



The Church Partnership of West Swindon and the Lydiards



All Saints Lydiard Millicent



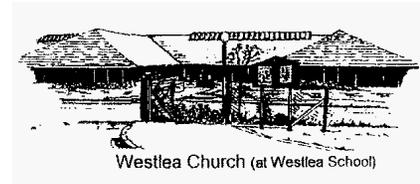
St. Mary's Lydiard Tregoze



Holy Trinity Shaw



Toothill Church



Westlea Church (at Westlea School)

**Annual Report of the Partnership
for the year ending 31 December 2009**

Values

We want to affirm a number of distinctive values, which we hold as being of particular importance for our Local Ecumenical Partnership (LEP):

- We accept the Lordship of the risen Jesus Christ – alive still today.
- We are Bible-based – accepting Scripture's inspiration and authority.
- We are evangelical – in doctrine and its application to contemporary life.
- We believe that Jesus Christ is the ground of our salvation and model of our mission, inspiring us in service to a materially and spiritually needy world.
- We depend upon the dynamic power of the Holy Spirit – to renew us and impart charismatic gifts for healing, deliverance and other ministries.
- We are committed to a collaborative style of ministry – with all God's People.

Covenant

We specifically commit ourselves:

- To seek prayerfully to understand more clearly the Vision of God and His calling to grow His kingdom here.
- To discover more from the Scriptures about the theological basis for our unity-in-mission, and its practical consequences.
- To conform ourselves to the values of Jesus, as enshrined in his teaching on discipleship and our 'Declaration of Intent'.
- To share together in missionary outreach to the people that God leads us into contact with through our daily lives.
- To serve all the people of West Swindon & the Lydiards with the same unconditional covenantal love that God has for them.

Mission Statement

We affirm, together with Churches Together in England that our understanding of the practical outworking of our shared Mission is:

- To proclaim the good news of the Kingdom;
- To teach, baptise and nurture new believers;
- To respond to human need by loving service;
- To seek to transform unjust structures of society; and
- To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth.

Organisation and Trustees

As a result of our new Constitution both the formal name and the governing body have new names. The Ecumenical Partnership has become the Church Partnership and the Ecumenical Church Council has become the Partnership Council.

The Church Partnership comprises five churches:

All Saints Church, Lydiard Millicent
Holy Trinity Church, Shaw
St Mary's Church, Lydiard Tregoze
Toothill Church
Westlea Church

The Partnership is recognised by the Baptist Union, Church of England, Methodist Church and United Reformed Church, and serves over 30,000 people living in West Swindon, The Lydiards and associated rural areas. It looks to the Swindon Churches Together as its Sponsoring Body for guidance and oversight.

Our Bank Account is with CafCash P.O. Box 289, West Malling, Kent ME19 4TA

Our Auditor is Robert Brailsford, Monahan's, 38 – 42 Newport Street, Swindon SN1 3DR.

The Ecumenical Staff Team of Ministers comprises those who have been duly authorised and appointed by the four participating denominations.

Team Vicar (Church of England)	Revd Tudor Roberts
United Reformed Church Minister	Revd Dick Gray
Baptist Minister	Revd Anne Carter
Team Minister (Church of England)	Vacancy

Whilst the Revd Patricia Roberts is not formally a member of the Staff team, and does not wish to be so for the time being, it would be remiss to fail to recognise the very significant role that she plays in supporting St Mary's and in putting together both a Baptism preparation policy and education session, and also the work that she does in relation to organisation of the Marriage Preparation course and the organisation of marriages in the Partnership.

Committee Structure

The trustees are the members of the Partnership Council (PC) (Article 8 of the Constitution). Anglican Members also constitute the Parochial Church Council (PCC) when needed to conduct Anglican specific business. The members of the PC are the Partnership's Trustees for Charity Commission purposes.

