

Annual Reports 1980

APM 26/4/81

Vicar's Report (Rev. Peter Mitchell)

Introduction

My first report – three most significant events during the past year

- a. The institution and induction of the new vicar
- b. The final confirmation of the new scheme for the united benefice of the parishes of Badsey with Aldington and Wickhamford
- c. The very large increase in the Quota Assessment for 1981 to cover the increased financial commitments of the parish

Institution and Induction

Our thanks are again due to all those responsible for our coming to Badsey, and once again, may I express on behalf of Mrs. Mitchell, Sara and myself our sincere thanks for the most kind and warm welcome you have given us. These past seven months have been a very busy time indeed, and very much a period of finding our feet and fitting in to an already very well-established life of the church and parish. Thank you again for the many kindnesses we have received.

Our thanks are also due to all those who in different ways help to maintain the life of the church during the Interregnum. This is always something of a testing time for a parish, but the life of the church here in Badsey was very well sustained and our thanks are due to all who were responsible. Thanks are also due to our two churchwardens, Mr. G. Willcox and Mr. R.D.H. Seaman, both of whom I am pleased to say are continuing to serve in this most responsible office, and also in his absence, to Canon R. Stevens who assisted the parish so well during the interregnum, assistance which I know was very much appreciated. I must of course add my appreciation of the other church officers, members of the P.C.C. and our regular congregation for their invaluable and faithful support. Mention especially by name Mr. Bert Owen and Mrs. Betty Owen, our Sacristan and Assistant Sacristan and Mrs Marjorie Perkins and the ladies of the Sanctuary Guild as well as those who assist with the church cleaning.

Order in Council

As the parish is already aware, the Order in Council confirming the new scheme was published in the London Gazette on the 17th Oct last and this authorized the establishment of the new united benefices of the parishes of Badsey with Aldington and Wickhamford. The patrons of the united benefice continue to be the Dean and Chapter, Christchurch, Oxford.

Increased Diocesan Quota

In company with many other parishes, the church in Badsey is faced with raising a greatly increased amount for the Diocesan quota this year as well as facing other increased costs if all its commitments are to be met. Consultations with the Diocesan Stewardship Advisor were held and the Finance Sub-committee have drawn up definite proposals in line with the recommendations approved by the P.C.C. Increased support for the present Stewardship and Planned Giving Scheme is to be sought together with a wider appeal to both the church and the parish. A special Thanksgiving and Renewal Service is to be held on the Sunday next to St. James' Day, the Patronal Festival, and later support for the church throughout the parish is to be sought for the Annual Church Fete to be held on Saturday

September 5th. Whilst it is to be hoped both these events will be more than successful, the principle form of giving should still be through the Planned Giving Scheme with covenanting whenever possible. Whilst individual and personal levels of giving remain entirely confidential between the giver and Mr. T. Sparrow (they are not known to myself), and whilst we are more than grateful for all those who support the church in this way, from the accounts it can be seen that the average level of giving per week per person or in other cases per household is around 41p, which when faced with today's costs is quite modest.

Pattern of Services

The present pattern of services at Badsey is now well established and I see no need of immediate change in the near future. By today's standards elsewhere, Evensong continues to be very well supported indeed. Our special appreciation and thanks are due to Mr. Reg Kyte our organist and the choir itself who continue to support and lead our worship so well. Mention must also be made of our Epistle and Lesson Readers for our services together with our regular sidesmen as well as those who lead the intercessions so sympathetically at the 11am services.

The present form of services is that of Series 11 with Evensong from the BCP (1662). With the exception of the Baptism Service, also Series 11 the occasional offices are from the BCP. The ASB was published in November its lectionary and collects are already regularly used in addition to certain of its prayers. In due time consideration will have to be given to the possible wider use of at least some of its services. I believe the ASB has come to stay and has a definite appeal to the younger people of today, and indeed some of the younger clergy may know no other form of worship. Also, there is the need to introduce our confirmation candidates to its use. But there are things which I believe will evolve as we become more accustomed to its form of words and thought.

