

**THE PARISH CHURCH
OF
HOLY TRINITY, BIRCHFIELD**

**ANNUAL REPORT
2014-2015**

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
SUNDAY APRIL 19th 2015**

OUR VISION

Holy Trinity, through Jesus Christ, wishes to continue sharing the love of God with others, regardless of age, race, gender or creed. To that end we welcome everyone to Holy Trinity.

HOLY TRINITY OFFICERS 2014-15

VICAR

Revd Canon Eve Pitts

READERS

**Mrs E Christian, Mrs M Grannell
Mrs J Simms, Mr K Rutherford
Mrs E Mitchell (retired)**

CHURCH WARDEN

Mrs C Callender

DEPUTY CHURCH WARDENS

Mrs W Richards

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

**Mrs P Bailey, Mrs M Bartley, Miss S Bartley,
Mrs C Callender, Miss H Cross, Miss J De Costa,
Miss C Harris (Treasurer), Mrs L McKie, Miss L
McPherson, Mr M Odubanjo,
Mrs W Richards, Mr Fitzroy Stewart,
Mrs A Watson (Vice Chair),
Miss M West (Secretary)**

**Readers: Mrs E Christian, Mrs M Grannell, Mrs J Simms,
Mrs E Mitchell (retired)**

FABRIC SUB-COMMITTEE

G Bartley, C Callender, A James

PASTORAL TEAM

E Christian, A Kooner, M Scott, J Simms, M West

SOCIAL AND FUNDRAISING SUB-COMMITTEE

**N Bartlett, M Bartley, H Cross, V Flowers, R Johnson,
L Rhone, W Richards,
K Rutherford, E Samuels, L Thomas, G Winfield**

'INSPIRED GENERATION' LEADERS

**Jennifer Alexander, Siobhan Bartley, Lorna McPherson,
Theo Rutherford, Wendy Walker, James Alexander**

SCHOOL GOVERNORS

A James, H Cross, G Bartley

DEANERY SYNOD

M Bartley (Lay Chair), M Odubanjo, F Stewart

DIOCESAN SYNOD

M Bartley

Figures for	2014	2013	2012
Electoral Roll	115	125	127
Baptisms	10	21	27
Confirmations	0	0	7
Weddings	4	9	6
Funerals in Church	24	19	11
Av Sunday attendance	111	143	166

AGENDA

- 1. Opening prayer**
- 2. Apologies**
- 3. Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting**
- 4. Matters arising**
- 5. Vicar's report**
- 6. Presentation of Annual Reports**
- 7. Treasurer's report**
- 8. Elections and appointments**
 - PCC members**
 - Sidesmen/Women**
 - Deanery Synod**
- 9. Any other business**
- 10. Date and time of next meetings, including PCC**
- 11. Closing prayer and blessing**

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Please note: the Financial Statements were not available when these reports were printed, so they will be issued separately.

VICAR'S REPORT 2015

Well, here we are again five years after my first AGM at Holy Trinity. So, what do I need to say to you all?

First, thanks to those of you have shown willingness to support our church. This small, yet willing and able group of individuals have made a marked difference to the work of our church.

There are many activities which can bring joy to any church; for example, our choir continues to bring harmony and blessing to our worship. It makes all the difference to what could be an otherwise dull service. Our choirmaster, Brian Perry, and mistress, Mary Farrell, do a sterling job.

Our Mothers' Union, a new venture, is very successful thanks to a flourishing group of people with vision and a willingness to work together. The MU is well led, with Veronica Flowers and Pam Bailey as chair and vice-chair, supported by several keen members.

Every vicar needs good lay readers, people they can trust. For many years they have given time and talents to the church. So thank you to Mrs Christian, Mrs Simms, Mrs Grannell and Mr Rutherford.

We have a hard-working Social and Fundraising committee, comprising individuals who have given time and energy to make things happen and bring us together, socially. So thank you to Veronica Flowers, Keith Rutherford, Waveney Richards, Angela Watson and Nell Bartlett for all your hard work.

What are we without young Christians (young Anglicans)? We have been blessed with the willingness and gifts of a wonderful group of people: Theo Rutherford, Jenny Alexander, James Alexander, Wendy Walker and Lorna Said. Thank you all. May the Lord continue to bless you and all our young men, women and children. They are the present and future church.

Thanks go to the Bereavement Committee for their fine work: Elaine Dawkins, Cissilyn Madourie, Thelma Hunte and Ida Smith.

Our Parochial Church Council (PCC) is a busy group of people working for a church with so much promise. All members are called on to live faithful and inspired lives to carry out the business of the church. Some members will step down this year after their three years' service, and by God's grace new members will be welcomed. I am looking forward to our new members.

Many thanks to Angela Watson (Vice-chair) for her hard work over the past three years. We need a new vice-chair. Many thanks, also, to Marcia West, for her splendid contribution as secretary to the PCC.

I have observed there are members of the PCC who regularly fail to attend meetings. If this continues I will ask those people to resign from the PCC. This principle will apply to all groups.

The treasury team (Christine Harris, Eamonn James and Anthony Pitts) are worth their weight in gold as they struggle to pay Holy Trinity's bills with barely enough income.

Our church is beautified by the hands of the flower arrangers, a gifted group of people: Angela Kooner, with the support of Waveney Richards and Angela Watson. Thank you!