The Partnership Council

The Ecumenical Staff Team	As above	
PC Chair	Revd Dick Gray	
PC Vice Chair	Lesley Franklin	
Churchwardens (All are ex-officio members Of the Partnership council)	John Ridsdale Lesley Franklin Debbie Fleet Ginnie Heads Simon Belcher	
Senior Steward	Mark Dowling	
Treasurer	Revd Dick Gray	
Secretary	Lesley Franklin	
Elected Members	John Halstead (R) Mark Dowling (R) Pat Watson (A) Janet Clark (A) Craig Tranfield (A)	Peter Gilder Julie Scarisbrick Chris Scarisbrick Eileen Sawyer (R) Dave Carter (A) Ruth Kiddle (A)
Co-opted members	Mary Poole David Ratnam (A)	
Deanery Synod Representatives	Mary Poole	

(A) Appointed during year (R) Resigned during year

We are recognised by Churches Together in England as a Single Congregation Local Ecumenical Partnership. The PC is the main governance and representative body. Its main responsibilities are broadly grouped as Regulatory, Oversight and Governance. Other responsibilities are devolved to the Local Church Committees (LCC) / Leadership Teams - in the areas of Partnership, Ministry / Mission, Pastoral care and Leadership. A fuller description of the current functions of the PC, PCC and LCC's can be found in the Partnership Constitution (2006) and in draft Standing Orders.

At the time of writing plans are in hand to start up a Messy Church session once each month on Sunday afternoon of the second Sunday of each month commencing in April. There is a good pool of volunteers to assist with and run the sessions, and we are looking forward to a well attended and fruitful activity.

We do need more volunteers to assist with food preparation.

And finally...

We believe this Report gives a clear picture of the life of the Ecumenical Partnership of West Swindon and the Lydiards, and the ways in which members of the Partnership Council have sought to fulfil the responsibility placed on them as Trustees. This report should also be read in conjunction with:

- The Consolidated accounts of the Partnership
- The Annual Accounts of the Partnership Council
- The Annual Reports & Accounts from each of our Local Churches

This composite Report and associated Accounts are prepared under the guidance of Charities Commission requirements and SORP 2005 recommended practice guidance.

This report will be posted at or below <http://WSwinLyd.org.uk/council/report/>
Partnership Website: <http://WSwinLyd.org.uk>

A Prayer for our Partnership

Partnership Prayer

Almighty God, We thank you for the freedom to come before you as one Partnership united in Jesus our Lord and Saviour. Pour out your Holy Spirit on all five churches, that together we may proclaim the Gospel, make disciples, and bring about healing in your name.

Unite us as one people, and equip us we pray, with all we need to become a mission shaped Church.

To Christ be the glory in the Church and in Christ Jesus for ever and ever.
Amen.

new diocesan strategy 'Releasing the Energy' and its implications. Our partnership has been one of the first in the area to learn about and implement changes in the way clergy are appointed. Another area within the strategy that will have an impact on us in the year ahead is income generation.

As West Swindon's representative at these meetings I find them a useful point of contact with our wider Anglican Church family and a chance to consider topics that concern all Christians.

Mary Poole

Our Goals for 2010

Our proposed goals for 2010 are

- Fill the vacancy for a minister
- Children's and Youth work via Messy Church and Emerge
- Equip and Encourage

Equip and Encourage

More detailed plans for this work are still pending for 2010 although it is clear it will involve more of the same as was done in 2009.

Youth & Children's Work

REMIX

REMIX will continue to operate on Tuesday nights but as always more helpers are really needed.

TGIF

This is a new initiative on alternate (approx) Friday evenings, starting Feb 19th – a youth worship event at Shaw Church for all young people in the partnership who want to explore faith more deeply; led by Claire Camm and Ivyna Melo but input is being welcomed from anyone, youth and adult, within the partnership churches and youth groups.

Schools Out Club

We hope to continue this in 2010 although numbers are still quite small, it does provide a valuable resource for some young people.

Schools Lunch clubs

With support from Ncounter we help with lunch clubs at Greendown and Braydon Forest.

