

Annual Report and Accounts 2010

1.	Reference and Administration Details
1.1.	<p>Name: Woughton Ecumenical Parish</p>
1.2.	<p>Address: Parish Office, Christ the Vine Community Church, Jonathans, Coffee Hall, Milton Keynes. MK6 5EG. 01908 392583. www.woughton.org.</p>
1.3.	<p>Trustees: The members of the Woughton Ecumenical Council (WEC) – see Appendix 1</p>
1.4.	<p>Key Personnel: <i>Chair:</i> Will Trevitt <i>Secretary and Administrator:</i> Barbara Albone <i>Parish Treasurer:</i> Brian Baldwin <i>Staff team:</i> Rev. Heather Pollard (<i>Team Leader</i>), Rev. Cathi Williams, Deacon Richard Beckett, Rev. David Rudiger, Rev. James Whysall, Rev. Ian Gooding and Minister in Training, Paul Norris.</p>
1.5.	<p>Principal Bankers: CAFBank, Central Finance Board of the Methodist Church and Central Board of Finance of the Church of England</p>
1.6.	<p>Independent Examiner : A new Independent Examiner is currently being sought to meet the requirements of the Charity Commissioners. It is not possible to put this in place before the Annual Meeting and therefore the Examiners Report will be placed before the Trustees as soon as possible.</p>
2.	Structure, Governance and Management
2.1.	<p>The WEC Constitution: The Constitution was adopted in 1974 and amended in 2001. Copies are available from the Parish Office. This constitution was approved by the Sponsoring Committee, a body comprised of representatives from the parent denominational bodies who monitor the progress and development of the Local Ecumenical Partnership.</p> <p>The Woughton Ecumenical Partnership (WEP) Governing Document: The requirement for the parish to register individually as a charity arising from the 2006 Act became effective 1st October 2008. Following agreement between the sponsoring denominations and under the guidance of Churches Together in England a new standard Governing Document has been agreed with the Charity Commissioners to which local specifics have been added. This document together with an Ecumenical Vision Statement has been sent</p>

to the participating denominations for final approval and at the time of writing this report approval has been received from the United Reformed Church and the Baptist Church. The document will be presented to the Methodist Synod on 24th April and we are waiting to hear from the Registrar of the Oxford Diocese.

In preparing for this report, it is proposed that the 2010 annual meeting will assume that the Governing Document has been approved and the meeting will shadow the format and arrangements for the first Annual Congregational Meeting. An appropriate resolution will be passed at the beginning of the meeting to enable this process. At the meeting the Governing Document will be adopted and Trustees appointed. A list of the nominated Trustees appears as Appendix 2. Immediately following the meeting and subject only to the formal approval from the participating denominations, registration with the Charity Commissioners will take place. WEP is a charitable unincorporated association. The Governing Document, the Ecumenical Vision Statement and the Partnerships Policies are available from the Partnership Secretary.

Future appointment and training of Trustees

The proposed Trustee Body consists of:

- Ex-officio Trustees, being the ministers of the LEP for the time being
- 13 Trustees elected at the Annual Congregational Meeting, 2 nominations per District and 3 additional nominations who will serve as Chair, Treasurer and Secretary.
- Co-opted Trustees shall be any members of the PCC of the Woughton Parish, not otherwise elected as Trustees and also not more than 2 others who may be appointed by the Trustees.

There is no formal training provided for Trustees at the present time although the matter is under consideration.

The organizational structure of the Woughton Ecumenical Partnership and how decisions are made:

There are five Local Church Councils whose task is to maintain and develop the life and mission of their local church. The formal constitution of a local church Council is under review. Each Church nominates two Trustees to the Partnership. A Lay Chair, Secretary and Treasurer are nominated by the members of the Partnership. Members of the Ministerial Team are ex officio Trustees.

The Trustees have delegated to the Clergy Team matters of ministry and spiritual/pastoral care.

There is an Annual Congregational Meeting to receive the Report and Accounts and elect Trustees. The normal business of the partnership is conducted through regular meetings of the Local Church Councils and the Trustees during the year.