Outside the church building we are indebted to Michael Richards for his hard work in cutting the grass.

It is easy to take for granted a clean building when we come every Sunday. We have a faithful, unsung band of people who turn up every Thursday: Mrs Scott, Mrs Nelson, Mrs Anderson, Mrs Nolan, Mrs Callender, and our Sacristan, Mrs James. Many thanks!

Mr James, our faithful Crucifer, prepares our church every Sunday morning. Others to thank are the sidesmen and women, including Mr Colin Douglas, Mrs Mckie and Mr Guy. Their role in greeting people every week is so important. And then we have those who provide tea and coffee after the service: Mrs Greenaway, Miss Forrester and Mr Pitts.

I would like to thank my husband, Anthony, for his constant support with the weekly notice sheet and hall bookings. Thank you, also, to Mrs Scott for her loving support and for her regular cleaning of the church hall, and to Jillian DeCosta, who helps me enormously by doing "Vicar's Hour" every Monday evening.

After all the gratitude to so many, I must move on to the stark reality of our finances. It seems to me there has been a long-term reluctance by many people at Holy Trinity to take seriously the finances of the church. No organisation can function without finance and the financial commitment of its members. Some people's average giving per week is very low. An attitude persists that the Church of England is very rich and will rescue us from our difficulties. We fail to recognise that we have a Christian responsibility to care for the house of God. Our care for God's house shows our honouring our faith and a commitment to the ministry of the church. The Church of England recommends that members give 5% of net earnings to our church (for example, if you take home £1000 a month, you give £50). If we fail to take seriously our financial commitment, then the consequences will be grave.

In all that I have said there is an important principle. As St. Paul says, we are all part of the body of Christ. Some people and groups are the hands or the eyes or the ears or the legs or the tongue – one could go on. The important thing is that we all work together and we all need one another if we are to do God's work.

One person can sing, another can read or speak, another garden, entertain, greet or beautify, administer or do the accounts. We may be different but we all need one another and without one another the job will not get done.

The same goes on beyond just this parish and congregation. Our ministers come to us from outside; we have sent ministers to the wider church, the most recent being Wayne Hamilton. Some of us have been on diocesan courses or have a ministry outside the parish; for example, helping in the cathedral. St. Paul would be pleased at that. But there was something else he was concerned about, and that was that as well as talents, money should be shared. He was always keen that those individuals and groups with

some money should share with those who had not. That's why he had a grand collection among all the churches he had founded, in order to help the hard pressed churches in Jerusalem, who had pioneers in the faith but had fallen on hard times. The same surely applies to us. We at Holy Trinity are called to share within the whole body of Christ, most immediately within Birmingham diocese. We pay into the Common Fund so we can have a vicar and vicarage, together with all sorts of specialised help we can call upon. We in turn are asked to share in the costs of the wider church, including a contribution to the Church in Malawi, whose people have an income less than a tenth of the value of ours. We have received so much. We need to give in return.

And here I must be blunt with you. I know that life is difficult for many of us, but if we want Holy Trinity church to be here for us and future generations, sacrifices must be made in our approach to what we give to God. We cannot continue to rely on income from funerals and the church hall to keep our church running. If we are going to take our membership seriously, we must begin to show that we care.

I want to say 'Thank you' to those individuals who have given towards the Floor Fund. If we don't take pride in our building, then the future is bleak.

It's always sad to lose church members. Sadly, Mr Douglas, Mrs McPherson and Mrs Morrison have died in the last twelve months.

So, as I end I need to say that no vicar can function without a good Church Warden. Cynthia Callender has been a great support to me. May God continue to strengthen and bless her.
Thank God for another year.

Revd Canon Eve Pitts, 14th April 2015

CHURCH WARDEN'S REPORT

To Reverend Eve, Deputy Wardens, Sidespersons, Organist, IG, other groups, the PCC and the Congregation:

I would like to take this opportunity of thanking the congregation for their commitment, support and prayers.

A special thank you to those who help clean the church, and to the sidespersons, I am so grateful to you all.

Thank you to the IG teachers for being inspirational to our IG members; they are certainly going from strength to strength.

Our vicar, Reverend Eve, who has been a dedicated leader.

She works tirelessly around our community. May God continue to bless her.

I am requesting more volunteers to support the church with the cleaning on Thursday mornings, and sidespersons on Sundays. These are on-going requirements throughout the year. Please let me know if you are interested; it will be much appreciated.

The church requires repairs at various times. Currently the roof is leaking and the floor tiles need replacing. We are requesting more donations to carry out these repairs to maintain the upkeep of the church. In order to create more funds we need ideas for fund-raising activities. If you have any suggestions, please let us know. I would like to say a special 'thank you' to the ladies who raised funds from the sale of their baked treats, for their continued efforts in raising money for Holy Trinity.

May the peace of God and the freshness of the Holy spirit rest in our thoughts. I pray for peace, healing, health, happiness, prosperity and joy in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Cynthia Callender, Warden.

April 2015

150th ANNIVERSARY COMMITTEE REPORT

It seems like such a long time ago that the initial plans for the 150th Anniversary celebrations took place. Now we are coming to the end of that period, where we can look at what we have achieved during that period.

