frances Clarke, Andrew Cook and Kingsley Pace.

9.4 Parochial Church Council Elections

15 members are elected to serve for up to three years, one third retiring each year. Candidates must have been on the Church Electoral Roll for at least six months.

Currently elected in 2007 (5)

Helen Beel, Barbara Crichton, Graham Morrell, Ellie White, John White.

Currently elected in 2006 (5)

Simon Brown, Bob Clarke, Steve Constable, Teresa Garrod, Julian Hill.

Needing to stand again this year:

Christine Billinghamurst, Sheila Briggs, Jackie Pace.

There are five places to fill.

9.5 Agenda for meetings, Tuesday 22nd April 2008**7.30 pm at Saint Lawrence's Church****ANNUAL MEETING OF PARISHIONERS**

1. Prayer
2. Receive the newly revised Church Electoral Roll
3. Resolve to disapply the 6-year rule for churchwardens
4. Choosing of Churchwardens
5. Choosing of Sidesmen

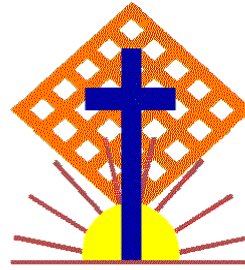
ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

6. Resolution from PCC
to increase the numbers elected to the PCC by 3
7. Election of representatives of the Laity to the PCC –
up to 5 members
8. Receive the reports
 - i. The Proceedings of the Church Council
 - ii. The Financial Affairs of the Parish
and the Examined Accounts for 2007
 - iii. The Fabric, Goods and Ornaments of the Parish Church
 - iv. The Proceedings of the Deanery Synod
9. Appointment of an Independent Examiner of the Accounts
10. Other reports
11. Motions before the Annual Meeting (if any)
12. Any other matters of parochial or general church interest

SHORT PCC MEETING

1. Election of Lay Vice-Chairman, Secretary,
and Standing Committee
2. Election of Senior Sidesmen (called “deputy wardens”)
3. Matters arising from the APCM
4. Other urgent business

Richard Billinghamurst, Rector



Your Parish Church is open

(Lower Church Road, next to the school)

Tuesdays – Coffee Cup

10 am – 12

open for Coffee and chat
all ages welcome



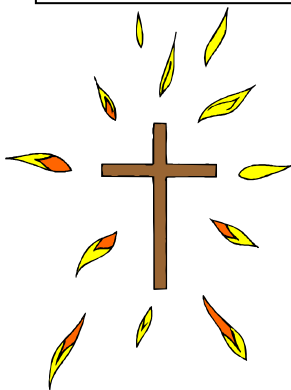
Thursdays in term time – Toy Box

10.30 am – 12

Parent and Toddler Group
Refreshments – no charge

Other times

by appointment
to speak with a member
of the ministry team
(Richard and/or Frances)



Sunday Services

10.15 am and 6.15 pm

Special activities for under 16's
at the morning service

All are welcome

Or enquires to the Rector – Rev Richard Billingham
The Rectory, 50 Lincoln Road, Skellingthorpe – 'phone 682520
(Church web-site – www.skellingthorpe-church.org.uk)