

## Welcome

Welcome to the annual report of the Church of the Good Shepherd. Once again I would like to thank the huge team of people who help keep this parish running, a lot of which goes on quietly behind the scenes and often is unseen by the rest of us. To all those who contribute in whatever way to the life of the church work a big thank you. I am grateful for your support and commitment.

I do hope you enjoy reading the report, and together we can give thanks to God for all that he is doing in this parish. As you read it why not ask Him if there is anything he would like you to do in the church? If there is anything you would like to be involved in just let us know, the names of the co-ordinators of the tasks are in the front of the newsletter, or speak to one of the ministry team.

*Dave Maher*



## Children's Group

We have been very blessed this year. In addition to our regular Sunday sessions, where we have been following the “Roots for Young People” pattern which is based on the Lectionary that we all use in Church every week, we have had the joy of working alongside Anthony in the “Preparation for First Communion” course.

Over the weeks of Lent we have been looking at what we believe and how we relate to God and to each other. Some 15 young people have committed to the course and are following it as we write this report. We are looking forward to sharing in the Lord's Supper with more of our young people when they finish the course.

While we have got your attention ... if, while reading this report, you feel the call to participate in our work with young people we would be delighted to hear from you. There are many levels of help and involvement that are possible and all offers of help would enable us to carry our work with these young people forward. We have found that it is a joy and very educational to be able to share our faith in these sessions, and we have some fun too!

Thank you to Dave and Hazel, Anthony and Wendy and all the ministry team for their support, encouragement and love as well as to Anthony for the First Communion course.

*Alison and John Phillips*

## **Children's Worship Band**

Last year, some of the children said that they would like to form some sort of worship band to help lead the music in the all age services. Since then, a number of the children have been involved in singing or playing instruments at these services. The group is developing in confidence and building a repertoire of more contemporary songs. We would be happy to welcome other young people who enjoy making music to the glory of God.

*Wendy Lees-Smith*



## **Christian Aid**

Christian Aid week in May 2009 was another success with over £1,500 raised for development work and emergency aid, through the following activities: street collection, a quiz night at the Carlton Arms, a choir concert and, of course, the COGS Kids Car Clean. Many thanks to everyone who took part in different ways. Simon and I have decided that this will be our last year organising this; we think it is time for someone else to take over and bring some fresh ideas to the fundraising. If anyone wants to volunteer for this, or just explore what is involved, please speak to us. It isn't very onerous, and there is lots of support from the congregation.

*Clare and Simon Redfern*



## Church Flowers

Have you a flair for flower arranging? Then please come and join our small team of flower arrangers.

For the Christmas and Easter Festivals, many of you come along to decorate the Church, and in beautifying the Church, everyone has a most enjoyable and satisfying time, for which Iris and I are very grateful and thank all those involved.

We are a small independent group who rely on donations to keep flowers in the Church, not only at the Festivals, but all the year round and if you feel able to support us in any way, please speak to Iris or me.

*Jeanne Elsey*



## Church Hall

2009 has been a relatively uneventful year for the Hall. This doesn't mean that there have been no events of course, as we have a full programme of regular user meetings and it's great to report that since last year, the 18<sup>th</sup> Cambridge Scout Troop has been re-established and meets regularly on Thursday evenings. As 2009 was the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Scout Group's foundation, it's good to know that there are still young people out there who want to be Scouts and that, equally, there are still adults willing to give up their precious free time to lead them. Another regular but completely different (is it?) event is the Puppy Training class conducted by members of the Arbury Road vet practice, so if you have an unruly pooch, please contact them, not me!

After many trials and tribulations, most of them endured by Ruth, I think we can now be sure of a reliable heating system (at last!). Literally, a comfort to all users.

As reported last year, the Hall still seems to be the venue of choice for children's parties and bookings are still on the increase. I am regularly approached by organisations wishing to hire the Hall, but there really aren't enough days in the week to accommodate everyone.

My thanks to everyone who has helped to make 2009 another successful year.

