

St John's Church, Bishopsteignton
Reports to the APCM on 16th May 2021

Report of the Church Electoral Roll Officer

The revised Roll for 2020 was presented to the APCM on 11th October. There were no changes between then and 31st December, when there were 81 names on the Roll.

Roger Avery

Churchwardens' Report on church fabric, goods and ornaments

2020 proved itself to be a year different from any other. I think we had an idea something unprecedented was on its way but didn't realise just how devastating it was to be.

The year started off with the usual exciting Statistics for Mission. Out of the 87 people on the electoral roll the average Sunday attendance was 63. Out of these 51 were age 70 and over. Makes you think!

Mothering Sunday, with its usual beautiful posies turned out to be the last service for a while as the country went into Covid-19 lockdown the next day.

Events in Holy Week were marked on the gates, Palm crosses were made from paper at home and Easter consisted of Flowers outside the church, thanks to Bindy Wollen, a cross made from the Christmas tree, posters on the gate and packets of seeds from Rev Jane outside the gate for people to take away. Rev Jane marked Easter by being robed outside the church with the gospel reading and singing for passers-by to join in. It was as if time had stood still in Bishopsteignton as the clock came to a halt and no-one was allowed into the church to wind it.

The churchwardens would like to extend their grateful thanks to Rev Jane Frost, Richard Frost and the extended ministry team for all the hard work which they undertook to keep church life going. Wonderful online services, available on YouTube through the Mission Community website, appeared. Services filmed brilliantly by Richard and taken by Jane, Sue and the team. Filmed in all the Team churches, in the country, on a boat, in the garden and often with Daisy playing an important part.

Hard copy packs of material were sent out to parishioners with ministry updates and prayer ideas. Phone call teams were set up to keep in contact with church members. Evening prayer and First Things First, a monthly Team Prayer Meeting, on Zoom.

At the end of May our first PCC meeting was held by Zoom and the APCM had been delayed until October. At the beginning of June we had to start giving consideration to a phased re-opening of the church. Quantities of cleaning materials and sanitiser had to be ordered and it was the start of many risk assessments.

On 1 July the church was opened on a Sunday and Wednesday for private prayer only. The body of the church had to be cordoned off, all kneeler and cushions had to be stacked away from human contact, social distancing signage had to go everywhere and people had to be sanitised on entry to the building.

Eventually St John's opened for public worship on 9 August with a track and trace system in place and Covid compliant socially distanced seating. This reduced our maximum congregation to 30 and we were down to one service at 10.00am.

The APCM took place on 11 October and the 2 churchwardens were reinstated. We said goodbye to Janet Williamson, Jan Paget and Mary Sanders. We thank them for their support during their time on the PCC. There are now 3 vacancies.

Our Harvest Festival was able to take place and the churchwardens sent out the Harvest Appeal letter which raised £6249.

Remembrance was very limited this year. Our grateful thanks go to Rosy Plumb and Helen Boyd for all they did to make the All Souls remembrance service as special as possible.

During the service on December 6 we had the joyous occasion of the Thanksgiving for the birth of Elijah Edwards.

There could be no Crib Service this year so a special thankyou to Liz McNamara and her team who organised a lovely walk through nativity in the Old Commercial. It helped to remind us what Christmas is all about. Thanks to Rev Jane who arranged an enjoyable Christmas Music and Readings evening. It was strange not being able to join in and sing the Christmas carols. Also to Rev Jane and Hilary Corlett for the church walk through on the 23rd to see the church dressed for Christmas. There was live and recorded music, banners with a carol theme made by community groups overcoming Lockdown odds to work together creatively, followed by the singing of carols outside afterwards.

The churchwardens also owe a debt of gratitude to all those other groups of people who keep the church alive - the members of the PCC – the Sacristy ladies – Fran Edwards and Lady Valerie Ridgway who deliver plants and flowers to those who are unwell in the village – the Open the Book team – the Stewards who have helped us run the church during a very difficult time – Mike and Jeff who do such great work in saving us a small fortune doing fabric repairs – Mike and Andrew for winding the clock every week and keeping it in good time - and especially Nick Gardiner who has always been there to provide music when we were open.

It was a pleasure to end the year with a wedding on the 30 December when so much was not possible.

All Church maintenance issues are reported in the Maintenance Committee report. The hard work put in by Sir Andrew Ridgway and his team is greatly appreciated.

Inventory and Terrier report: All the contents of the church are recorded in the NADFAS document. We are not aware of losing anything this year!

Keith Hutchings and Liz McNamara

Churchwardens

Church Maintenance Committee Report

This has been a very difficult period for the CMC, as well as for just about everyone else! The Committee has met face to face only once during the year. Church Maintenance work has been conducted in the interim via monthly update reports, e-mails and Zoom meetings! It is extremely good that the Church is once again open for business and, hopefully we will be able to meet face to face again soon!