The quarterly group service of Evensong continues to be held on the 5th Sunday of the month although in 1981 three of these Sundays fall on Bank Holiday weekends or on Mothering Sunday. I think there may need to be a fresh look at the continuing use of these services in view of the most recent pattern of support. Our Mothering Sunday morning service this year was extremely well supported.

Church Services – attendances

Baptisms	1980	18
	1979	22

1978 Communicants

Easter Day	140
Christmas Day	160
Normal Sunday	30

Numbers usually attending Sunday services 75

1980 Communicants

Easter Day	92
Christmas Day	175

Normal Sunday 29

Numbers usually attending Sunday services 80

1981 Communicants

Easter Day 85

Lent 1980 – 5 Thursday services in Lent including 1 at Badsey

Lay Reader

Mr. John Callaghan was formally licenced by the Bishop of Worcester to the united benefice, at Evensong in Worcester Cathedral on Saturday April 11th. We are fortunate in having him with us and he is most anxious to help and willing to assist. We extend a most warm welcome to him and his wife, Mary, and hope they will be very happy with us.

Thanks

The prayer group continues to meet very faithfully, unheralded and unsung, but is a very vital part of our church's life, and indeed the deepening of our own spiritual life. Closely coupled with the prayer group is the pastoral concern for many of the sick of this parish. Our thanks are also due to Mrs. Betty Owen for her untiring efforts for the Church of England Children's Society, and also to Mrs. R.D.H. Seaman for her work for Christian Aid.

Visiting

Since coming to the parish I have been able to visit 106 separate homes in Badsey and 62 in Wickhamford at least once. Some I have visited more than once as the pastoral situation requires. I am always anxious to know of anyone who would like a visit, or of course anyone who may be sick where a visit is necessary. I visit the long-term patients in our hospitals both in Evesham and Worcester at least once a month, and once a fortnight whenever possible. Again, I am always anxious to know of anyone admitted to hospital, both for the parish intercessions and the visit itself.

Other matters

- a. The discussion on the extended ministry and its wider implications together with a further report issued on the same subject.
- b. Brandt Report later this year

Further Afield – national scene

- a. Prayer Book Protection Measure – introduced in Parliament to safeguard the use of the BCP and not only its availability
- b. Appointment of Bishops – echoes of disestablishment and the extent to which the church should govern its own affairs – the particular role of the C of E as the established church of the land

All in all a very busy, lively, active introduction to the church and parish but one which I hope will continue to grow as we seek to build God's Kingdom in this place.

Churchwardens' Report

The Annual General Meeting of 1980 found St. James' Church in the middle of an interregnum, during which we were fortunate to enjoy the services of the Rev. Canon Reg Stevens who had shortly before retired from the post of Rural Dean of Dudley. Canon Stevens conducted nearly all the Sunday morning services, the mid-week Eucharists, the weddings and funerals and some baptisms. In addition Canon Stevens did a great deal of pastoral visiting and by voluntarily attending P.C.C. meetings thoroughly identified himself with the parish. His advice and support during the interregnum were much appreciated by the churchwardens and congregation. We were grateful too in the corps of Lay Readers, and especially to Arthur Kerr for conducting our Sunday evening services which happily remained well supported. Another factor which helped us survive the difficult months of 1980 was our revived choir who were splendidly consistent throughout.

One unfortunate consequence however of the interregnum was the need to abandon the plans that had been formed for Badsey to celebrate the historic 13th Century Centenary of our diocese. At least Badsey church bells were rung for a short time on the evening of Ascension Day. The P.C.C. chartered a coach to take a few members of the congregation to the County Cricket Ground at Worcester to join with all the other parishes of the diocese in a moving open-air celebration of Holy Communion led by His Grace, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Runcie. Also, ladies of the Altar Guild responded to an invitation from All Saints Church, Evesham, to participate in a Flower Festival in honour of the Centenary and the Badsey flower arrangements on the chancel steps at All Saints were much admired.