*Ruby Leyshon*



## **Church Wardens' Report**

2009-10 has been a good year for the Church of the Good Shepherd. We rejoice in modest but sustained growth in many areas of our life together. We have welcomed a succession of new babies and toddlers into our crèche and been joined by newcomers to the area who have found a welcome, good teaching, good fellowship and inspiring worship among us. There has also been growth in the number of people involved in housegroups, social activities, reaching out to our local community and all the necessary 'chores' that keep us going. Special mention should be made of Anthony and his family. It is hard to believe that they have been with us for less than a year. We also celebrate Liz Collinson's licensing as an Authorised Lay Minister (Social Responsibility).

We are grateful that our buildings, although repairs, heating, utilities and cleaning have all needed attention from wardens and PCC, have caused no major headaches. We look forward to working to implement our Mission Action Plan especially as it relates to our buildings.

On the second page of every NEWSLETTER there is a list of those responsible for different aspects of the life of our church. We give a heartfelt thanks to each of these AND in many cases their UN-named team of helpers and to all who give their time money and prayers to the service of God and community through our church. Terry is especially grateful for the patience and practical help given to a novice warden.

*Henry Disney & Terry Barringer*



## **Fund Raising**

This year we returned to our regular round of fund-raising events throughout the year and I'm happy to report that every event exceeded our expectations for monies raised and that the budget set at the

beginning of the year was achieved and topped! Unfortunately, this will probably mean that Ginni will set us a higher target!

We did put on an different event in 2009 that was reasonably well attended – the Autumn Fayre. This replaced the Summer Fete, which in recent years has attracted fewer people. I'm sure this will take off and become a major attraction in the parish.

For the second year running, we were represented at the Arbury Carnival with two stalls, manned by our stalwart team of volunteers. Again, a very successful enterprise, both for fund and profile raising.

Let's hope that, with the help of our great team of helpers, 2010 will be another successful year for us.

*Ruby Leyshon, Evelyn Walker & Eva Hutson*



## **House Groups**

Over a deep, engaging chat at the pub, David (TV celebrity, motor biking vicar Dave) and I (curly Dave) started to talk about the idea of a sermon series that would tackle different parts of the Bible, and house groups that could follow on with discussions and fellowship. Both agreeing this was a great idea; I was tasked with coming up with the first series of themes and discussions notes for the House Groups to follow. The idea was simple, do a six-week series on Ephesians, with each member of the ministry team tackling one of the topics each Sunday. The existing, and newly launched house groups would then enjoy fellowship and lively discussions around the topic just covered that Sunday. The Ephesians series was a great success with all the ministry team enjoying tackling a topic within a series, and also all the house groups having had wonderful time together, with much laughter and discussion.

This term Dave Britton has put together a series on Isaiah, in consultation with the ministry team. Once again there has been thoughtful and engaging study as the Old Testament has challenged the way in which we think about God. This term we have started recording the sermons and putting the readings and the house group questions in the weekly bulletin so that those unable to go out can still participate. We also started a new house group bringing the total up to five, with approximately 45 members in all.

The house groups have been a great way of getting to know each other better, form a closer sense of church community, and also engage with the Bible in more depth.

*David Oxtoby*



## **The Sunday Lunch Club**

The Sunday Lunch Club continues to meet on the first Sunday of every month, and provides fun and fellowship, as well as a delicious roast meal for Senior Citizens in our local community.

Unfortunately this year we have had to raise the price of a meal to £3.00 to meet rising costs – but it is still excellent value!

Some of the 40 or so folk attending are Good Shepherd members, some belong to other churches, and some have no church affiliation at all.

Celebrations are important and birthdays are always marked by members receiving a card from the club. In April we celebrated one couple's 68<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary with a little extra glass of wine. If any member is ill and unable to attend, they are remembered in our prayers. A special Christmas party lunch was held once again on our December date. We are very grateful to the Good Shepherd choir for coming, as in previous years, to lead us in singing carols which were very much enjoyed, with great audience participation!