Current Membership – stands at 196, a reduction of 6. See appendix 3

	<p><i>The relationship between the Parish and The Milton Keynes Mission Partnership:</i></p> <p>Woughton Ecumenical Partnership is a member of the Mission Partnership of the Milton Keynes Churches Council, which represents the Anglican Deanery, Methodist Circuit, United Reformed District and Baptist Connexion within Milton Keynes. Each congregation appoints representatives to attend the Mission Partnership assembly.</p>
2.2.	<p><i>A statement of the major risks to which Woughton Ecumenical Parish is exposed:</i></p> <p>Risk Assessment and Risk Reduction strategies are being developed in the following areas:- Financial, Reputational, Statutory requirements, Insurance and Operational issues.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Financial – funding problems, which reduce the ability to carry out our aims and objectives, loss of cash, inappropriate investment or reduction of investment income and the security and maintenance of our Church buildings. ○ Reputational – the actions and statements of both Church Officers and Church members may influence, negatively, the perception of those who have occasional contact with the Church. ○ Statutory - meeting the requirements of relevant legislation of which Health and Safety, Discrimination, including Disability, Child Protection and Employment Law are the principal items. ○ Insurance – loss or damage to Buildings and Assets and Public and Employer Liability ○ Operational – the Parish strategy, organization, leadership, decision making and communications must all be effective to ensure that we achieve our primary objectives and activities as set out in Section 3.
3.	Parish Aims and Objectives
3.1.	<p><i>A summary of the objectives of the Parish as set out in the Constitution:</i></p> <p>The purpose of the Charity is to advance the Christian faith in the Area of Benefit (as defined in the Governing Document) in accordance with the principles and practices of the Participating Churches and to meet the objectives of the Ecumenical Vision Statement. See Appendix 4</p>
3.2.	<p><i>An explanation of the Parish’s aims including the difference it seeks to make</i></p> <p>The Parish aims to:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Provide regular public worship for all who wish to attend. b) Pray for the well being of members, adherents, and people and organisations in the wider community. c) Provide opportunities for children, young people and adults to learn about the Christian faith and its key teaching. d) Undertake mission activity including both evangelism and service, for example ideas listed in Community Development Report, Item 4.8

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> e) Engage with the local community and other agencies to work towards meeting the needs of the community. f) Engage in pastoral work for the benefit of members and others. g) Offer baptism, thanksgiving, naming and blessing, marriage and funeral services for members, adherents and people in the wider community with appropriate preparation and follow-up. h) Provide facilities and activities with a Christian ethos for the local community, including the elderly, young and groups with special needs i) Support other charities in the United Kingdom and overseas. j) Seek God’s guidance and direction in all that we do. <p>The above aims are underpinned by the core values of the Woughton Ecumenical Partnership, which are:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Spiritually alive o Together in Christ o Using our gifts o Reaching Out o Welcoming and including all o Being sustainable
3.3.	<p><i>Context and constraints on achieving the aims and objectives.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o The innate diversity of the five District churches and the communities they serve. o Our limited resources. o The difficult economic climate and the impact on our members our funders and the communities with which we work. o The continuing need for significant property maintenance and development. o Any further changes arising from Charities Act legislation and the organisational response of denominations to this. o The planned increase, well above inflation, of the level of Ministry costs being borne by the parish as part of a city wide commitment to being self sufficient over the next ten years.
3.4.	<p><i>An explanation of the charities main objectives for the coming year</i></p> <p>Against the background of work undertaken in relation to 3.2, and affirming and encouraging the development of the life and mission of each Church and the work of the Partnership, the following are key priorities for the year ahead.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Continue to offer acts of worship at five locations. o Strengthen our communication to local community using various media