In the middle of September 1980, we were most pleased to welcome the Rev. Peter Mitchell with his wife and daughter, Sara. During the summer a small number of helpers under Ralph Taylor's supervision worked to put the vicarage in good order, and with the assistance of small grants from the Diocesan Parsonages Board and from Christchurch College, Oxford, this was completed without cost either to the P.C.C. or to the new incumbent. In the meantime, the Church Commissioners had decided to join Badsey and Wickhamford into one benefice. This seemed to the P.C.C. to make no great difference since our two churches had enjoyed the same incumbent from Tudor times. We were able joyfully to welcome the churchwardens and congregation of Wickhamford to the Service of Induction and Installation; and the church was necessarily packed full to meet the new vicar, the Lord Bishop of Worcester, the Archdeacon of Worcester and a representative from Christchurch. This was the Archdeacon's last induction before retirement, and probably the last visit from Bishop Robin Woods. The bishop commenced his address by commenting on the beauty of the interior of the church, a fitting tribute to the devotion of Margery Perkins and others.

The Wardens would like to thank the Sidesmen for their consistently loyal support during the year. Recently Robert Cain has been co-opted to their numbers on the departure of Jack Bartlett from the parish after many years as sidesman and member of the Overseas Committee. We would like to pay our tribute too, to the long and inspired service of Daphne Bell in the Sunday School from which she retired in September 1980 to be succeeded by Kathy Small.

During the year this P.C.C. has like almost every parish in the land, been faced by growing anxieties about finance. This was due not merely to the effects of inflation upon church expenses, but also to the decision taken unanimously by the P.C.C. to support the country-wide move to increase clergy stipends substantially and retirement pensions. The wardens feel that as a matter of urgency we must try to broaden the base of our congregation and those committed to regular giving and covenanting as well as to enlisting participation of the whole village community in maintaining their church through major efforts like the Church Fete.

Another question which the P.C.C. has needed to discuss and which is likely to come well to the fore in the coming months is that of the fuller participation by members of the laity in all aspects of the church's ministry in our villages. This becomes increasingly urgent as the numbers of stipendiary full-time clergy declines. Forecasts suggest that the urgency will be severe in the Vale of Evesham; already the three Littletons and Cleeve Prior share one young clergyman; Sedgeberrow and Hinton-on-the-Green lose their vicar shortly and there is no indication of any clear intention to replace him. The consequence of such moves when the Christian Ministry in the Vale can only be to increase the burden on our own vicar. But our fellow Christians in the non-conformist churches have needed to face up to this very problem for many years and the challenge comes to us to accept the commitments that go with our beliefs.

Sidesmen

- Mr. Hartwell
- Mr. P.E. Embleton
- Mr. A. Bell
- Mr. D. Granger
- Mr. T.C. Sparrow
- Mr. D. Jelfs
- Mr. P. Sparrow
- Mr. R. Taylor
- Mr. K. Cole
- Mr. R. Gregory
- Mr. J. Ives
- Mr. G. Perry
- Mr. R. Cain
- Mr. C. Jones

Overseas Committee

A very successful Coffee Evening was held last October at the home of Miss Norah Smith, at which approximately £130 was raised for the work of the church overseas. A further sum of £150 was donated to the Arctic Fellowship towards the support of Bobby Nakoolak. A letter of thanks was received from the secretary of the Arctic Fellowship in this country and more recently a letter was received from the Very Reverend John Sperry, Bishop of the Arctic, expressing his thanks for the support we have given over the past years. He says, "we are very grateful indeed for this help and owing to Bobby's inability to put together any letter of appreciation in good English, I am happy to relate his own personal greetings and thanks." A total of £750 has been sent to the Arctic Fellowship over the last 3 years or so, and present funds stand at approximately £120.