At present there are 29 people in the rota of helpers, who serve in teams of six, three times a year, to lay the tables, collect the money (and bookings for next time), give out free raffle tickets, serve the food, take round tea and coffee, WASH UP, and tidy the church hall at the end of the event. They work hard but also enjoy the fellowship and buzz.

Evelyn Dennington is the head chef, responsible for planning the menus, buying the food, and ensuring that it is prepared in accordance with current Health and Safety regulations. She is an incredible lady, who has done such a lot for the club over the years. Finsetta Cummings is another amazing lady who beavers away preparing vegetables, many of which she has grown on her allotment.

They have been joined in the kitchen this year by Pat Marsh, who comes each month to do the heavy duty washing of the pots and pans, and assist

the others in leaving the kitchen absolutely spotless and hygienic for next time. Pat stepped in at short notice when Monica Shipp had to “retire” from the job due to illness. The Club is extremely grateful to Pat for taking over this unsung service.

Monica Shipp had been a stalwart worker at the Club for many years. Everyone appreciated her dedication, and the hard work which she undertook in such a gentle unassuming way. Thank you so much, Monica.

The Sunday Lunch Club is an opportunity for both members and helpers to enjoy an excellent meal, to meet up with old friends, to make new ones, and to share in the life of our local community.

*John and Libby Lamont*



## **Ministry Team**

The ministry team consists of David Maher (Vicar), John Polkinghorne (Honorary Assistant Curate), Linda Dean (Reader), Edmore Moyo (Self Supporting Minister), and Harry Rose (local retired priest). This year we have been delighted to be joined by Anthony Lees-Smith as our Assistant Curate.

Once again the variety of the team has been further enhanced and encouraged by the students we have had from both Westcott and Ridley. Ed Thornly and Tom Glover have been with us from Westcott, both threw themselves into their placements with us, becoming popular as they visited various people across the parish. Dave Britton and David Oxtoby have been our long term Ridley students. Both have been real assets to the life and growth of the Church in their time with us. They significantly contributed to the development of the house groups, and social groups, preaching excellently and helping in the preparation and support of parish life. It was a real joy to celebrate with Dave and Rachel as we welcomed Isaac into the world last year. Sadly, both Dave & David finish their placements this year and our thoughts and prayers go with them as they take up their title posts.

As well as services on Sundays there are the Occasional Offices, (Weddings, Funerals and Baptisms) which have been particularly busy this year, parish visiting, and on a monthly basis we take communion to

four out of the five care homes in the parish. We regularly visit three primary schools, Arbury, Kings Hedges and Orchard Park, and have them come and visit us. This year we have also begun to take assemblies and visit the secondary school, Manor Community College, and we are enjoying getting to know the Head Teacher and the staff.

We have all enjoyed preaching for 'little bit' longer in our sermon series and hope that it has engaged and stimulated you as much as it did us!

The other major initiative this year has been the development of the Church on Orchard Park which is written about elsewhere in this report.

*David Maher*



## **Monday Club**

We are a small group of very friendly and very chatty (mature) ladies who meet most Mondays in the Church Hall between 2.30 and 4.00pm. Sometimes we have a speaker or an entertainment; if there is neither of these we play Bingo and have tea and biscuits. We would be pleased to welcome new members, so why not come along and see what you think?

To give you an idea of what to expect – last year the Monday Club had visits from a WPC and from the Guide Dogs Association (the dog was fantastic!). Age Concern have talked to us and so have Christopher and Janet South. Arbury School Choir's visits are one of the highlights of our year. Sometimes we have a quiz, but most of all we get together and enjoy each other's company.

*Eva Hutson*





## **Music at The Good Shepherd**

During the year the choir has continued to lead the singing of the congregation at the scheduled services – and our congregation sings really well! We also provide an anthem during Communion at the 10am service – there is enormous variety in what we sing and all that matters is that it is good of its kind and relates closely to the theme of the service.

Apart from singing regularly at 10 o'clock we have sung at special services throughout the year – a service of words and music for Holy Week on Palm Sunday evening, a service of remembrance on All Souls' afternoon, and at the Advent and Christmas Carol Services etc. This gives us an opportunity to sing other liturgical music and sometimes there is a chance to sing an anthem which would not fit easily into the regular post-Communion slot. We meet regularly to practice each week (except during August) and know each other's weaknesses and strengths which makes us very supportive of each other. What binds us together is that we are in the choir because we love music and our music is part of the worship we offer to God.