Messy Church

The PC met 5 times in 2009 [Jan (twice), May, July, October] in addition to the Annual General Meeting on 18 March. Main PC topics during the year were:

- Partnership Goals
- Income and expenditure; property refurbishments; review of budget planning process
- Youth activity reports
- The vacancy

The Standing Committee met 6 times in 2009, at intervals between PC meetings – to plan agendas and follow up on PC decisions.

Appointed Sub Groups handled specialist areas of work on behalf of the PC, and gave reports on progress. They included for 2009:

- Constitution Group (Update for new CTE Constitution and preparation for Charity Registration) – group meetings and development work
- Youth Leaders Group
- Emerge Consultative / Working Group

Risks

The Partnership has a number of risks to its activities which have been assessed at either PC or Standing Committee levels. These include:

- ◆ Risk of financial commitment, particularly with 3 full time clergy. Reserves cover approx 1 year's stipend and expenses.
- ◆ Organisational risks due to limited deployment of Staff for a large part of the year, Limited resources available for work delegated to the Officers and the Standing Committee.
- ◆ Organisational and accountability risks relating to the Partnership's Policies and Procedures
- ◆ Structural risks due to the Partnership's Ecumenical nature, and membership trends in some churches

The PC considers that these risks have been mitigated to the best practicable extent. They are monitored within the Partnership's governance processes.

Induction and Training of Trustees

There is at present no formal process for training of new or existing Trustees. However new PC members are made aware of their role and responsibilities, through discussion and briefing before and at meetings. Further attention will be given based on the provisions of the new Constitution. Arrangements will also be made in relation to the requirements for the Partnership's Charity Commission registration.

Review of 2009 Goals/Tasks

Spirituality

Unfortunately no-one took full ownership of this goal in 2009 and so, at a partnership level very little was achieved, although individuals and churches were challenged to develop their spirituality in a variety of ways. The Partnership Prayer Group that had been set up ceased meeting when Revd Stephen Skinner moved on although separate church ones continue. However in an effort to encourage people to read their Bibles more the monthly Partnership magazine "In Partnership" carried a Bible Quiz with answers the following month. The lesson to be learnt from our failure to develop this goal at Partnership level should be that a specific person should be identified each year to take charge of it.

Equip and Encourage

Support, develop and affirm church members in their contribution to church and community life

- Developing a culture where we express our appreciation for the gifts we see in others - through a simple word of thanks, or sometimes a card or note.
- Considering ways that some might offer 'support services' in order to release others in different ministries - e.g. agreeing to keep an eye on the children of those involved in prayer ministry.
- Continuing to train and equip children and youth workers, perhaps this year by taking some away to a training course where they can benefit from interaction with others in similar situations as well at the overall teaching given.
- To begin to develop courses and trainers to run community linked courses which could include: money management; parenting; stress management etc.

Actions that have contributed to these goals include:

- Appointing Dave Carter as children's work coordinator
- Arranging group attendance at Children's ministry conference and back up from Partnership over changing date of Partnership service to facilitate this.
- Encouraging additional people to help with services - partly necessitated by the reduction in the staff team - but valuing and growing skills
- Inclusion of a variety of people in major services - e.g. Partnership covenant service and team that organised that.

Holy Trinity are brought to the PC/PCC before being sent to the Diocesan Office for approval; work at Toothill Church needs Methodist approval.

Finance

The PC carries the responsibility of handling payments for:

- Our share of contributions to the Sponsoring Parent Bodies via: the Bristol Diocese, The Upper Thames Methodist Circuit, The West of England Baptist Association and the United Reformed Church. These payments contribute towards the cost of the full time stipendiary clergy and wider ministry.
- Ministerial and church fees for weddings and funerals
- Staff Expenses
- Salary for Partnership Administrator
- Stipend for a Baptist Minister
- Expenses incurred during a pastoral vacancy
- Support for Partnership-wide Youth work

More detailed information about Partnership Finances is in the Annual Accounts and Financial Statement.