The 150th Anniversary Committee began with three members and was left with two by the summer of last year, myself and the tireless Waveney Richards . We did have plenty of support, thankfully, from our warden Cynthia Callender and Angela Watson in organising events so, thank you to them both. In addition to this, we thank Revd Eve for her responsiveness to all the ideas put forward.

In addition to this, a big thank you to all the committees who helped to support and organise events of behalf of the Anniversary Committee, including the Social Committee, Holy Trinity Choir, our Choir Master Brian, Trinity Brotherhood, Gems, Mothers' Union, the Convention Committee, IGG, our Readers, Mrs Simms, Mr Rutherford and Mrs Christian and, of course, our wonderful congregation.

The events organised included: The Sesquicentennial Service and luncheon attended by The Bishop of Aston, Summer Fete, Christmas Fare, 150th Anniversary Ball attended by The Lord Mayor, The New Year's Eve dance and many more. These events could not have happened without the support of the committees.

We still have some events planned to conclude our celebrations, and hope that God continues to bless Holy Trinity events.

Many thanks,

Michelle Grannell,

Lay Reader and Co-ordinator 150th Anniversary Committee

CONVENTION REPORT 2014

The Convention Team of 2014 was represented by Rev Eve, Jackie Rutherford, Marcia West, Veronica Flowers, Jillian De Costa, Wayne Simmonds, Siobhan Bartley and Keith Rutherford.

Last year we had our 2nd Convention. To all intents and purposes the Convention was once again a success.

The opening service on the Friday was attended by a mixture of members from the Church and members from other Churches and the community as a whole. The evening started with Praise and Worship that was supported by a group called Psalms, led by Melanie Higgins and Co. from the Church of God of Prophecy, and of course, Holy Trinity's Praise and Worship Team.

Melanie spent 3 hours over a 3 week period practising and preparing the Praise and Worship team for the opening service.

Music on the evening was provided by an agency called TAUK organised by Omar Rutherford. Both Psalms and TAUK offered their services free of charge. Fr Douglas from St Andrew's Church preached and delivered a wonderful sermon on the theme

Preparing for the Future. A few people from the congregation gave testimonies on their journey through Faith.

The Saturday morning started with breakfast followed by Morning Prayers. This session was well attended and well organised by the Social and Fundraising Team.

The first seminar for the day was led by Pastor Dorothy Rose from Hamstead Road Baptist Church who delivered a two hour seminar on "**Preparing for God's Greater Kingdom**".

The second seminar was on "**Prayer**", led by Michelle Grannell, Jean Simms and Keith Rutherford.

The seminars were brilliant. Although the main speaker was excellent, I was particularly proud of our Readers' seminar. They did an excellent session on ***Prayer***; people were moved to tears during this session!

Mrs Farrell did a fantastic job organising the concert and the choir practice tirelessly. Mrs Farrell organised the programme, printed the tickets and the choir sold the tickets to the value of £600+.

The performers were excellent, and again all free of charge. Wayne Simmonds did an excellent job as compere for the evening. Wayne really got the audience involved in the whole evening. The evening was full of entertainment but more importantly there was togetherness in worship. It was a very spiritual evening in so many ways.

The 150th service was well organised by Michelle Grannell, Waveney Richards, Wayne Simmonds and Angela Watson. This Team did an excellent job in organising and planning the Service for the Sunday. The Lord Mayor, Elect Cllr Mike Leddy and Lady Mayoress Mrs Pauline Leddy both attended, together with past curates including Fr. John Hawkins, and past members of the church, and leaders from other Anglican Churches. Bishop Andrew Watson presided over the service; the speaker was Revd Dr Kate Coleman, Director of Next Leadership.

The Youth Service was planned by Siobhan Bartley with support from the other IG team members. Their programme was well planned and executed, the Youths performed excellently and were supported by rappers Brother AV Henderson, Gap D and Praying Mantis.

The closing service was led by Rev. Canon Eve Pitts. The hymns and service were arranged by Brian Perry. Bishop Reid from the Church of God of Prophecy and members from his congregation also attended this service.

The theme for the weekend was again excellently covered by the speakers, Fr. Douglas, Pastor Rose, Dr Coleman and all those who participated.

THANKS

I would like to thank Rev Eve for giving me/us the opportunity to introduce the Convention Event to our Church congregation and community.

I would like to offer my thanks to the Convention Team for all their hard work, without whom it would not have been possible to put the event on. Thank you to the 150th group, Mrs Farrell, the Choir, the Brotherhood, the Wardens, sidespersons, all helpers, those who prepared the Church for the event, the flower arrangers, Brian the

organist, our Lay Readers, Inspired Generation Leaders, Inspired Generation, Gems, Waveney, Angela, to GEMS for organising the refreshments on the Saturday, to the Social and Fundraising team, Michael Richards, Anthony Pitts and to those unsung heroes and, of course, the PCC for their support. A special thank you to our speakers, Fr. Douglas, Pastor Rose, Dr Coleman, Rappers Brother AV Henderson, Gap D and Praying Mantis, Melanie Higgins from the Church of God of Prophecy, Gavin and the musicians from TAU Agency, and to the dignitaries who made the special effort to attend.

CONCLUSION

All in all it was a very exhausting weekend all round. It was a lot less tiring and a lot less stressful than the first event.