	<p>including the website and newsletters.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Continue to teach children via Sunday school sessions, Christmas and Easter Cracked, ABC groups, and through a planned holiday club. ○ Develop ongoing work with young people. ○ Establish a group for young adults to help them learn about the Christian faith, pray, study the bible, and form Christian community. ○ Continue to offer opportunities for growth via Bible Study, Home Groups and Courses. ○ Engage with the local community through involvement with regeneration plans and other secular activity. ○ Hold a Parish event in May to explore the meaning of Together in Christ. ○ Develop a sense of ownership of all activities within the Parish by all members. ○ Begin to establish a longer term Partnership plan addressing resources. ○ Define more clearly the ways in which the Homeless activity will develop to meet current needs. ○ Continue to develop ways of meeting the needs of local people by giving opportunities for them to visit local Churches and for members of the Church to go to them. ○ Revisit the timing and priorities of the St. Mary's Restoration project. ○ Successfully finish the registration and revised governance structures arising from the Charities Act. ○ Raise awareness of the need for continuing financial support and maximisation of the use of the Gift Aid benefit.
3.5.	<p><i>An explanation of the use of volunteers:</i></p> <p>The Partnership is very reliant upon the excellent work and skills of the volunteers that are drawn from across the congregations and from beyond. Some of this work includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Lay Chair, Secretary and Treasurer roles are key posts for the Partnership and in most Districts. ○ Worship-leading in the regular Sunday services, and at special times of the year, such as Lent and Advent courses; ○ Providing music for services, and at other times; ○ Providing leadership across the parish in areas such as Youth work, Children's work, Bell ringing, Pastoral Care, Bereavement Care, Marriage preparation, Home Groups, Adults, Babies & Children groups. ○ The Parish office team, supporting administration across the Parish; ○ Weddings - taking bookings and providing support in the services. ○ The restoration and maintenance of all buildings and equipment.

4.

Activity and Achievement Reports

4.1.

Team Leader

- This has been another busy year in the life of our Parish and churches. After a period in which our focus was “being parish” we have come to recognise that our strength is in the diversity of the life and work of our District churches and their links with their own local communities. Therefore whilst WEC has retained the overall governance of the Parish, and some activities remain Parish wide, our focus has changed to encourage local initiative.
- In most of our churches it has been a time for consolidation and growth, building on the solid foundations laid in previous years and moving forward into new initiatives. For St Mary’s this has been a particularly difficult year as they have been grappling with what their key priorities should be. Across the Parish much work has been undertaken, by individuals, groups and churches, within our stated aims and objective, and in particular our core values.
- It was good to welcome both Ian and Paul to the ministry team in September. Paul entered his final year of training for ministry and Ian was licensed to the Parish in a non-stipendiary role. We look forward to Paul’s ordination on 3rd July.
- All members of the ministerial team work across the Parish, but some also have particular responsibility for one or more local congregations. Cathi works with St Mary’s Woughton on the Green and Holy Trinity Woolstone, David with Christ the Vine, Coffee Hall, and I am with Trinity Fishermead and St Thomas’ Church Simpson, whilst continuing as Team Leader. Richard continues to have a “community focus” to his ministry, whilst still doing much in parish life. James, Paul and Ian help wherever needed.
- We greatly value our authorised ministers and the many other lay people who share their God-given gifts so freely. Without them the life, worship and work of the Parish would be diminished.
- At the end of July Paula Collinson decided that it was time for her to leave the Parish. We miss her contribution to the Parish, especially at Christ the Vine where she set up Learning Vine and preached regularly.
- In December we were saddened to hear of the death of Ken Blundell, who had served as an authorised minister in the Parish prior to moving to Aylesbury in 2008. Dennis Reynolds died in January of this year, only a few months after preaching his final sermon at St Mary’s. We continue to miss them both.
- Services continue to be held every Sunday morning in our five buildings, led by ministers and lay people from both within and outside the parish. Evening services are held monthly at Trinity and quarterly at St Mary’s.
- Last year we held Parish services for Ash Wednesday, Holy Week, Easter, Ascension and Pentecost. From the beginning of 2010 festival services are being organised more locally by District churches. The Ash Wednesday,

Maundy Thursday and Good Friday services this year were well attended by people from across the Parish.