For 2009 the Partnership made a small planned loss. For 2010 the budget is for a loss as churches are unable yet to meet the significantly increased costs from the Diocese. Our Diocesan share is increased by 3%. We plan to undertake an income survey in March 2010.

The Budget for 2010 shows a small deficit of £2,200, but there is significant doubt over whether churches can make their contributions. There will be a major problem in 2011 unless we can increase church giving. We have reserves of almost £27,000 at the end of 2009, which should enable us to manage the deficit in 2010.

Dick Gray

Partnership Office

Our Administrator Brenda Hicks has been with us since June 2008. She keeps the office clean and our work up to date.

Dick Gray

Wider Church

Deanery Synod

Representatives of all churches within Swindon Deanery meet three times a year to gather information and to discuss topics that concern us all. It gives everyone the opportunity to think about wider church matters and to learn from one another. A main topic for discussion in the last year has been the

- In October we started a small group for secondary aged children at the Vicarage in Lydiard Millicent. Initially we set it up for young people across the Partnership but most of those who have come have been through links at All Saints. The course is a little like the Alpha Course and is brilliant for those thinking about their faith or preparing to be baptised or confirmed. We have been joined by young people from within the church family but also others who are friends of theirs and to who it is all new. We have made pizzas, pancakes, and milkshakes together, as well as building towers out of spaghetti and marshmallows, designing our perfect church and generally having fun together as we learn about what it means to be a Christian. We meet on a Thursday evening from 7 – 9pm. If you want to come along and join us we would love to see you.

Publicity and Communication

- We advertise monthly in the local Link Magazine, which includes information about our Partnership, the Office telephone number and email address.
- We especially promote our major festivals of Christmas, Lent, Holy Week and Easter. Cards are produced and delivered by some local churches. This year we produced joint information leaflets, through the Partnership Administrator. These show all the special Services and Events of this period.
- We also have our monthly magazine “In Partnership” which contains news of church and local events.
- Generally each local church is responsible for its own publicity – this is through their Monthly Magazines or Weekly Notice Sheets. Our web sites are becoming more comprehensive and traffic is building up, mostly as a result of the regular partnership news being read online, or downloaded. Browse over to <http://WSwinLyd.org.uk/council/webbery> to see the usage graph.

Buildings and Resources

Church Buildings

The Partnership Council (PC) devolves the care and maintenance of our church buildings to the respective Local Church Councils whilst still being the legal body charged with their management. So, for example, applications for Faculties to allow work to be done in St Mary's, All Saints or

- Cards, notes and support services still need work - though Anne was amazed how many notes and telephone calls there were and still are about her health and well being - not just from Shaw and Toothill.
- A Diocesan day at St Joseph's College looking at strategies for church growth

We are also looking at the possibility of running "Just Looking" which is a pre Alpha Power point presentation of the Christian faith.

We are encouraged by what goes on in home groups, and in children's ministry training, but there is still huge scope to see all in the Church "equipped and encouraged". It's sometimes easier in one week at New Wine to do more than you can in a whole term at Church but like other events of this type it is not everybody's "cup of tea" Nevertheless we are looking forward to all that the next year has, and know the Lord will guide and lead us.

Tudor Roberts & Anne Carter

Emerge

Our Youth Café has been going for 18 months now and has an attendance of 18 young people, with average attendance on Monday of 10 and on Wednesday of 5. It is essentially a drop-in group and young people often introduce new friends. Its aims are to provide a safe, free and welcoming place for young people to come in after school, when often no adults are at home. We offer them toast and hot drinks which they are encouraged to make and wash up after themselves. We provide sports, arts, and cookery and discussion activities, with no obligation to participate. There is also opportunity just to relax and chill out or to catch up on homework. There is an opportunity to talk to and listen to young people, some of whom have very difficult issues they are working through. We celebrate individual birthdays with a cake and prayer for that young person.