A substantial part of CMC effort has continued to be devoted to the Roof Repair Project. The urgent need for repair was confirmed by a substantial cascade of water coming down through the Tower roof in August last year. The project to carry out the repairs is quite substantial and will cost some £400,000. The Roof Repair Project Team has been working to raise this money for some time and has, so far, been quite successful. A substantial sum has already been raised through some excellent Church fundraising and some generous personal donations; including through the annual Harvest Appeal, the 100 Club and major fundraising events such as the virtual Open Gardens and the Plant Sale, amounting to some £44,900. Grants have also been made by

Weston Garfield and Devon Historic Churches Trust to the sum of £22,000 and applications for further grants are being made. We are also optimistic of receiving some £65,000 from the Listed Places of Worship VAT Recovery Scheme. We are hugely grateful for the fundraising efforts that have been made in the Village but we are still short of a substantial amount. It has always been our intention to approach the National Lottery Heritage Fund for a major grant of £250,000 and our discussions with the NLHF have so far been very positive and considerable effort has already gone into preparing a compelling grant bid. However, early last year we were informed by the NLHF that all applications for grants such as ours would be put on hold while the Lottery focused exclusively on Emergency Grants for those affected by the Coronavirus crisis. The NLHF has now opened for grants such as ours but they are still very focused on Pandemic issues. Consequently we have submitted a formal Project Enquiry Form which will generate advice from the NLHF as to the timing and approach we should take. We should have the NLHF response in time for the APCM.

The need for repairs to the roof was identified in the last Quinquennial Inspection as requiring immediate attention but it was not the only issue raised. A need was identified to stop the grilles on the South facing stained glass windows pressing against the glass and possibly causing serious damage. It was decided to remove the grilles and repair the stonework but this work has been held up by the Pandemic. A site visit was held recently with Andrew Johnson, our preferred stain glass window contractor, and we are now optimistic that the work will be completed in the Spring. A need was also identified to carry out some extensive re-pointing of various parts of the external Church walls: however, this was not seen as a high priority requirement and has been put on hold. One issue that the Committee was keen to proceed with is the removal of flaking plaster from the interior walls, renewing with a lime plaster and repainting the walls with a breathable paint. The Architect believes that the improved airflow in the Nave should make this possible. The Committee initiated a trial to identify an appropriate paint but again this trial has been put on hold until the Spring. The Report also includes a number of Maintenance recommendations, all of which have been carried out by members of the Committee. The Committee now conducts a formal review of progress with delivering QQR recommendations in each year. This will be carried out once we can have a face to face meeting.

An issue that was brought to our attention recently was the state of the trap doors in the Tower floor. There has clearly been some rotting caused by ongoing dampness in the Tower ground floor. The floor remains safe for bell ringers but a decision was taken to replace the support surrounds for each trap door. In the meantime, the Tower door leading into the Nave is to be left open to improve air circulation and reduce humidity.

The CMC continues to work closely with the Parish Council which is responsible for the Churchyard and Kim Ford, the Clerk of the Parish Council, is a key member of the Committee. The Annual Joint Churchyard inspection was carried out by members of the CMC and the BPC in September last year. No Health and Safety issues concerning Gravestones were identified although one gravestone needing some attention has been drawn to the attention of Bishopsteignton Gardening Services. BGS are continuing to deliver extremely effective maintenance of the Churchyard. The Yew trees have had the brambles removed; the graves in the SE corner of the Churchyard have been cleared of overgrowth; and a planning request has been approved to remove a holly tree at the entrance to the Garden of rest. We are working with BGS and the Parish Council to arrange for the replacement of the roof to the Sexton shed. This will replace the rusty, corrugated iron roof with a living, green, Sedum roof. This will play very well with the NLHF! The Churchyard maintenance contract with BGS has been renewed by BPC and we were given the opportunity to make amendments to the terms of the contract.

The CMC is also working closely with Bishopsteignton Heritage and, as a result, the Admirals' Graves Information Board has been put in place at the East end of the Church. Substantial work has been carried out by BGS to improve the pathway and a fence has been erected to avoid visitors falling into the gully. There will be a formal unveiling of the Information Board once Covid restrictions allow. Bishopsteignton Heritage is also working on a project to make it easier for visitors to the Church to identify the location of individual graves; often of relatives. Drone

photographs have been taken of the Churchyard and the Garden of Rest and these will form the basis of information sheets.

As ever, there has been a substantial amount of routine maintenance work undertaken by members of the Committee during the year for which we are all most grateful. Most recently we have had problems with the heating system which have been fixed, at least in the short term! We have also had the mains electricity supply to the Porch re-routed. We are also most grateful to all those who are carrying out voluntary cleaning duties during these difficult times and, of course, to our Church Wardens, without whom much of this Church Maintenance work would not have been possible.