The responsibility for the event was shared more evenly. In the eyes of all who attended, the Convention was well received, well attended and deemed as another successful Convention for Holy Trinity Church, Birchfield.

The theme for the 2014 Event was **“Preparing for the Future..a new beginning, Preparing for God’s Greater Kingdom”**.

The Church is on a journey to change for the greater good of the church and our community. The PCC and the Church will need to decide whether this should include further Conventions and Events and if so the frequency of events.

Thank you

Jackie Rutherford

HOLY TRINITY CHOIR

Last year, the choir had a concert to celebrate the 150th Anniversary. This was very successful thanks to all who supported and helped us. We were helped by our Warden, ushers and the Gems. Thanks to all who came from other churches to join us and also to all the performers who kept us entertained on the night.

The last year has been a sad one for us with three members losing family members. We also lost our brother, Lionel Douglas. May God rest his soul. As choir members, we have a strong faith in Christ and will persevere.

We continue to practise on Thursday evenings in church and would happily welcome new members.

A big thank you to Elaine Weir, our tutor, Brian Perry, our organist, Revd Eve and, as ever, our congregation.

Mary Farrell
Choir Mistress

HOLY TRINITY PASTORAL CARE

The last year has been busy for our team, but we have managed to keep up with our visits, and give assistance to those whose loved ones have died. In April, we all attended our Pastoral Care Away Day at Carrs Lane Church, which was very informative and re-energising. We said goodbye to a few much loved brothers and sisters.

Once more we would like to say that if you need our help or a visit for any reason, please contact any of us in the team.

Jean Simms, Evadney Christian, Mavis Scott, Marcia West, Angela Kooner

CHILD PROTECTION REPORT 2014-2015

I would like to begin this report by saying thank you to Reverend Canon Eve Pitts for her support in following the safeguarding guidelines.

Holy Trinity Church Parish will soon be processing Child Protection paper-work through Holy Trinity Church's nominated Verifier, who will be responsible for applying for Disclosure & Barring Service checks for volunteers and paid workers.

Benefits are:-

- Faster recruitment decisions – the system can reduce overall processing time by at least 5-10 days.
- No postage costs.
- Reduced manual administration saving time and hassle
- Greatly reduced error rates due to self-validating mandatory fields – no forms returned in the post.

The process will involve the applicant completing an online disclosure application form which is forwarded to the Recruiter who verifies the applicant's details. The application is then forwarded to the Disclosure & Barring Service via the Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS). The whole process can take less than one working day to complete.

The DBS will process the form and send either a secure electronic notification if the applicant record is clear or a paper copy if there is information to be disclosed about the applicant. The applicant in both cases would receive a paper copy in the form of a DBS Certificate.

I will forward any additional information (if requested) to the PCC regarding safeguarding guidelines or Verifier role

The Child protection team aims to communicate effectively, to work to a high standard and to develop good practices which make it easier for everyone to follow the Child Protection policies. This will help enable us to protect young people and vulnerable adults.

Child protection team: Reverend Canon Eve Pitts, Angela Watson and Michael Richards.

INSPIRED GENERATION REPORT

The year 2014/2015 has been an eventful year for Inspired Generation.

With each passing year, the group gets older but in this year gone, we said goodbye and gave our best to Samson Odubanjo who became a group leader for the year. Samson has gone on to university to continue his studies. This has left a shortfall in the number of leaders we have for the group and we are now asking for any willing congregation members to step forward to become leaders in Inspired Generation.

We have continued to run Inspired Generation with only 2 teaching groups due to the number of young people in each age range. The younger group being 4-10 year olds and the older group ranging from 11 years old upwards. This is continuing with the aim set out last year to make the groups as inclusive as possible and not isolate younger young people in the smaller groups.

Jennifer Alexander has comfortably adopted primary responsibility for the younger age group with the assistance of Siobhan Bartley and Lorna Said. Throughout the year, the group have been enjoying their lessons with a whole range of reading, creative activities and sometimes homework keeping the young people focused and enthused about being in the group.

The older group is lead by Wendy Walker, Theo Rutherford and James Alexander. This group's teaching is more discussion based to encourage the young people to really think about the lessons and challenge everything.

Lauren McPherson and Matthew Odubanjo of the older group have continued in their roles as non-voting members of the PCC.

Inspired Generation continue to lead Family Service on the first Sunday of every second month. This sees our young people, from both age groups, step forward to do lead the service and do readings and intercessions. Some of our younger group have even started making a

musical contribution to the regular services, playing the drums and tambourines.

A number of the older young people of Inspired Generation have been taking part in the Diocese-run “Urban Disciples” programme. This saw the group link up with neighbouring church, St George's, Newtown and attend workshops and residentials that helped the young people explore what it means to be a disciple but also what it means to be a disciple in an urban setting, like central Birmingham. The programme ran successfully for 2 years and was led by Helen Tomblin (former Bishop's Advisor for Youth Ministry) and Revd. Joycelyn Lewis-Gregory (Bishop's Adviser for Minority Ethnic Anglicans). This year, Inspired Generation went on a weekend residential which was the last for the programme. Urban Disciples has now run its course and has ended but over the 2 years, our group has been very grateful for this programme and the opportunities it has offered our young people.

The diocese is now running a new youth-led programme with a greater focus on social action work in evangelism. The programme is called Mission Academy and is open to all young people across the diocese who want to get involved in making a difference in our communities. One of our young people has attended a meeting but it is early days.