- Mission remains high on our agenda, with the Soup Run, Easter and Christmas Cracked, contact with schools, ABC groups, regular children's and youth work and Sunday and mid-week opportunities to welcome people into our churches for fellowship and prayer. Members of the ministerial team have regularly led worship in a number of residential and nursing homes, and baptisms, TNB's, weddings and funerals have given us contact with many people. We have tried to raise awareness of our presence and activities through a programme of leaflet deliveries across the Parish. We have seen an encouraging number of new people in our congregations over the year. We support a number of Christian charities and organisations.
- Over the last twelve months we held three "Five Alive" events, with quality visiting speakers: Mark Sherratt; Andy Frost and Stephen Gaukroger. Whilst they were relatively well attended by members of our churches they did not attract people who would not normally attend worship. Therefore it has been decided not to hold any more of these events in the near future.
- A number of young people and adults have been baptised over the course of the year. The baptistery at Christ the Vine was completed in April 2009 and has been used. In November 2009 one of our young people was confirmed. We had a number of candidates for confirmation in March of this year but the Milton Keynes wide confirmation service was cancelled. We hope that these people and others will be confirmed in November.
- "Parish Prayers" was held three times a week until the end of September, led by both lay and ordained people. However, numbers attending were low and it was decided to discontinue. The monthly prayer diary continues to be an important resource, helping us to focus our prayers day by day. Some of our churches have started or developed their own prayer groups.
- We continue to encourage house groups and Bible study groups. Advent and Lent groups were organised locally rather than at Parish level.
- In January we held a "Parish morning", when Tim Norwood helped us to think about how we discover the mind of Christ. A similar event is planned for May, when Tim will help us to focus on one of our core values: "Together in Christ".
- After a review the WEC Standing Group ceased to exist last Summer. WEC has been working towards charity registration, and considering the structural implications. The fact that we are seen as a "single congregation ecumenical partnership" has made this particularly complex and time consuming.
- Our annual meetings this year, both locally and as a Parish, see a number of people standing down from positions of responsibility, others taking their place, and some continuing. We thank God for them all, and we