We present two concerts each year which raise money for different charities, alternating local and national good causes and providing an opportunity for choir members and those in the audience to sit and chat together in the Church over the excellent bring and share tea which always follows these concerts. (Very many thanks to the volunteer tea makers!) Again the music is varied, encompassing the Beatles and unaccompanied folksongs! We enjoy, together with The Good Shepherd Players, a Welsh Evening with appropriate music and words, and other events throughout the year. We love singing carols with the Sunday Lunch Club before their Christmas lunch, had a lovely carol evening at Orchard Park School and sang carols round the tree at the Kingsway Flats.

We respond, wherever possible, to invitations from local organisations to provide entertainment – we have visited Havenfield, Harry Scott Court and the St. Raphael Club. We have been invited to sing carols in our local Budgens for the last few years.

One exciting new development this year has been the formation of a youth group. Some of our younger members now lead the Communion hymn at All Age services (while the choir members receive communion) and we are planning for more instrumental involvement in the coming year. Watch this space!

Another pleasure this year has been the opportunity to sing the Psalms in a variety of formats (from Responsorial Psalms to modern songs) as the Gradual Hymn. This has proved popular with the congregation as well as the choir and we are glad that we shall be adopting this pattern in future except during the penitential seasons of Advent and Lent when we shall revert to saying the Psalms.

Our regular members provide us with four part harmony and we benefit from occasional visits from relatives and past members. Do think about joining us. Finally, we particularly thank our congregation for the support they give the choir and the music of the church.

*Dorothy Holliday*



## **Orchard Park**

This year has seen exciting developments in our work on the Orchard Park estate. David's excellent relationship with the school laid the foundation for Anthony's involvement since Erica started there in June. Anthony is now a school governor, takes monthly assemblies, assists with RE lessons and runs a thinking skills club. Edmore Moyo and his family also live on Orchard Park and have become increasingly involved with activities in the community and the church.

In the wider community, we have had involvement with families through baptisms and weddings, and have worked closely with Carly Meagher, the Community Development Officer, on community events such as the carol service, and Finsetta also helped out with gardening tips at the Big Grow in February. We gave a presentation in November to the newly formed Community Council about our work and vision which was well received and we now have a regular slot in the new community newsletter.

In September we began a weekly prayer meeting in one of the school's community rooms, bringing together Christians living on the development who wouldn't otherwise know each other because they are members of different churches. This meeting, led alternately by Edmore and Anthony, now attracts about a dozen Christians from the development.

As a direct result of the prayer and discernment that has gone on at those meetings, the Orchard Park Community Church will start after Easter on Sunday afternoons in the community centre. It is hoped that this will attract many of the Christians who already live on the development as well as their neighbours so that it can become truly representative of the community it serves.

*Anthony Lees-Smith*



## **Parochial Church Council**

It has been another busy year – but what year isn't busy? The PCC and Standing Committee has each met in the Vicarage on alternate months (with December and August off for good behaviour), enjoying the more relaxed atmosphere – and the refreshments!

PCC Officers have remained unchanged this year and we have spent the time progressing the decisions reached in our Mission Action Plan, trying to effect the changes we have agreed on in a way that will benefit all the congregation and spend our money wisely.

We are delighted to see our church growing and it is a very unusual PCC meeting that does not have a list of names to approve as additions to the Electoral Roll.

Special thanks should go to Henry Disney who ends his period as Churchwarden (and PCC Vice Chairman) this year and to Ruby Leyshon and Michael Lovell who are coming to the end of their time on the PCC.