Toward the end of 2015, a number of young people and leaders from Inspired Generation teamed up with other young people from Mission Academy to take part in St. Basil's Big SleepOut – an annual sponsored charity event in which participants sleep in a car park with minimal supplies. This is our 2nd time attending as a group and it particularly challenging this year when the skies opened up and rain hammered down in the night but we all survived. The young people would like to thank everyone who supported this effort and put forward sponsorship money.

In 2014, the group also took part in the church's 2nd convention. The young people had an evening slot to fill on the final day of the convention. The youth programme was very well organised by Siobhan Bartley who arranged a number of well-known external speakers and

performers to take part and make the evening special. The evening also saw performances from both our younger and older Inspired Generation groups. The groups spent months preparing sketches and performances for the evening which came together very well and made it a memorable occasion.

A number of our young people took part in this year's nativity, making it another successful mixed age group performance and showing once again that it is possible for the younger generation to work with their older peers.

We continue to stick to the *Living Stones* teaching books for our Sunday lessons. We have been using these for a number of years now and they have proven to be a useful guide for the young people. These books are no longer in print however, so we may review and consider more updated material next year. One of the things we are considering is acquiring a number of children's Bibles to make the readings easier to break down for our younger group.

We would like to say that if anyone in the congregation is interested in taking up a leading role in Inspired Generation, you will be very welcome and will receive our support. We need more leaders to run the group and help it go from strength to strength.

Inspired Generation would like to thank everyone in the congregation and visitors for all the support this year and all the positive feedback the young people have received. This has had such a positive impact on the group's growth.

God bless, Inspired Generation.

BEREAVEMENT GROUP

Holy Trinity Bereavement Group began on 13th May 2011.

This group was set up to offer support to bereaved members and their families and also to families of anyone whose burial service was taken by Rev Canon Eve Pitts.

We usually meet fortnightly on a Tuesday for discussion and also to plan our yearly All Souls' Service, which usually takes place in November.

The Team consists of 4 members plus Rev Canon Eve: myself Elaine Dawkins, Cissilyn Madourie, Thelma Hunte, and new member Ida Smith.

Elaine Dawkins

SOCIAL AND FUNDRAISING REPORT

Thank you for the support from Social Funding members over the 3 years as Chair.

Special Thank you to my Vice Chair, Nell Bartlett, Secretary, Angela Watson, and members Waveney Richards, Keith Rutherford, Madge Bartley, Helen Cross and Graham Winfield.

We also had guest members supporting us - thanks to Revd Eve, Jackie Rutherford and Jillian De Costa.

Thank you to church members, their families and the community for supporting the events.

We will be happy to continue to help with events until a new team is formed. A suggestion was made for all the groups to take the lead for the event. For example, the Mothers' Union and Gems help with the Valentine's event, the Mothers' Union for Passover, and IG for Mothering Sunday.

Please see the 2014 Diary of church events for a reminder of what was celebrated last year.

God bless you all
Veronica Flowers

Date	Event	Responsible party
January – Thursday 16 th	Social Evening	S&F Team
February – Sunday 16 th	Valentines Celebration	Mother's Union
March – Tuesday 4 th Sunday 30 th	Pancakes Evening Mothering Sunday	IG with assistance from S&F Team IG
April – Thursday 17 th	Maundy Thursday (Passover)	Mothers' Union
May – Friday 16 th - Sunday 18 th	Church Convention	Convention Team, Michelle & Team, S&F Team
June – Saturday 21 st	Summer Fair (family day)	S&F Team
July – Saturday 19 th	Summer Excursion	S&F Team
August	Month free of events	
September – Saturday 27 th	GEMS Hosting of Ball on behalf of Holy Trinity 150 th	GEMS
October – Wednesday 1 st – Friday 31 st Saturday 4 th – Sunday 5 th Monday 6 th	Black History Month (BHM) Harvest Supper Harvest Auction	S&F Team/Congregations input S&F Team (Congregation/HT School/Community input) S&F Team (Congregation/HT School/Community input)
November – Friday 7 th Saturday 29 th	Bonfire Night Winter Fair	Keith Rutherford & IG S&F Team
December – Sunday 14 th Wednesday 31 st	Christmas Lunch New Year's Eve Service New Year's Jamboree	S&F Team S&F Team/Brotherhood

COLOUR GROUPS

We have received reports from four groups.

Red Group – leader: Waveney Richards

Firstly, I would like to thank all members of the Red Group who provided tremendous support throughout the year as well as the church parishioners who supported our fund-raising activities. The Ruby Selections stall, which occurred during the weeks leading up to the winter fayre, raised much need funds for the church. Members of the Red Group contributed items in addition to their time in order to for the stall's functioning. The New Year's raffle was another venture that successfully raised additional funds and was well received by the congregation. In total, the group raised £360 and we hope to continue working together and strengthening our fruitful relationships. With the grace of God, we hope to do more things together in the near future. Thank you all for your generosity and love.

God's Blessings be with you All
Waveney Richards.

Blue Group – leader: Barbara Hamilton

We carried out a raffle towards funding for the Church, which was quite successful.

Trying to arrange a time for us to come together as a group to decide what happens next.