Remix (Tues evening):

Remix (renamed from Café Base) has been held at Shaw Church for 2½ years now. Attended by young people aged 11-16 from 6 different secondary schools in Swindon area. There are 48 young people with average weekly attendance of 35. The majority of young people are from un-churched families, although a few are from local churches. There is stress on building positive relationships with young people, through which they are encouraged to share concerns with leaders and listen to one another. Over this last year, we have seen a real growth in trust and self-esteem in many young people who have previously exhibited negative

attitudes. We also encourage young people to develop talents, learn new skills (including social and life skills) and explore faith.

Activities include sports, cookery, craft, discussion, music, and dance, there are regular food evenings. We have developed a clear discipline policy over the last year which has helped greatly to develop good behaviour and relationships, using merits for good behaviour and achievement, and penalties for negative behaviour. This results in individual and group awards at the end of term.

In order to explore faith with young people, this year we have held two interactive "labyrinth" sessions around Easter and Advent, a visit from Shaw Church's link BMS missionary in Guinea, Gen Eldred. Around Valentine's Day we looked at the subject of God's love for us in two separate small groups.

We also encourage the young people to think of the wider world through engagement with charities such as Toybox and Tearfund and more recently, Helen House Hospice (Oxford). For the latter, we raised £125.00 at our Christmas Cabaret and had a very moving talk from a lady whose daughter had lived and died at the Hospice recently – the young people were very touched by this and wrote a letter expressing their thoughts to our contact at the Hospice.

Young people have grown in leadership skills over this last year through taking responsibility for different activities. We now have 14 young people with clearly defined leadership roles and many of them attend regular Management Meetings for the project, in conjunction with adult leaders. Young people from the group have recently helped to set up a Remix facebook page in order to improve communication of events and news. Remix sessions are always planned and evaluated as a whole team (with input from young people) and the team always pray together before and after each session.

School Lunch Clubs:

Wed (Greendown) – Ivyna supports the Schools Christian Worker, Dave Davison (Freshbrook Church/SYFC) where average attendance is 10. The aims of the club are to explore and develop Christian faith and have fun, through games and Bible study. The group is attended by a mixture of churched and unchurched young people and we have seen new young people from Remix starting to attend this group since September '09.

Thurs (Bradon Forest) – Ivyna does 2 lunch clubs alongside Beth Dent, Purton and W. Bassett Lay Youth & Children's Worker. Numbers on average are 15 (y 7-8) and 8 (y 9-11). The aims of the club are to explore

helpers at the schools in our locality. Let us pray that our relationships with the schools will continue to grow over the coming year.

Dave Carter

Partnership Marriage Preparation Sessions

We held 2 marriage preparation sessions for couples planning to get married. These sessions were held in conjunction with Purton & North Swindon churches and Michael & Jane Haslam shared in their delivery.

Feedback as always was very positive, and we hope and believe that we offer couples some firm foundations and practical hints on how best to make their marriage run more smoothly.

In 2010 we shall continue to offer courses and will offer them also to Purton & N Swindon as these churches are in pastoral vacancy.

Dick Gray

Mission

Mission & Evangelism

- **Community Café.**
 - This continues to run on Monday's from 9.30 – 1.30 at Toothill Church. It is good to see church and café being able to work together, though we have had a lot of trouble with dishwasher and cooker which has made life difficult for the volunteers. We hope to get these problems resolved in the near future. Joint events with the church are held occasionally, and both the Community Police and the Council now come regularly to listen to concerns and give information. We are currently exploring the possibility of a Credit Union being accessible while the café is open, and also of actively getting out information and practical support about the digital switchover due at the beginning of April.
- **Contact events**
 - The Partnership continues to put on social events across the churches and some of these have attracted visitors who are now beginning to come to our churches as a result of discovering that Christians are human and have something to offer
- Emmaus

their children for a christening to attend and if they want to; to bring the godparents.