*Ruth Banger*



## **Pastoral Care**

Pastoral care continues to be a large and very important part of our ministry here at the Good Shepherd, and part of this work is undertaken by the Pastoral Team on behalf of the Church. However, this also

happens informally amongst members of the congregation and we greatly value these contacts and rely on them to alert us to people's needs. At the time of writing the team consists of five active members, two of whom are authorized by the Bishop, having completed the Diocesan course on Pastoral Care; they are now ALMs, Authorised Lay Ministers, with the Reader/Licensed Lay Minister as team co-ordinator. We visit those who are ill at home or in hospital, the elderly at home and those who live in Residential Homes in the Parish. We also offer care and support for people who are bereaved.

During the last year we have been developing a new initiative. People seeking Baptism for their children or for themselves are invited by the Vicar to come to our all-age service on the first Sunday of the month, and after the service two members of the Pastoral Team meet with families and assist them with filling in the appropriate forms. Whenever possible the team members will be present at the Baptism and will make a follow-up visit to the family. For the 4 years following their baptism children are invited back to an all-age service at the time of the anniversary and are presented with a card during the service. We hope that this helps people to feel welcomed and encourages them to keep in contact with the church.

The team meets regularly every four to six weeks for training purposes; anything that is discussed at those meetings is treated with total confidentiality.

Being alongside people who are in any kind of need is a way of living out our faith and following in the footsteps of Christ. We believe that through us he exercises his ministry of healing and we see Pastoral Care as our particular part of the Healing Ministry of the Church.

*Linda Dean*



## **Social Awareness**

I was licensed as an Authorised Lay Minister in the field of social awareness in September. Our course had covered many aspects of social awareness and it was rather daunting to know where to begin! However, I am pleased to report that there is a lot going on in the area of social

awareness in our church at the present time. I hasten to add that most of what is afoot is not directly due to my efforts!

In November, together with our other ALMs and church wardens, I attended a talk given by Archbishop John Sentamu. As you may imagine, it was very inspiring and focused on how the churches can reach out into the community. In his inimitable way, the Archbishop reminded us that we can't wait for our community to wander into our church – we must go to them. We must find ways to engage with the community and find out where there is a need.

The very next day, Linda Dean and I set off at an early hour for London to attend a day which dealt with the same subject – reaching out to the community.

It was amazing to be there with over six hundred other people, all with the same desire! Again, the message was clear – find out where there is a need and try to help. Linda and I were very excited as we heard lots of ideas, but we also took note that it was best to do one thing at a time!

Linda and I recently met with Dave Maher to discuss the idea of appointing a family worker who would work with our church to offer help to families who might need it. This is still being discussed, but it is an exciting prospect. Linda and I also mentioned the idea we had brought from the course – “Love Arbury” where a group of churches would get together to provide a Christmas hamper for families who might otherwise not have much at Christmas. We are not sure whether this scheme is already underway here, so we will be investigating, as obviously we don't want to duplicate. Anything we would like to undertake would of course, need to be ratified by the PCC.

We are very grateful to Clare and Simon Redfern, who have been inspiring us to “greenness” by organising some films for us to watch and discuss. As I write this, about twelve of us have met twice – the first time to watch *An Inconvenient Truth* and the second to watch *The Age of Stupid*. We had very thoughtful and interesting discussions after both these films. Dave Maher has been looking at some information from “Eco Congregation”. This also contains a church audit which we can complete to help us know where to start! During our discussions, the idea of solar panels for our church cropped up and we all felt that this would not only help us a church to play our part in conserving the world's resources, but also send a real message to our community that our church is concerned with environmental issues. Of course, as Christians, we all believe that we must take care of the beautiful world that God has given us.

So then, we have a few projects to think about at the moment. Please pray for God's guidance as we try to work out as a church what we should be doing in our community at this time.

*Liz Collinson*



## **Social Events 2009**

We enjoyed a variety of Social Events in 2009, beginning with the annual Shrove Tuesday Supper, which was a "sell-out". Always very popular, though! Additionally, there was a Choir Concert in the Church, and a Carol Service with mulled wine and mince pies. If there are other ideas or occasions to celebrate with an informal get-together this coming year, please let me know and we'll do our best to make it happen.