The vicar has been in touch with the Church Missionary Society, with the object of forming a link with a missionary in the field in the Middle or Far East and we are hoping that later on this year, such a link will be formed and to support his work in the mission field.

I am sorry to relate that Mr. Jack Bartlett left the parish during this past year and our thanks are due to him for his work as Secretary/Treasurer. Mr. A. Owen was elected by the committee to carry out these duties.

Another coffee evening will be held at the home of Miss Norah Smith on Friday 22nd May, when it is hoped that the congregation will again give their support as they have done so generously in the past. (A.Owen)

Church Fabric

Interior

I am pleased to report that the interior of the church is in excellent condition in general and fortunately we have no maintenance problems. This is largely due to the great care and service given by the group of ladies who regularly and conscientiously clean the church and furniture to whom I would express sincere and grateful thanks.

During the past year the floor of the church has been vastly improved by being sealed which makes cleaning much easier and more satisfactory. For this benefit we have to thank Miss Norah Smith who generously defrayed the expenses and to Mr. Ralph Taylor who carried out the work. Our grateful thanks to both. The organ is in good condition being regularly tuned and cared for.

External

Whilst generally speaking the stonework etc is in fairly good condition, there is still some work to be done after the last examination. The roof needs constant surveillance and slates need replacing. We shall be looking into the question of the stonework repairs during the coming months. One front gate will require repair. The boiler house has been much better since the alterations and in spite of the plentiful rain we have suffered no flooding.

The churchyard is in fairly good condition. Instructions have been given some time ago for the removal of the soil etc by the lychgate and this is having attention. Also the question of the disposal of surplus material from grave digging is being investigated. The grass cutting was undertaken last year by the Vale Young Farmers who in spite of the difficult weather conditions managed to keep things in reasonably good shape. We are very grateful to them for their efforts and a letter expressing our appreciation has been sent to them.

Help is required this year in keeping down the grass around and inside the kerbs mainly on the front churchyard. We would greatly appreciate the help of anyone who can bring a pair of shears and spend half an hour or so cutting down this grass.

In conclusion may I say that we are hoping to shortly have arrangements in hand whereby the rubbish can be kept tidy and not just dumped in a heap under the trees.

Social Committee

Three main social events were held during this year. A Garden Party in June at the Manor House by the kind invitation of Mr. and Mrs. Bowler. This was a successful evening with a profit of £94. The main event of the fete in September was marred by the weather but with great help from the various organisations involved and the use of the Badsey school hall, we had a successful afternoon realising £309. The Harvest Supper in October was most enjoyable, great help being given by the ladies of the congregation led by Mrs. Lee, in providing the meal. The entertainment of a Barn Dance was exhausting but enjoyable. Profit: £38.

I would like to thank the Social Committee for their efforts this year, and exhort them to even greater ones in the year ahead.