	<p>express our appreciation to them for sharing their God-given gifts and time so willingly.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ As we review the past year we know that God has been working with us. We look forward to the coming year, knowing that God will continue to guide and help us in the challenges, opportunities and developments that lie ahead. <p>Heather Pollard</p>
4.2.	<p>Secretarial:</p> <p>The Parish office offers support to the Ministerial Team by providing the resources needed as well as being a busy hub of activity. The new colour photocopier has enabled high quality literature to be produced reflecting the professional image of the Parish as it communicates with the local community.</p> <p>Barbara continues to be supported by Pauline Rudiger handling all wedding matters and Barbara Timmins as a valuable assistant. Geoffrey Miller continues maintenance of the website for which we are very grateful. Investigations continue to develop the website to ensure that it is fully used and reflects the variety and diversity of the life of Woughton.</p>
4.3.	<p>Holy Trinity Church Woolstone</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Small in size but big in outlook, with a positive and supportive church community. ○ Links with the community are made via WOW (Women of Woolstone) and the Tuesday club. Every effort is being made to strengthen these links such as Easter service linked with the WOW Egg hunt, carol singing/Santa event, carol singing in the local pub and nursing home with support from St. Mary's Christmas choir. ○ Size means it is clear that we can't keep doing the same as we have always done and expect to survive and grow. As a stepping stone, experiments in Cafe Style worship have been positive. A pilot scheme to move some services to the local pub is in place driven by a need to be visible in the community, informal and welcoming; also potential cost saving. ○ Current financial position is untenable due to the unrealistic allocation of 33% of my time despite the church having only 14% of the membership. <p>Cathi Williams</p>
4.4.	<p>Christ the Vine Community Church, Coffee Hall</p> <p>Record of some of what God has been doing at Christ the Vine Community Church during church year 2009/10. Highs and lows, in no particular order:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ News faces, one or two now regular worshippers, alas, others not seen again. ○ Encouragement from Junior Church, where two or three people provide a small, but wide, age-range with a meaningful, enjoyable, experience.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A new member asking for Adult Baptism. ○ Mid-week house group regularly drawing 6 to 10 people. ○ A fine, supportive music group, enhancing our worship. ○ At Christmastime many people came through the doors for our services, including the New Chapter School on Coffee Hall for a Christingle service. ○ Joys and problems over having the busiest building in the parish! ○ Spasmodic vandalism, expensive and inconvenient, as well as time consuming. ○ New hire arrangement (much reduced) agreed with MK Council. ○ Sadly said farewell to the AA local group, who have moved on. ○ Re-decorated the Worship area, and moving through the rest of the building. ○ Our regular Christmas Coffee Cards & Cakes, was the best ever. ○ The first CVCC May Fayre was successful enough for us to try again this year. ○ The Parish's new Baptistry (housed at CVCC) was used for the first time. ○ The 'Learning Vine' is now being used regularly by ACE for evening classes. ○ The DCC has reviewed activities in the light of the Parish Core Values and is working on a Vision statement as well as producing a CVCC Welcome Pack. ○ We are grateful for a small, increasingly ageing, dedicated group of people, who keep CVCC open and operational, not only for themselves, but for the whole parish. <p>David Rudiger</p>
4.5.	<p>Trinity Church, Fishermead</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The membership roll shows steady increase. Two believers' baptism services were held: in September for three children/young people and in February for an adult. Spiritual growth can be seen in a number of areas of church life and an increasing number of people are playing their part in the life of Trinity Church and the wider Parish. ○ Numbers attending House Group have increased. In addition to the usual Lent and Advent studies we have studied a course on preparing the church for mission and a personal evangelism course. ○ A team of eleven intercessors was established in the summer. Much of the work is done individually, but the group has met for discussion and prayer and is currently studying the Dunamis training course on prayer. ○ The worship style has continued to evolve, with more contemporary songs and "band-led" worship one Sunday morning a month. The Worship Group has led morning worship once or twice a quarter.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Pastoral care is offered through pastoral groups and informally through friendships. Prayer ministry is offered after services and as part of Drop in. People have appreciated this, and a number of testimonies of healing have been shared. ○ We have hosted Parish events and services, including the outdoor Pentecost Praise and Good Friday children’s workshop. ○ Attempts to make links and share the Gospel with the people of Fishermead continue. Links with Penwith School, Willows School and Children’s Centre, Frank Howe Court and the Fremantle Trust house continue to be built. Sunday afternoon drop-in is held fortnightly. At various times during the year we have delivered leaflets to the 1631 homes in Fishermead. We regularly pray for local residents and organisations and invite them to send prayer requests to us. In November we were involved in the Glow in the Park community event and in January we held an event aimed at introducing people from the community to Jesus. We keep in touch with regeneration plans for Fishermead. ○ We have continued to seek God’s guidance for our life together and our mission. We held three 24 hour prayer events in 2009 and another in March 2010. The “dreams book” started during 2008 has been filled up and a second one already has a number of entries. A number of key themes have emerged, and we are sure that God is not only helping us in our current work, but that he is also leading us into new things. In the light of this our text for the coming year is Isaiah 43:19 – “See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the desert and streams in the wasteland.” <p><i>Heather Pollard</i></p>
4.6.	<p>St. Mary’s Church Woughton on the Green</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Focus is currently on the two core values: ‘Spirituality alive’ and ‘Together in Christ’. The hope is that as we grow closer to God and to each other, God’s vision for our church will become clear. As a part of this, we are valuing the Oxford Diocese programme ‘Sustaining the sacred centre’ ○ Approval of Local Authority, the Diocesan Advisory Committee and English Heritage to our proposals for the redevelopment of the building. ○ The last twelve months have been difficult for many, in particular a lack of clarity over where the building work fits with mission/ministry priorities. For this reason the work is currently on hold. ○ The Quinquennial report was received and all urgent repairs, primarily concerned with water ingress, have been carried out at a cost of £5,600. ○ Permission received to carry out the urgent Electrical repairs. ○ The 29th annual lecture was given by Lord Griffiths, his theme was Faith and Politics in Britain today. The 30th lecture will be delivered on Monday 6th September by Ann Morrisy, a popular speaker at Greenbelt.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There have been many successful occasions when the church has been opened to the community for social, fundraising or prayerful events. ○ Currently piloting a ‘liquid worship’ approach to All-Age worship. ○ Thanks given for the many years of faithful service to Brian Baldwin (treasurer) Norma Baldwin (churchwarden) and Barbara Albone (DCC secretary) who are not standing for re-election this year. Also to Mark Saunders, our DCC chair who left earlier in the year. ○ The year ahead will bring challenges, particularly in terms of continuity and experience. However, we look forward to a fresh and exciting 2010 <p><i>Cathi Williams</i></p>
4.7.	<p>St. Thomas’ Church Simpson</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We celebrated an important birthday in the family this year as Nellie Medlock reached 100! ○ Heather has brought care and thought to our liturgy and worship. Richard’s leadership has also been very valued in all age worship and other services. ○ Numbers have remained steady and a very full cycle of events and activities undertaken. Financially we even managed a small surplus in part because there were no major maintenance issues and the parish had lightened our portion of the parish share, which was much appreciated. ○ The effective fund-raising tradition of St Thomas’ continued with Pat organising quizzes, readings/music, supporting walkers’ visits, open-day and sales events. ○ Alison Beckett has joined the teaching team for Junior Church allowing sessions to be held on 3 out of 4 weeks. Our appreciation to all of the leaders and helpers for their work in this valuable area. ○ The musical life of St Thomas’ remains varied, two fine organists, Andrea and Alan and regular services with the music group. ○ Community events have continued with Hope09 Fun Day. The church has been included in Simpson Village events, notably the ‘history walk’ in which St Thomas’ was a focal point. We have opened for walkers and the music school continues to use our facilities. The Wednesday get-togethers are well-established. <p><i>David Wilson</i></p>
4.8.	<p>Community Development</p> <p><u>Soup Run</u></p> <p>As a practical expression of Faith in Jesus Christ, the Soup Run offers soup, sandwiches, drinks and appropriate food to those people who are homeless or vulnerably housed in Milton Keynes.</p> <p>Our aim is to offer to meet basic needs unconditionally and consistently and to build friendships within the limitations set by the Soup Runs policies and procedures. We also aim to act as ‘signposts’, providing people with information about relevant agencies and organizations.</p>