We provide a crèche so families can bring their children with them and offer hospitality with refreshments and the opportunity to get to know members of the congregation.

The course looks at three possible services that parents may choose; thanksgiving, dedication and baptism. We try to encourage parents to consider what is most appropriate for them and talk about what the promises mean and the theology behind these services.

We also show them resources and ways that will help them to teach their children to pray, to read the Bible and to come to faith. Various church members have shared their stories about coming to faith and what baptism has meant to them.

I have really appreciated all the help that has been offered to help run this course. Please continue to pray for this work and for the families who have brought their children for baptism over the last year that the seed that has been sown would come to bear much fruit.

Tricia Roberts

Church & Schools

Over the past year the relationship between the various churches and local schools has continued to develop. Staff team members and others have taken assemblies in at least 7 of the local primary/infant/junior schools, at varying intervals. Some of these schools are visited fortnightly while others may only be once or twice a term. Several of these schools plus at least one other have made a number of visits to the various church buildings for RE lessons, which have looked at some of the different traditions of our denominations as well as the differences and similarities in our buildings etc.

The interaction does not stop there either - Christingle making and short acts of worship were the subject of some visits by classes from at least two schools just before Christmas, our buildings have been used for school concerts, church members have got involved in running after school clubs in some, others have been involved in reading to kids during book week, others are on governing bodies, and the lists go on. In truth we will never know all of what is done and certainly not the whole of the impact that members of the partnership make in the lives of the children, staff and

and develop Christian faith and have fun, through games, Bible study and prayer.

Other activities we link into run by other local churches
 Impact – town-wide bi-monthly youth worship event
 Big Event – huge Christian youth get-together at Alton Towers with Christian rock concert
 Oasis Pool Party – annual social event

For the last two years we have also led small group trips to Greenbelt Christian Arts festival

Emerge Management Committee

The emerge Management team now comprises: Claire Camm (Project Manager), Ivyna Melo (Gap student from Ncounter), Andy Vernon, Judith Mumford, Nicki Badcock and we have 12 young people who have leadership roles within the groups and all are invited to attend Management Committee meetings – in practice between 4-12 of them attend.

Claire Camm

The Christian Community and our Worship

Membership

Membership of the Partnership is through the Local Churches, and each congregation is responsible for encouraging regular attendees into membership. Within our different church traditions there are slight differences in understanding of membership.

Membership Summary

	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002
All Saints	120	123	126	123	118	116	118	120
St Mary's	73	69	76	80	87	98	104	102
Holy Trinity	40	42	37	37	55	57	57	64
Toothill	39	37	35	34	41	42	41	44
Westlea	28	25	25	25	24	25	26	27
Total	300	296	299	299	325	338	346	357

Normal Sunday Attendance

Church	2009		2008		2007		2006		2005	
	Adult	Child	Adult	Child	Adult	Child	Adult	Child	Adult	Child
All Saints	77	19	87	20	81	20	82	24	81	26
St Mary's	39	8	47	5	53	10	50	10	57	10
Holy Trinity	28	7	33	10	34	11	32	10	37	15
Toothill	36	6	40	10	23	4	26	8	24	8
Westlea	22	12	22	11	22	11	21	13	21	14
Total	202	52	229	56	213	56	211	65	220	73

Ministry

In addition to Staff Team of Ministers, we are grateful to the following members of the Partnership who assist with the leading of worship in our churches:

Methodist Local Preachers	Mr Mark Dowling Mrs Rachel Dowling Mr Gordon Partridge
Anglican Readers	Mrs Di Benbow
Non-Stipendiary Ministers	Revd Mike Dilly (Baptist) Revd Jan Partridge (Methodist retired)
Other Groups	Westlea Leadership Team Local Church Home Group Members

There is also Team Toothill and Shaw's Worship Enabling Group who lead worship from time to time.