Financial report

ST. JAMES CHURCH BADSEY.							
Receipts and Payments for the year ended 31st December, 1980 (with 1979 comparative figures).							
	1980		1979			1980	
	£	£	£	£		£	£
GENERAL INCOME					GENERAL EXPENDITURE		
Stewardship Contributions	1747.15		1537.17		Diocesan Quota	2301.00	
Tax Recovered	282.56	2034.81	254.34	1791.51	Expenses: Vicar and Visiting Clergy	157.60	2069.00
					Vicarage Feb - Sept 1980.	72.72	382.37
						2534.32	2451.37
Donations	47.55		233.10		Running Expenses: Electricity	161.30	62.02
Collections at Sunday Services	863.35		936.31		Gas	211.88	242.64
Weddings & Funerals	138.08	1048.98	192.38	1361.79	Water	3.00	3.75
Regular Giving		3083.79		3153.30	Cleaning	-	70.85
					Insurance	368.20	329.84
Social Events: Pats	309.26		356.59		Altar Fund	65.93	3.44
: Manor House	94.88		53.57		Choir & Organist	138.50	122.50
: Harvest Supper	37.97		29.38		Sunday School	30.00	30.00
		442.11		439.54	Parish Review	65.00	30.00
					Stationery: Stewardship	19.52	-
P.C.C. Fees: Rents	-		-		: General	-	36.49
: Funerals	120.45		196.20		Sundry Expenses	9.00	-
: Weddings	293.40	413.85	45.50	241.70	Churchyard - New Mover	-	132.25
Grants for Churchyard Maint.		118.00		104.68	Churchyard - Expenses	161.06	183.64
Sundry Income		27.15			Grants to Church Work outside Badsey	211.00	210.00
					Donations:	32.00	212.00
TOTAL GENERAL INCOME		4084.90		3939.22	TOTAL GENERAL EXPENDITURE		3993.71
FABRIC FUND					FABRIC FUND		
Donations	73.50		375.00		Building Repairs	-	560.06
Interest on Investments	747.32		604.83		Organ Repairs	43.00	28.00
Tax on Investment Interest - Rec.	20.21		56.95		Clock and Bells	32.48	30.51
Insurance Claim - Storm Damage		841.03		1216.78			75.48
					TOTAL PAYMENTS FROM CHURCH FUNDS		4069.19
TOTAL RECEIPTS FOR CHURCH FUNDS		4925.93		5156.00	SURPLUS OF RECEIPTS OVER PAYMENTS		856.74
COLLECTIONS FOR SPECIAL PURPOSES		590.99		299.69	COLLECTIONS FOR SPECIAL PURPOSES		590.99
TOTAL RECEIPTS		5516.92		5455.69	TOTAL EXPENDITURE & SURPLUS		5516.92

PRESENTED TO THE ANNUAL CHURCH MEETING ON 26TH APRIL, 1981.

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31st DECEMBER, 1980.					
	1980	1980	1979	1979	
General Fund					
The Binyon Clock and Bell Fund	£ 200.00		£ 200.00		
Fabric Fund balance b/Fwd 1st Jan.	6032.42		5634.21		
	6232.42		5634.21		
Add Surplus of Receipts and Payments	883.55		328.74		
= Fabric Fund balance at 31st Dec.	7115.97	5699.79	6023.42		
Current Account at 1st January	125.84	109.77	97.41		
Add Surplus of Receipts over Payments	91.19		28.43		
= Current Account at 31st December		£ 217.03	£ 125.84		
THE TOTAL FUNDS OF ST. JAMES BADSEY ARE:		£ 2215.00	£ 6328.25		
The Funds are held in the following investments:		1980	1979		
County Borough of Oldham 12½ Bond Maturing 1982		1000.00	1000.00		
C. of E. Central Board of Finance: Investment Fund		1154.42	1099.16		
Lloyds Bank: Deposit Account		4371.16	3862.84		
Current Account		472.39	540.26		
Payments in Advance or Accrued		101.99	143.99		
TOTAL		£ 2215.00	£ 6328.25		
Signed: <i>J. Battaglia</i> Treasurer 18.1.81 Date					
<i>D. H. Rogers</i> Church Accountant 18.1.81 Date					
Audited and Found Correct.					
<i>A. L. Knight</i> Auditor 27.1.81 Date					
NOTES TO THE 1980 ACCOUNTS.					
1. The outline of 1980 is summarised below:					
	Current Account	Fabric Fund	Total		
Total Income	£ 4,085	£ 841	£ 4,926		
Total Expenditure	£ 3,994	£ 75	£ 4,069		
Surplus	£ 91	£ 766	£ 857		
2. The current account is used for the collection of all regular income, mainly parishioners giving, and disbursement of day to day running expenses through the year. The objective is that we should have a small surplus each year which can be transferred to the Fabric Fund.					
3. In 1980, regular giving was actually less than in 1979 and we are fortunate that, despite the general increase in prices, a number of expenses were lower than in 1979, and a small surplus was achieved.					
In 1981 this good fortune is unlikely to be repeated. The Quota, our contribution to the cost of maintaining a full time priest, will increase to £3,477 and we expect further increases in general price levels.					
4. The increase in the Fabric Fund during 1980, thanks to high interest rates and few repair bills, helped to maintain the value of our reserves. The five-yearly survey is imminent and repairs in 1981 will probably be higher.					
5. Our expenditure from Current Account included donations of £211 to Church Work outside Badsey and collections for special purposes totalling £591. Also in 1980 the Overseas Committee completed their project which over three years has contributed £750 towards the support of Bobby Nakoulak during his training for the priesthood in the Diocese of the Arctic.					
Collections for Special Purposes, included as both receipts and payments, and Grants to Church work outside Badsey are detailed below:					
	1980	1979	Grants	1980	1979
The Church Army	£17.00	20.50	S.P.C.K.	£55.00	55.00
U.S.F.G.	40.00	37.50	C.M.S.	55.00	55.00
C. of E. Childrens Soc.	174.67	173.93	B. & F.B.S.	55.00	55.00
Earl Haig Poppy Fund	34.08	27.85	Pensions		
Bishop of Worcester:			Board	35.00	35.00
Pastoral Fund	-	39.91	Friends of		
Induction of New			Holland Hse.	6.00	5.00
Priests	44.62	-	Friends of		
Friends of Evesham Hosp.	43.00		Christ Ch.		
Farewell Gift:			Oxford	5.00	5.00
Rev. A. S. Leak	237.62	-			
	£ 590.99	299.69		£ 211.00	210.00