	<p>Highlights of the year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Support for homeless and vulnerably housed people every Wednesday and Friday night in three MK locations: Station, theatre and library. ○ Distribution of boxes at Christmas containing gifts and basic supplies and Gideon New Testaments. ○ News Years Day meal. <p>Possible future plans:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Starting a further evening depending on availability of more volunteers. ○ A winter night shelter based at a different church each night of the week. ○ An ‘open house’ night for other groups thinking of starting a Soup Run. ○ Work towards a café/drop-in in one central location for homeless & vulnerably housed people. <p>With thanks to organizers, volunteers and those who contribute financially or in prayer.</p> <p><u>People’s Project</u></p> <p>The project to build a community centre ‘by the people, for the people’ in Netherfield has again made slow progress although links with the local Regeneration projects have been made.</p> <p>Work with the Groundwork Federation has helped in the development of the feasibility study and questionnaires are being circulated amongst local agencies and organizations who might be interested in using a community building.</p> <p><u>Netherfield Partnership / Farthing Enterprise Centre.</u></p> <p>I serve as the Woughton Ecumenical Parish’s representative on the Management Board which runs the centre. (See March Roundabout Article for more information)</p> <p>Richard Beckett</p>
4.9.	<p>Marriage in the Parish</p> <p>General:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 34 weddings, marriage blessings and renewal of vows have taken place in 2009. Weddings offer opportunities for contact with people who don’t attend church, and we give each couple a Bible. ○ The high volume of weddings means a lot of work for quite a significant number of people, both ordained and lay. Thanks to those who give their time as part of the Wedding Bookings Team and the Marriage Preparation Group. ○ Good administration is vital, and we thank Pauline Rudiger who does most of this and Brian Baldwin who deals with the fees. <p>Wedding Bookings Team:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Booking sessions are held on Wednesday evenings at Christ the Vine Church with a member of the Ministerial Team and a lay person acting as