Sir Andrew Ridgway, Chairman

Annual Report from the Deanery Synod Meetings

There were two meetings during the year, both held by Zoom. Roger Avery joined Liz McNamara as Bishopsteignton PCC representatives. The Business Interest Account for Kenn Deanery stood at £1740.34 on 31st December.

Liz McNamara & Roger Avery

Reports from Church Organisations

Bellringing Report

Bellringing ceased at the time of the first lockdown in March. It was able to resume during the summer, but with ringing on only four bells and with social distancing and other precautions, but had to be abandoned again at the time of the next lockdown.

Roger Avery, Tower Captain

Bishopsteignton United Charities

Registered No. 200768

Summary

Despite some changeovers of tenants and trustees, BUC continues to provide an efficient, caring and personalised service to Church House residents, and contributes significantly to community needs in Bishopsteignton.

Church Houses

All four flats have been fully occupied, save for one short changeover period in early 2021. Coronavirus lockdowns have been successfully negotiated, and Trustees are in regular contact with residents (thanks here to Helen Boyd). The Annual Inspection of buildings was postponed due to the COVID restriction, but significant maintenance was carried out during the year, including outside painting and repair, garden maintenance, one new kitchen, and bathroom refurbishment (thanks here to John Randall). Fire alarm and emergency lighting systems have all been tested regularly, and all policies, procedures and documentation comply with current national requirements.

Community Support

A contribution of £1,000 was made to the village primary school for the purchase of laptop computers to assist with home schooling during the pandemic.

Finance

Income and expenditure during the year were in line with the budget, and ongoing careful financial management includes provision for costs arising from the delayed annual inspection as well as ongoing maintenance schedules (thanks here to Bob Gateshill). The weekly maintenance contribution for residents was not increased during 2020, but a small below-inflation rise has been necessary from 1 April 2021.

Governance

Trustees meet at least quarterly, and there is regular involvement and communication in between meetings, not least because of the efficient work of the Clerk (thanks here to Yvonne Barnes). Over the last year, a number of policy documents have been discussed and agreed in line with guidelines laid down by the Almshouse Association. Derek Greatorex and Rosey Plumb have stepped down as Trustees and we are grateful for their enormous contribution to the successful operation of BUC. Paul Cloke was appointed as Trustee, and then as Chair, and the remaining Trustee vacancy will be filled as soon as face-to-face interviews can be carried out. We continue to appreciate Jane Frost's active participation as a Trustee.

Paul Cloke, on behalf of the current Trustees (Helen Boyd, Paul Cloke, Jane Frost, Bob Gateshill, John Randall and A.N.Other).

Choir Report

We began 2020 with a visit to St James' Church, Teignmouth, for a Haldon Team Confirmation Service. About half a dozen of us joined with singers from St James' and St Michael's. Together we filled the choir stalls. The service was led by Rt Rev'd Jackie Searle, Bishop of Crediton. The combined choir led the hymn-singing and sang "I am the bread of life" by Suzanne Toolan during the communion. Welcome refreshments and friendly conversations rounded off what had been a really lovely and uplifting occasion.

After that we settled back into our normal routine of choir practices and Sunday services. Usually there is always much to plan and work towards: from all of the easter services to a whole range of special services and events through the year in Bishopsteignton, Teignmouth and Luton. Alas, everything had to stop.

Since the first lockdown began we have kept in touch with each other socially through telephone calls etc... We one small-scale reunion just before Christmas. Four choir members spread themselves out in the choir stalls for some socially-distanced carol singing, while people wandered around the church looking at the decorations.

We hope that we will be asble to start up again in 2021 and that, perhaps, one or two more members of the congregation might consider joining us. We are small in number but big in heart and very friendly. There is no audition.

Nicholas Gardiner, Organist and Choirmaster

Bishopsteignton Parish Chronicle

2020/21 was a strange year for the Chronicle. Out of 15 months we were only able to go to print for 9 of them. It is the first time the Chronicle has been an online only copy available to read on the St John's link through the Mission Community website and on the Village website.

However, the Chronicle has maintained its popularity with an amazing number of articles from different organisations in the village. I was continually astounded how much could be written when no-one was actually doing anything!!

Our distribution remains at around 700 copies each month and we have been able to maintain the cost again at 50p per copy. Unfortunately, we cannot include colour pictures inside, unless it is something special, as the printing costs too much. If we want to make the Chronicle look more

exciting with increased use of colour the cost of each copy would probably have to go up to £1. To make up for missed copies the subscription this year will be renewed on 1 July. (£5 for the year if paid in advance)

My grateful thanks to Anne Whitaker for looking after the advertising side of the Chronicle. It involves a lot of time and work.