*Evelyn Walker*



## **Toddler Group**

I run a toddler group on a Friday morning from 9.30-11.30. This group is for anyone who is caring for a child up to school age be you a grandparent, a parent, a carer, or any other you are welcome to come and join us.

The Group is open term time but also sometimes during the school holidays, it is open to any age and we try to provide activities for all.

We provide lots of fun things for the children to do. Along with our toys including animals, bricks, books, cars, trains, and baby toys we also provide an art activity that can be anything from play-do to sticking and glue. We also try to cover all events of the year - Easter, Christmas but also things like Chinese New Year also.

We provide tea and coffee for the carers but also drinks and biscuits for the children with a mix of fruit on and off during the year.

At around 11.00 we ask the children to help tidy up so we can get the ride along toys out - most children are very willing to help with this!!! We also try to include a story and sing time session which the children really enjoy and they love to pick out their favourite songs!!

We also have a Christmas party and a few short services in the church to mark special occasions.

We are a fun group who love to see any new faces!!!

*Claire Duell*



## **Uniformed Organisations**

### **Good Shepherd Rainbows and Brownies.**

We kicked off the year in style with our launch party in September. We were joined by faces from the past, and new prospective members. There was fun, games, singing and of course sausages sizzling! This year is the first centenary of the Girlguiding UK and is full of all sorts of challenges and activities for the girls to take part in.

Both units are taking part in “Adventure 100” which is made up of a series of tasks that get the girls out and about, jumping around, thinking and caring, making and sharing to name but a few. Upon completion they will be presented a special centenary badge.

Brownies have had a very busy year, with an international themed Packed holiday that saw them visiting (in a virtual sense) Australia, USA, Italy and Mystic East. Great fun was had by all and no one was jet-lagged. They’ve also taken part in archery, swimming and made a visit to Castle Hill. Pack Number has reduced over the year – but that’s no too much of a problem, there’s still just over 20 girls, whereas before we were closer to 30! We are also seeing lots more of our girls moving on to Guides which is good news too.

Rainbows continue to have lots of fun at our Tuesday meetings. We spend a great deal of time playing games and making things. We were also very excited to be visited by Philippa Pearson, a local garden designer who has been commissioned by headquarters to design a centenary garden for the RHS Flower Show later this year. The Rainbows made a huge 3D garden full of ideas and things to see which Philippa loved and has taken away to help with her planning! We’ve had a fun evening playing hockey and hula-hooping. As well as also learning

about our senses with having an evening in the dark, and discovering mystery objects in feely bags. Our unit numbers have increased to 15 places, and we've welcomed a new trainee leader who is working on her leadership qualification. As ever the waiting list is open and does welcome girls aged 5 and under – its better to put your name down now and be sure you don't get forgotten later.

Both units have of course continued to play an active role in Parade Services and also helping at church events. At the Autumn Fayre we did a roaring trade at the sausage sizzling stall – which proved much more popular than first thought. At the Christmas Market, we ran the children's craft stall that Alison and John had fully stocked for us!

We will all be attending a massive day out at Newmarket Races in July 2010 – the Guides, Brownies and Rainbows will be taking over the racecourse. Fun, games, crafts, signing and lots more - a fun day to celebrate being part of the world largest organisation for women and girls.

*Pat and Dana Marsh*

## **Good Shepherd Scouts, Cubs and Beavers**

This year has seen good growth for the 18th Cambridge, while celebrating its 40th Birthday this year. With the success of the website as a source of information for parents, kids and leaders we are now running a trial Facebook and YouTube page with plans this year to allow young members to start having an active input across all media. The goal being to build on last year's success of becoming a well known community brand.

We held our first family camp in 2009 with great success at Phasels Wood and we have had near weekly requests by parents for a follow up camp (that is planned for 2011). During the year gap we will be holding a family day to celebrate the group's birthday. We hope to continue growing our strong relationship with parents into 2011 and beyond.

With a successful grant application combined with group funds we were able raise funds to update and modernise our group camping equipment including three new twin pod tents, two day tents, and other essential equipment. This has allowed us to improve the outdoor activities we have on offer for all youth members.