	<p>administrator.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We have continued to review and revise our procedures, made more difficult due to the problems associated with offering both Anglican and Free Church services. <p>Marriage Preparation Group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Membership of the group has changed over the year. ○ 35 couples have attended the marriage preparation sessions held during the year. All have given positive feedback. ○ PowerPoint is used and each person is given a booklet for use during the session and to take home. <p><i>Heather Pollard</i></p>
4.10.	<p>Christening Group</p> <p>The Woughton Ecumenical Parish welcomes requests from families who live in the Parish or have contact with one of the churches or have links with members.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Christening group visitors are: Richard Beckett, Di Miller, Vernese Nurse, Ann Dodds, Lynn Castle, Lynn Davidge and Beverley Glasspool and we thank them for carrying out this important task. ○ 17 Baptisms have taken place and 8 Thanksgiving, Naming and Blessing services. a slightly lower number than previous years. Applying the Parish Policy, several enquirers have been referred to their own Parishes. ○ Work this year has included the revision and approval of the Parish Christening Procedure and Policy. <p><i>Richard Beckett</i></p>
4.11.	<p>Bereavement Care</p> <p>The bereavement group acts on referrals from the clergy. Initially a card is sent to the next of kin – a follow up visit may take place, depending on circumstances. On the anniversary of the deceased another card is sent.</p> <p>Our present team is Jill Strong, Kathy White, Alison Lucas, Lyn Castle and Barry Messham.</p> <p>A bimonthly tea is held at Christ the Vine for bereaved families, while an annual tea is held at Frosts garden centre in June. The memorial service which is held in November is well attended and appreciated.</p> <p><i>Barry Messham</i></p>
4.12.	<p>Christian Aid</p> <p>in 2009 the Parish raised £3,415. With grateful thanks to all collectors and co-ordinators.</p> <p><i>Anne Dodds</i></p>
4.13.	<p>ABC (Adults, Babies and Children)</p> <p>ABC continues to thrive at both Coffee Hall and Woughton and offer a good</p>