I think everyone is okay with being part of the Blue group. I try to have regular contact with everyone whether at Church or by phone call. *Barbara Hamilton*

Red A Group – leader: Veronica Flowers

The main fundraising involved selling food and drink in the church.

Special Thanks to Kieran and Olivia, £40 was raised.

Thank you to the donation of a Mini Car from my work colleague, Inderjit Shergil. The car raised £100, which was donated to the church funds

Total raised is £140 from the Red A group. Watch this space, we have more items to sell.

Veronica Flowers

Yellow A Group - leader: Christeen Forrester

Christeen reports – That the Group is in constant contact. Whilst some members have been unable to meet, communication is mainly by phone, meeting at Sunday services, Lunch Club and the Prayer group.

Many thanks to all who have contributed to our £15 investment for Fundraising. Our on-going group fund-raising monies have grown considerably – your continued support is greatly appreciated.

The group have suffered at least three bereavements of loved ones in a short space of time, and others from illnesses. We continue to support each other through prayer and words of comfort. Now that the brighter weather is here we hope to meet more regularly.

Regards - Christeen Forrester

HOLY TRINITY BROTHERHOOD

The Brotherhood is a men's group which meets on the first Monday of each month in the church hall from 7.30 until 9pm.

The subscription is £4 per month, which goes towards paying for the occasional outing such as ten pin bowling or a meal at a restaurant.

2014 was a sad year for the Brotherhood as a much-loved brother, Lionel Douglas died. We sang at his funeral on 12th November at Holy Trinity, and formed a guard of honour before and after the service. He is greatly missed.

Highlights of the last twelve months include: the New Year's Eve dance, organised with Gems, a Christmas meal at 'Buffet Island', singing at the Convention concert in May, and a visit to The Mac to see "Selma"

Also, we continued visits to 'The Drakes Drum' in Great Barr for Crown Green bowling. We have our own bowls and a key to the green.

We meet two or three Saturday mornings each year to clear the leaves from the church grounds.

We open every meeting with prayer and the group's hymn, *A New Commandment*. We also sing other hymns and choruses. From time to time we sing in church at the 11am service on Sunday.

Officers:

Chairman – Mike Gregory

Secretary – Anthony Pitts

Treasurer – George Bartley

Our regular attendance is between six and ten men, a slight reduction from previous years.

NEW MEMBERS ARE MOST WELCOME.

Please see Anthony Pitts.

Anthony Pitts, Brotherhood secretary, 3rd April 2015

HOLY TRINITY MOTHERS' UNION

To date we have 16 Mothers' Union members at Holy Trinity Birchfield. The Branch Leader is Veronica Flowers, Vice Branch Leader is Pam Bailey and the Treasurer is Christine Harris, who have been in post since November 2013. Revd Canon Eve Pitts is also a member of the Mothers' Union.

Holy Trinity Mothers' Union meets on a regular basis every 4 to 8 weeks in the Church Hall or the Church. Most meetings are held on a Saturday morning and members bring and share food and drink.

The meetings start with prayers from the Mothers' Union Book and singing. The discussions are mainly focussed on the main projects and Mothers' Union events.

Members are also involved in supporting events and special services at Holy Trinity, below are details of some of those events.

16/02/2014 - St Valentine's Celebration

The members of the Mothers' Union supported the Valentine's event. A special guest, opera singer Byron Jackson, sang for the congregation. Revd Eve provided a CD of love songs. Revd Eve invited couples whom she conducted wedding ceremonies over the past 3 years. The couples received special prayers and blessing. The congregation wore an item of red clothing to go with the theme. The church was decorated with red balloons and each female was presented with a red rose.

14/03/2014 World Wide Mothers' Union President Visit

Lynne Temby, the World Wide Mothers' Union President visited Birmingham on 12/04/2014. Holy Trinity Mothers' Union was chosen to be visited on 14/04/2014. She met members of the newly formed group. Veronica delivered a presentation of the plans for Holy Trinity Mothers' Union, other members gave a short testimony of what Mothers' Union means to them. Two members were inducted into the Mothers' Union by Lynne. Lynne was impressed by our ideas and our display of baby clothing.

17/04/2014 - Maundy Thursday Passover

The Maundy Service Passover is the night before Good Friday and was held in the church hall. Mothers' Union assisted with the preparations of

the Hall and coordinated the service with Veronica leading the proceedings. Members supported with the bring and share supper

18/05/2014 - Convention 150th celebration service

Members of the Mothers' Union formed part of the procession led by the Bishop of Birmingham. Erica Parker attended the service and sat with the Mothers' Union. The Lord Mayor, Councillors, and former priests attended a packed church service.

The Mothers' Union pop up displays were positioned at the back of the church. Veronica made members Royal Blue sashes to be worn on the day over black or navy clothing.

Holy Trinity Mothers' Union Projects Lunch Club

Holy Trinity Mothers' Union Lunch Club was launched on Wednesday 28th May 2014. The team agreed to meet fortnightly on Wednesdays, 12pm - 2pm mainly because there is Wednesday service and church members may come for lunch after the Service. Mavis Scott and Christine Forrester volunteered to make vegetable and meat soups. A few weeks later dinners were introduced, made by Mavis with contributions from church members. The prices were kept low to suit all. Other members have supported with serving, cleaning and preparation of the hall.