## **Beaver Colony**

The Beaver colony has continued with another strong year. 20 members aged 6-8 are currently enjoying a host of activities, including a trip to the seaside where they were given an opportunity to bury a leader in the sand,



various hikes by day and night, plus a number of themed crafts and games. The Beavers have worked closely with the Cubs during the beginning of the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations by performing a nativity play for parents, friends and family, and participating in the Family camp, which was attended by 40 members of the group at a Hertfordshire campsite in September.

Emma Roberts and Simon Gates continue to lead the colony, though they have been grateful for the assistance of Stef Barker, who is returning part-time after a break from Scouting, and local youth worker Alison Flack. The colony has plans for more sleepovers and outings in the Summer, including a trip to Drayton Manor Theme Park.

## **Cub Pack**

This past year the Cub Pack has gone from strength to strength with between 26-28 young members and a stronger Leadership team. We have introduced new helpers and have welcomed young leaders joining the section. The focus of the year has been 40 years of scouting, looking back at scouting activities of the past. To do this for one term we reintroduced the old arrow badges and produced our own replica of the cub scout badge work book. We even banned all talk and use of any modern technology unless it was around 40 years ago.

The Cubs have enjoyed nights away at both group and district events including a recent trip the Bradfield Park for a weekend of climbing, karting and caving.

## **Scout Troop**

In September 2008 the 18<sup>th</sup> Cambridge Scout Troop was re-established after approximately 30 years of non-existence. It was restarted with just 4 scouts but over the last 18 months has grown to almost 20 who all are relatively young being in the lower age limits of the age range for the section. The troop leadership team has recently undergone some changes and now has a fully committed SL and ASL, a small number of Occasional Helpers and is very well supported by the other leaders and sections within the group.

The troop has been mainly focusing on Scouting Principles and both traditional and modern programme activities such as DIY challenges, pioneering activities, navigation and hiking skills, cooking and wide games. The scouts, in their patrols, have also planned, organised and run troop meetings with assistance and support from the troop leadership team. The troop have recently undertaken a 10+ mile navigation and hiking challenge which included an over night lightweight style camp. All in attendance did very well and enjoyed the event and are now

looking forward to similar events and camps in the future.

*Charles Brown et al.*



## **Vicar's Report**

Last year I wrote about pausing and reflecting, this year has been quite a contrast! Of the five things that the PCC submitted to the Bishop for our five year strategy - we are well on the way to completing four of them.

The monthly family service has continued to grow and we are grateful to Linda, Wendy and Dorothy for developing the children's band, to Tom for the order of service and for the greater involvement of the young people in the worship. Hopefully by the time of the APCM we will have had the new signage fitted. We have tidied up the North door to improve disabled and buggy access and we are in consultation about development of the Creche/office area. We have also been talking with Romsey Mill considering how we can partner together working with families in our community.

This year we have been delighted to welcome Anthony, Wendy, Erica and Hilary to the Church. Anthony was ordained as our curate in the summer, and as many of you have said, it's like he has been here for ever - in a good way! It is great having them here. As well as joining me in the day to day engagement of parish life Anthony has special responsibility for Orchard Park, working alongside Edmore and the team to establish the church there.

This year we have had some memorable social events, particularly the traditional Shrove Tuesday fish and chip supper, as well as some great 'special services', Palm Sunday and the Community Carol concert, to name just two. Once again thank you to all those who made these possible. As I write we are looking forward to a spectacular Easter when 16 of our young people will receive Holy Communion for the first time. Thanks to John, Alison and Anthony for the preparation course that they have been running.

Weddings have been on the increase this year, almost reaching double figures, and Baptisms continue to be popular. It has been great that the baptism families have been joining us on the first Sunday of the month

and now we are inviting them back to celebrate their baptism anniversaries.

We continue to work well with the other churches in the area on combined outreach and worship and have been developing our links with community groups and are look forward to that continuing in 2010.

We have another exciting year ahead, with plenty going on. Let us thank God for all that He has done, for all that He is doing and for all that He is going to do. Do pray, do get involved and do let's have some fun!

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