Badsey Church Insurance
for Year from 29th September 1980

PREPARED BY: P. S. Tucker
DATE: 12th April 1981

Items	Amounts		Insured	
	Fire *		Storm etc *	
Fabric:				
Building	189,000			500
Windows	5,040			-
Bells and Clock	31,500			-
	225,540			
Organ	15,120			-
Other Contents	25,200			-
Plate etc				2,000
Picture				200
Other Articles				1,500
Money	-			400
Total	265,860		265,860	
Public Liability, etc				
Premium -				
Gross	199.40		180.78	123.96
Discount	49.85		45.19	-
Net	149.55		135.59	
Total - - - -				409.10
Commission				40.90
Amount Paid				368.20

Note -

* Figures as R.I.C.S. Cost Index

Reviewed by
Date

Although I can report that virtually all our present members have been extremely regular in their giving, we have been unable to increase our total numbers. The few new enrolments have done no more than replace those who have dropped out.

The Finance Sub-Committee of the P.C.C. is at present undertaking a venture whereby potential new members of the Stewardship Scheme can be approached informally with a view to joining, and it is hoped that next year will see the benefit from this effort.

Once again it is my unfortunate duty to report lukewarm support from many P.C.C. members to this, the biggest single item of the church's fundraising activities. Also, it continues to be a disappointment that only a small proportion of existing members have covenanted their contributions.

Membership of the Stewardship Scheme now stands at 68, but with many of these being husband and wife, the effective number is 103. (T.C. Sparrow)

Electoral Roll

In 1980 there were 133 names on the Roll. During the past year, 2 names have been removed and 8 additions were made, leaving a total of 139. (Linda Core)

Mothers' Union

Mothers' Union continues to meet twice monthly and membership is now 45. Our programme has been varied and interesting, including talks, some with slides, including Life in Papua New Guinea, Wordsworth's Lake District with poetry, educational cruises for children, the duties of a councillor, teaching Juniors in Yorkshire, and Orthodox Jews today; two discussion evenings, one led by our vicar who answered many religious queries especially re: the new **HS** book. The other discussion was about Christian family life and findings from the conference in Brisbane. An enjoyable garden cheese and wine evening, a super New Year party and a summer outing to Berkeley Castle in June.

Many members attended the 13th Century Service on the cricket pitch last year going by car and parish coach. We also took about 7 car loads to a family picnic and Festival Service led by our bishop at Hartlebury Castle in June. This March many members attended the Deanery Festival Service at Feckenham and in April we were hostesses to the Deanery for the Quiet Afternoon attended by about 85 members taken by Deaconess Cuznor.