Some of the elders that attend the club purchase meals to take away for their evening meal or to store for another day. The lunch club is attended by a lively group of people mainly church members there is lots of laughter, debates and learning.

The Lunch Club is MU's main fundraiser. More details on the funds raised by the treasurer.

Sewing and knitting project

The Sewing project is led by Masie McCarthy. She has been instrumental in hand-sewing over 100 still born and premature baby dresses. She has also knitted a range of baby garments. The items were blessed by Reverend Eve in church before being distributed to local Children's Hospitals.

Maisie lives part of the year in Grenada, West Indies, where she carries on her Mothers' Union work co-ordinating others to make the baby

clothes. Other church members have knitted items suitable for toddlers and have donated to the Mothers' Union project. There have also been donations of crochet threads.

Prison Visiting

This project is led by Pam Bailey. Pam has visited several prisons in the Birmingham and West Midlands area. There are three other MU members who attend Birmingham Prison. Pam has attended a Family Day when families visit prisons. More recently, Helen Cross has expressed an interest in the prison visits and accompanied Pam to a carol service at Birmingham Prison in December 2014.

Plans for the future

The Lunch club will be the Hub for activities and socialising for the local community. People will be encouraged to share their gifts to inform and teach other new skills including sewing, knitting, cooking, job search, or to make new friends and socialise happily with others.

Other ideas for the future include a prayer chain around the church building, gift boxes, informing the congregation of the Dementia Friends project and staying healthy.

Thank you to Holy Trinity Mothers' Union. We have done a lot in just over a year. We are a permanent feature in church, on the notice board and the newsletter. Members proudly wear their badges to church and other events. We are also recognised by our unique blue sashes. Mothers' Union is always happy to support other events to promote happy family life

Thank you for your support and hard work. Holy Trinity Mothers' Union will look forward to working together in 2015-2016.

God bless

Veronica Flowers

Branch Leader

DEANERY SYNOD and General Synod

Various subjects have been brought forward in the synod matters meetings, involving church and communities in the mission of the church.

The item of greatest, wider interest discussed at **General Synod** during 2014-2015 was the appointment of women as Bishops. Birmingham Diocese voted overwhelmingly in favour of the proposal to allow this. However, some abstained; some still believe that woman should not be Bishops.

Many other issues were debated, voted and agreed. The topics covered included: new wording of the Baptism service and the Catechism, vestments, Credit Unions, the Armed Forces Covenant, Clergy Conduct, Food banks, Climate Change and Church Finances. Same sex marriage has been questioned and referred and we are awaiting the process by which the church will debate the subject.

In addition, the Synod debates a wide range of other issues regarding social injustice and ethical investments particularly of its own assets.

The Local Church and World Mission

World Mission Gatherings - will offer a lively meeting where people can meet members of the World Mission Task group and tackle questions about why we need to engage in world mission.

Urban Ministry- there was a discussion about faith in the city and faithful cities reports, urges the Church of England to maintain its presence in inner city parishes and recognise the challenge of mission and ministry in these areas.

At Diocesan Synod level and the main Diocesan Committees, people from the inner city and those from minority ethnic backgrounds are under-represented.

After several meetings and discussions, on July 2014, the General Synod voted to allow women to become Bishops. The Church of England appointed Reverend Elizabeth Jane Holden, as a Bishop.

Handsworth Deanery Synod

Subjects discussed at Deanery Synod meetings included: Transforming Church Growing Younger, Developing Discipleship, Resourcing Ministerial Education and Resourcing the Future. Church growth has become centre stage in the thinking of the Church of England.

Birmingham Cathedral - celebrates its 300 years at the heart of the city. There will be celebrations throughout the year of 2015. St Philip's Cathedral (in the Diocese of Birmingham) welcomed the Most Reverend Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury on Saturday 21st February 2015 to the cathedral's opening celebrations for 2015.

Urban Disciples 14-21 year olds- is an innovative, creative project unique to Church of England in Birmingham. Drawing together young people from different churches enabling them to become confident in their faith and to enable young people to understand and develop in discipleship.

The Bishops thanked the people of Birmingham, for supporting the partnership maintained with the people of Malawi.

The Church of England statistics showed that 1 million people attend service each week, a fall of 1%. The Most Reverend Archbishop Welby stated that the Anglican Communion is flourishing.

Handsworth Deanery - Other happenings

- Credit Unions, How can the Church Help?
- Food banks- many churches are involved in this.

Over the past years, the churches have seen many vicars come and go. We are now pleased to report that we are fully booked.

We are pleased to welcome:

- Reverend Adam Romanis- Incumbent of St Matthew Perry Beeches
- Fr Douglas Machiridza of St Andrew's
- Fr Robert Stephens of St Mary's
- Fr Barrie Scott of St John's.

On a sad note, we say a farewell and happy retirement to Canon Jemima on her 18 ½ year ministry at St Paul and St Silas Church Lozells.

God Bless them all and keep them strong in their faith.

Marjorie Bartley

Lay Chair

TREASURERS' REPORT

Recently, someone was overheard, while looking at the sorry condition of the vestry, with several buckets catching the rain as it came through the roof, saying "All this money we get every week and look at the state of the vestry."

"All this money" he was referring to was the weekly collection (as printed on the notice sheet) of between £800 and £900. This may look a lot of money – most of us can only dream of getting £800 every week (£41,600 per year).