	<p>space for children and parents.</p> <p>Barbara Albone has stood down from overall coordinator of ABC. Many thanks to her for all her hard work over the years. Cathi Williams has taken on the coordinating role, though Barbara continues to hold an administrative role.</p> <p>Coffee Hall</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Janice Evans, a member at Christ the Vine is now leader of the group having taken over when Nicky Graves left to be a fulltime Mum. ○ Volunteers support Janice in planning and delivering the programme each week. 12 new children have been welcomed during this year and plans are in place to be part of the Woughton Carnival Procession. ○ Fundraising throughout the year (selling bric-a-brac) has raised enough money to purchase a small Bouncy castle for ABC to use at their regular sessions. ○ Holiday projects welcoming children from 0 – 10 years continue during holiday periods. <p>Woughton</p> <p>Alison Beckett leads this group with 25 children currently on the register. Two volunteers who have supported the group for several years have left as their children reach school age, Nicky and Claire.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In the summer 6 older regular children left for pre-school/nursery. ○ Christmas party attended by 19 children and their parents/carers. ○ Average attendance between Christmas and Easter has been 11 children with numbers rising steadily to 20 after half term. <p>Many thanks to the rota of refreshment helpers Elsie, Lore, Rosemary, regular helper Barry and Richard who provides the music.</p> <p><i>Cathi Williams</i></p>
4.14.	<p>Youth Work</p> <p>2009</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Successful launch of Bible Study, split by gender - More God-Focused sessions on Sunday Evenings - Launch of Youth Service (Last Sunday of every month) - Soul Survivor which inspired an encouragement for Holy Spirit and Prayer work. - Youth ran a Soul Survivor Service for the Parish - Began to look at Evangelism <p>2010</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Holy Spirit Course - Soul Survivor Preparation Course - Freedom in Christ for Youth - Focus on Evangelism and Mission (including application for Evangelism fund)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Launch of 18-25's group (FROGs) - Potential Launch of 5-11's group (Pyglets)
4.15.	<p>CONNECT</p> <p>Meeting monthly, the ladies of the Parish have maintained a regular but varied programme. A talk on visits to the Holy Land, much laughter at a Murder Mystery evening and understanding the wonders of Aromatherapy. Evenings are hosted and chaired by members and all value the friendship and relaxation that these evenings offer.</p>
5.	Financial Review
5.1.	<p><i>A statement of the principal financial policies including reserves:</i></p> <p>The fundamental accounting policies are in line with the Charity Commissioners SORP 2005. The accounts are presented on a Receipts and Payments basis</p> <p>The Parish has a range of Unrestricted Funds to meet the general running costs of the parish and a number of Restricted Funds to manage those funds given for a specific purpose.</p> <p>The primary purposes of the funding is to enable our mission objectives to be achieved, to meet the ministry costs set out by the Mission Partnership each year and to ensure that the parish premises are insured and maintained in good order.</p> <p>The reserve policies for unrestricted funds are to hold a minimum of 25% of a year's forward expenditure.</p> <p>The Parish Share and all agreed and budgeted Parish overheads are shared by each District on an actual cost basis where possible, e.g. insurance, and on an agreed proportional share for all other matters.</p>
5.2.	<p><i>Banking and accounting arrangements:</i></p> <p>During 2009 the parish implemented an integration of all its routine banking and fund accounting arrangements into one central system whilst retaining responsibility and accountability within each District and other operating units. The transfer arrangements were completed successfully.</p>
5.3.	<p><i>Details of any fund in deficit and actions to be taken:</i></p> <p>There were a number of funds that experienced an operating deficit in the current year. Please refer to the Funds Movement summary with comments against each fund and the notes to the accounts.</p>
5.4.	<p><i>A Report of Fund Raising Activity:</i></p> <p>The principal methods of raising funds are:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Members donations and tax rebates thereon, ○ Subscriptions from regular attendees to certain charitable activities. ○ A wide variety of traditional fundraising events including annual fetes, concerts, quizzes.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Minor Grants to assist the operation of certain charitable activities ○ Major grants and special appeals to support significant building projects ○ A range of charitable activities including Wedding and Funeral Fees ○ Interest on deposits and dividends from investments.
5.5.	<p><i>Investment Policies and Performance:</i></p> <p>To hold the parish surplus cash funds in secure interest bearing accounts. To hold investment capital in secure and ethical funds in accordance with the Trust Deeds. Performance of all these sources has diminished in 2009 due to the rapid reduction in bank interest rates and the decline of dividends from equity investments. Arising from the consolidation of bank accounts the opportunity is there to update our investment activity.</p>
5.6.	<p><i>Overall Financial situation</i></p> <p>The adverse movement of balances in the unrestricted funds, reported in 2008, continued in 2009 with a deficit of £11,516.54. This continuing deficit arises from a lack of sufficient growth in Membership donations, ministry costs increasing at 8% per annum as part of a parish objective to eliminate the subsidy, together with an increase in other Parish overheads including some additional promotion costs. Also there was some impact arising from a downturn of investment income and some essential maintenance of our buildings. The overall unrestricted reserves of the Parish at the 31st December 2009 are £77,665 which represents approximately 45% of the 2010 running expenses.</p> <p>A projection of this trend was presented to the Trustees in September 2009 indicating that 2013 is the year when our reserves will be under serious pressure unless the margins are improved through additional income and/or reductions in our operating costs.</p> <p>The importance of a well established and regularly reviewed business plan is even more crucial now and should rank alongside and be in support of the Mission, Pastoral and Public Benefit priorities of the Trustees.</p>