Most members are consistent in weekly worship and many attend corporate and mid-week Eucharist, and some the weekly prayer group. At least a third of our members do regular church cleaning and we have a weekly brass cleaning rota. One of our members along with her husband clean the silver regularly and also keeps the altar linen and in order. Mrs. Perkins, another member, keeps the members of the flower guild up to standard. We have members helping with prison work, hospital duty, Infant Welfare and on the committee of the Village Hall and the Parish Council; and one member helps at Mums and Toddlers; also with Girl Guide badge tests.

We continue to give a New Testament (inscribed) to each young couple married in this church, and one of our members writes, records and delivers Baptism Anniversary cards. At St. Luke's Tide a number of members visited some sick parishioners. This last 12 months we have given money and gifts of clothing to our Children's Society Home at Eastnor, and from money made by a Rummage Sale we gave £21 worth of altar linen (which was prepared and sown by about 5 members) and £40 to our own workers overseas and £20 for work in war torn Uganda, £10 to Messafe Home in our diocese, also money for the 'Away from it all' caravan. Help has been given to 2 collections – Christian Aid and Church of England Children's Society.

It has been our great pleasure to help give out parcels after the Harvest Festival, and to help with the June barbecue at the Manor and the church fete in September, and at the Harvest party in October and at the Overseas Coffee Evening at Miss Smith's. Lastly we were very glad to join forces with other members of the church to prepare and serve refreshments at the induction of our vicar last Autumn and all members wish to join with me in thanking both Peter Mitchell and Pat his wife for their kindness to us and interest in all that we do.

Sunday School (Kathy Small)

The past year has seen big changes for the children of Badsey under 8 Sunday School in that Mrs. Bell handed over the leadership and running of it to me as from the beginning of last September. I had helped at Sedgeberrow Sunday School for about 18 months prior to moving to Badsey but it was with some trepidation that I undertook the responsibilities of leadership, particularly as I had been able to see with what skill and devotion Mrs. Bell had been teaching the children. However, with a great deal of help and advice from Mrs. Bell I have endeavoured to carry on her work, very much learning from my mistakes as I go along.

I have continued to have the valuable help of Carol Burton and Lesley Hockenhull who come every week to help look after the children, assist in the activities we have and also to supervise when we come to church. We have been joined by Nicole Featherstone on community service from the Guides. These three girls also help with the preparation of material for lessons.

I am pleased to say that the numbers of children attending Sunday School has remained about the same. We have about 30 children regularly attending, but in any one week there is usually about 20 children who come.

We have been putting the Sunday School collections towards a Tear Fund project for a country called Irian Jaya. This is a very poor mountainous country in Indonesia and Tear Fund is supporting some overseas workers who are teaching the people to farm their own animals and crops. We have learnt a little about the country and the children have seen pictures of it. I have just been able to send off £12 to help in their work.

I had the Christmas party in January and was valiantly helped by my husband, Mrs. Bell and Mrs. Christine Print. The vicar came to distribute much appreciated sweets and I think the afternoon was greatly enjoyed by all. For Easter the children made about 30 cards which were distributed to the very old and housebound people in Badsey and also some who are in hospital.

In April Nicole, Carol and I attended a Sunday School workshop at the Old Palace, Worcester. This was a meeting of Sunday School leaders and helpers designed to give encouragement and some ideas. It was encouraging for me to meet other people of a similar age and circumstances undertaking Sunday School work and I came home feeling enthusiastic and anxious to try out some of their ideas. Following on from that day I have obtained permission from the vicar to display some of the children's work in the church on a monthly basis. I hope this will help to make the link between church and Sunday School even closer.

Finally I must give my thanks to Mrs. Goldstraw who allows us to use her Play School every Sunday at the very small cost of 30p a week. It is through her generosity that this valuable work is able to be carried on.