The reality is, though, that **THIS IS NOT ENOUGH!**

Holy Trinity's single largest outgoing is the **Common Fund** of £45,634, which pays for ministry and the upkeep of the vicarage. This equates to £878 every week, before we pay any other bills such as insurance, gas and electricity.

There is a leaflet at the back of church which explains the Common Fund and why it is so important.

At a recent presentation to the PCC, Amanda Homer, Diocesan Stewardship Officer, gave us the following projected figures for income and expenditure, based on figures provided by our treasurer, Christine Harris.

On average, over the next 3 years, Holy Trinity will spend **£1623** every week, with the largest item being the Common Fund, £963 (this is allowing for an increase over the 2015 Common Fund). Church and hall running costs and maintenance will be £524.

Weekly income over the next 3 years:

Planned Giving	£665	Tax recovered	£154,
Other giving	£238	Wedding and Funeral fees	£178
Income from Church Hall	£151	Other income	£46
Total:	£1432.		

This means Holy Trinity will be £191 short of what we need every week (£9932 per year)

Funeral fees and money from letting the hall are keeping the good ship, Holy Trinity afloat. What an irony it is that money from Muslim families is helping to keep our church running!

Ideally, the income from the hall should be spent on the hall. It badly needs the roof repaired, and new toilets and kitchen.

Last year income from the **hall** fell over £2000, from the previous year, to £7,855. This is mainly because we lost Wednesday morning's 'Stay and Play', without any notice. This used to bring in £1200 a year.

Holy Trinity's main source of income is **PLANNED GIVING** – the numbered, weekly envelopes. In 2014, 96 people contributed £31,728, a weekly average of £610, and an average for the 96 people over 52 weeks, of £6.35. And we thank God for those people.

However, if £10 per week is regarded as the target amount for everyone, and all 96 people gave this amount we would average £960 every week, an increase of £350 every week, or £18,200 for the year, which would make an enormous difference to Holy Trinity. Sadly, only 6 people gave at least £10 every week, including one person who gave over £20. 35 people gave under £5 per week, including one member whose contribution over the year was under £1 every week!

The number of **GIFT AID** envelopes every week was about 10 to 12. Two regular contributors by this method gave an average of over £10 per week. One person gave £1000 one Sunday.

Ideally, we would like many more people to pay by monthly standing order, as this would be a more reliable source of income for our church, and an acknowledgement that we should pay for the Lord's work even on Sundays when we do not attend. Only 5 people pay by standing order, and 2 of them no longer attend Holy Trinity!

I will repeat what my colleague, Christine, said in last year's report: *May the good Lord open our hearts and minds and help us to reflect on the future of Holy Trinity so that we think collectively and truly recognize the need to give generously.*

If we all want a future for Holy Trinity, we seriously need to change the perception of giving and consider moving away from a culture of giving what's 'left over'. We need to commit ourselves to a monthly/weekly pledge of 'generous giving' from the heart.

FLOOR FUND

The cost of repairing the church floor is **£43,000**. Following the Diocese's refusal to give Holy Trinity a loan, Revd Eve appealed to the congregation to give £300 each. The first money was deposited in the Jubilee Fund in early July 2014.

By Easter Day this year the Floor Fund stood at **£17,398**.

72 people have contributed to this amount, including 38 who have given at least £300.

In the period January to December 2014, **£19331** was deposited in the **JUBILEE FUND**, of which £15,146 was for the Floor Fund. We say a big 'thank you' to those people who contributed to the these funds.

COLOUR GROUPS

Each group was given £15 in 2014 to use as they wished, so long as they made a profit to give to Holy Trinity's fund-raising effort. By Easter Day most of the groups had raised over £100.

***Christine Harris, Treasurer,
Eamonn James, Assistant Treasurer
Anthony Pitts, Assistant Treasurer***

Anthony Pitts, 10th April 2015

GEMS REPORT

GEMS is a collective of women who aim to support women and families in the local community, by running social events to bring people together. The group is associated with Holy Trinity Church, as some members of GEMS worship at church. We have regular meetings where as we socialise together, we discuss and arrange the calendar of events for the current year.

Our mission statement is as follows:

'To respect each other at all times regardless of age, disability, position or race, through a holistic spiritual and empathetic way treating others as they would wish to be treated... to provide a service to all women in the local community regardless of their social background'

We have offered support to Holy Trinity Church over the year with its own events and special services. We offered help with hospitality during the 150th Anniversary celebrations, the Valentine service, and organised another Family BBQ, which attracts people from the local community. A highlight for the year was the 150th Anniversary Ball, which GEMS hosted on behalf of Holy Trinity Church in celebration of this major milestone of the church's history. The Church Hall was transformed into a vision of gold, dark red and silver and a great evening was had by all.

Thanks to the events we have organised, GEMS has been able to make donations to Holy Trinity Church and Holy Trinity Academy, in honour of the 150th Anniversary. For this year, we would like to hold events that are educational, such as a Cancer Awareness event.

If you are interested in joining GEMS please call Heather Small on 07891 413839 or speak to any of the following members at church: Michelle Grannell, Barbara Hamilton, Jenny Ranson, Waveney Richards, Angela Watson or Marcia West.

Thank you to all those who have supported what we have organised, or asked for our help over the past year.