Weekly Services

The worship rota is arranged across the Partnership. The Staff Team, Local Preachers and our Reader all lead services and preach not only in their 'home' church but also in the other partner churches and some lead worship in churches in the Methodist Circuit. The Methodist circuit also contributes worship leaders.

We are continuing to look for a person to take on the partnership safe to grow coordination position or to help the current one in either doing administration or the training.

Puppet Ministry

Under the leadership of Tudor Roberts we have started a puppet ministry with around 15 people, some from outside the churches signed up to help. They are hoping to be able to share the ministry amongst children and young people and also with our own churches and mission activities.

Constitution

Partnership Constitution & Standing Orders

Constitution is done, well almost... It was really gratifying to get all of our parent denominations to approve our constitution and sign off on all that work. It was even better on 29th March to celebrate with all of our partnership churches, denominational representatives and especially good to greet our friends, community partners and representatives from our local schools at our joint celebration service.

Now we have begun the process of applying for direct registration with the charity commissioner...and they have decided how to deal with us(!), we have to add some legal stuff to our constitution. But do not be alarmed, it's all good stuff, and does not alter or detract from our original work; it's just another admin' task. Progress reports shortly, and queries to the Standing Committee of Partnership Council (Lesley Franklin, chair). Thanks Lesley!
Chris Scarisbrick

Other Joint Partnership Ministries

Joint Thanksgiving & Baptism policy Baptism Preparation Course

As a result of the large number of requests for baptism that St Mary's (as the church in the park) and All Saints receive each year Tudor and I felt that it would not be possible to get round and visit all the families ourselves and so this year we introduced the Baptism Preparation Course.

We ran 4 courses last year and more are already planned for 2010. These take place alternately at All Saints or St Mary's on either a Saturday morning or Sunday afternoon. We encourage families who want to bring

Pastoral Care & Occasional Offices

Weddings across the Partnership

This year we conducted 16 weddings across the Partnership. Most were at St Mary's but three were at All Saints and one at Holy Trinity Shaw. As in other years we conducted two Marriage Preparation Courses together with St Mary's Purton and the Parish of North Swindon – which were a privilege to be part of.

During the year I took on responsibility for booking and meeting couples who are coming for marriage. This has been a delightful task but has had its fun moments; like the couple who want their dog to be a bridesmaid, the couple who knelt at the altar with 7 children for a blessing on their family and chasing a bride's veil as it took off for the bell tower.

Please remember these couples as they start their married lives together and pray for them and those of us who are involved in preparing them for marriage. In 2010 we are looking for couples that would like to join us to help run the Marriage Preparation Course.

Funerals

Overall, the number of Funerals conducted by the clergy at the Kingsdown Crematorium has remained low in 2009.

Confirmation

Finally we continue our collaboration with Purton on our joint Confirmation Services. These are held annually, with the most recent, in June 2009 being at Shaw. We welcomed the Bishop of Swindon to conduct this Service and to preach. We hope that as our youth work develops through Remix that young people will come to see the huge value of giving public testimony to their commitment to follow Jesus Christ.

Tudor Roberts

Safe to Grow

This has been a quiet year; we have not updated the policy as it was done at the beginning of 2009. No training has been done, but is planned for in the next month or so.

There are changes happening with the CRB checks, standard checking is now not done and only enhanced is. Other changes start around June 2010.

Every Sunday there is a Partnership 8am Holy Communion at All Saints Church, which typically includes two Book of Common Prayer Services, one Free Church Service and one Common Worship Service each month.

Some Sunday evenings All Saints & St Mary's Church hold an Evening Service, typically taken from Book of Common Prayer, Songs of Praise, Partnership Communion and Evening Prayer. Both services have a regular and faithful congregation with attendees coming mainly from the host church.

Our main Services take place on a Sunday Morning with each of our Churches having a thriving and enthusiastic congregation, several with crèches, children's and young people groups also being provided. The communion services generally vary between Anglican order and a Free-Church style.

Joint Partnership Worship

Several joint Services were organised again in 2009. The 5th Sunday Services have become a regular fixture now, and are supported by all churches. There is a question about having them on key Festival Sundays such as Pentecost or Advent. Occasionally these occur other than on a 5th Sunday.

The 5th Sunday morning Services in 2009 were:

- 29th March at Holy Trinity Shaw signing the new Constitution and Covenant
- 31st May Pentecost service at Toothill
- 30th August at All Saints
- 27th December at All Saints

The joint Services in 2009 were as follows:

- 25th February Ash Wednesday service
- Holy week labyrinth at Toothill
- 12th April Easter sunrise service at St Mary's
- 21st May Ascension day service at St Mary's
- 14th June Baptism and Confirmation service at Shaw
- 29th November Advent praise at All Saints

Partnership events

This is, of course one of our responses to Jesus new command. "Love one another" (John 13v34). They are great opportunities to meet others and put

faces to names. If you've not done so yet, go along to one hosted by a church other than yours, even if it's not something you would have chosen. Go on encourage one another!

- 14th February Valentines dance at Shaw
- Farewell to Stephen and Jane
- Lent course
- 9th May Partnership walk
- 16th May Mix Festival at Shaw
- 20th June Walk for Water Lydiard Park
- Summer course
- Cruise at Toothill in August
- 3rd October Gospel evening at Shaw
- 31st October Illuminate festival at All Saints as an alternative to Halloween. A good number came from all the churches

The Partnership vacancy process

Since the departure of Revds Stephen and Jane Skinner we have been engaged in a new Diocesan process to first determine whether there was a vacancy and second to find the role and a person to fill it.

The initial process involved the Diocesan representatives in consultations with the staff team, the Partnership Council and the leaders of St Mary's, as well as an open meeting to give the opportunity for all to make their contributions to the process. This process was to determine whether there was indeed a vacancy to be filled.

The Diocese has concurred that there is a vacancy, and we have then appointed a team to look at the needs of the church at St Mary's and the partnership and to write a profile which is essentially an advertising document that will be used to attract potential ministers to the vacancy. The present stage is that the profile is completed from our perspective, and we await Diocesan concurrence on its contents. Then we shall be able to advertise the proposed vacancy and hopefully hold interviews with a view to an appointment.

The Diocese has also agreed that the current Rectory in Old Shaw Lane is not the ideal location for a new minister and has agreed to try to find a new house probably in the Grange Park area.

Dick Gray

Chair of Partnership Council

2009 has not been an easy year for the Partnership but there have been some good things happening.

We completed and had accepted the new Constitution ratified by the churches and the Denominational leaders at our service in March. We then found in the autumn that the Charity Commission and Churches together in England had come up with a new constitution that all Single Congregation Ecumenical Partnerships would need to adopt. We shall retain our agreed constitution as a codicil to the new general constitution. This is now going through the process of ratification.

We began the Diocesan Process for seeking a new minister that started with consultations with the churches and a team set up by the Partnership Council to put together first a needs document and then a vacancy profile. The profile is now with the Diocese for consideration, and hopefully we shall be able to advertise the post in the near future. We shall also have a new parsonage (minister's house) if one can be found in Grange Park. This will replace the Rectory in Old Shaw Lane.

The Partnership Council has worked well and there has been a good lively spirit at the meetings that we have had.

I am encouraged by the Emerge project and its reaching out to young people who would normally have no connection with the church. I think it is not an exaggeration to say that it has changed lives.

High spots of the year for me have been the baptism and confirmation service, the covenant service and the Mix Festival.

Dick Gray

Ecumenical team leader's report

The 3 more or less full time ministers have met together regularly and have formed a good working team. We do not always agree on issues and this causes lively debate. But we do work pretty well together and we are keen to foster this relationship with any new member of the staff team.

The wider staff team also meet though rather less often than in the past, mainly due to other commitments.

Dick Gray