Many thanks, also, to my wonderful team of distributors who go out in all weathers to deliver between them 700 copies each month. And to Avril Avery and Pam Tate for giving up their time to batch them up.

A special appreciation goes to Jill Eversett, our printer. She has the patience of a saint and does an amazing job keeping me in order juggling the articles to fit in the required space.

Keith Hutchings

Flower Report

2020 started with us keeping the arrangements from Christmas going and then reverting to the normal pedestal and porch arrangements until Covid struck and we were forced to stop meeting in Church. There were the usual contributions to the Lily Fund but that remains untouched - hopefully we may be able to use some of the money for Easter 2021.

With help we have attempted to have some flowers in Church for the few visits which have been allowed but are looking forward to things hopefully changing in 2021. Bindy has had wonderful ideas for displays in the path which have been much admired and lifted everyone's spirits - most of which she has done mainly on her own. Thank you Bindy.

We are now a very small group so if anyone fancies lending a hand now and again they would be very welcome.

Margaret Rawlings

Social and Fundraising

Sadly, no social activities were possible but by thinking 'outside the box' some fund raising was achieved.



Bishopsteignton Open Gardens in June - 2020 was a designated year for this event. By tradition this alternates bi-annually with The Village Festival. So it would have had wider implications to postpone it. And church funds were still needed. After much discussion and a very generous offer of his time by Derek Greatorex, 'Bishopsteignton **Virtual** Open Gardens' was born. This required a huge learning curve for the organisers and gardeners alike, as the gardeners had to do their own filming – for many a first. Then Derek had to learn how to transfer and edit the films with Gill's help before sending to The Village Website. There were over 2,000 viewings of the gardens which is an amazing result. As usually around 250 tickets are sold over a 'normal' OG weekend, this has certainly reached a wider audience, albeit without the cakes and that subsequent income! But sadly, we were unable to have the usual well-loved '*Wined-Up*' social evening as a thank you for the gardeners themselves and the opportunity to discuss feedback. This is usually when the next event O.G. gardeners are identified, so this task is outstanding currently for 2022.

Very special thanks should be recorded to Derek and Gill Greatorex for the tremendous work they did in collating and editing all the videos into a wonderful production, and to Ben Northcott of the Bishopsteignton Village Website for hosting the event on-line. And also, thanks to Caroline

Thornton and Hilary Corlett (organisers). But mainly *Thank you* to the Gardeners for being brave with the new technology and sharing their gardens with us – without them it couldn't have happened.

Having originally planned to hold a plant sale in her open garden, we are grateful to Libby Foxton for her initiative in July of holding a subsequent '**socially distanced**' plant sale in her drive which raised £152.50. And thanks to those who went on that damp drizzly morning to buy her plants - a virtual sell out!

In August, Chris Hunt offered to lend their drive for a '**Pop-Up plant sale**'. Posters went up. Weather and plants came together and with a small bookstall to accompany the plants, we managed to raise £352.24 thanks to the generosity of all who came. Nothing was priced and payment was by donation. Two couples, new to the village, made contact with St John's through this venture and had a chance to meet Rev. Jane that morning.

Sincere thanks are due to Chris and Roger Hunt for the loan of their drive and sun tent and the Nicholson family who helped. We are pleased to report that the whole O.G. event including the two plant sales raised **£1,139.42** for the church roof repairs.

Sale of Christmas cards. Finella, Pam Tate and Hilary had acquired a selection of cards in anticipation, but with no Christmas Fayre being possible, Hilary offered them to church friends for sale via email, with socially distanced collection organized in a COVID-19 safe way. Most cards sold out quickly and a total of **£190** was added to church funds. Thanks to those who supported this initiative.

Christingle. As part of the 'Walk-by-Nativity' held in The Old Commercial pub garden, 'D.I.Y. Christingle goody-bags' was available for children for a donation. Thanks to Liz McNamara and Morrisons for the free oranges. As a result, £80 was sent off to The Children's' Society.

Bindy Wollen, Finella Whitehorn, Hilary Corlett and helpers.

The Welcome Pack

The Welcome Pack scheme has been running for 16 Years, 773 packs have been delivered to newcomers up to December 2020. Volunteers deliver the Packs which is always done in person to give a Christian welcome to the village. The Packs are always well received and appreciated. 30 Welcome Packs were delivered in 2020 this is below average due to the lockdown making it difficult to deliver packs.

The Pack has not been updated in the last 12 months due to lockdown restrictions we hope to start again in 2021. We rely on members of the Church and Villagers to let us know about any newcomers, the Village Shop is particularly helpful.

The costs in producing the Welcome Packs are met from the Parish Chronicles income.

Many thanks to those who deliver the packs, advise us of newcomers, and the 'checking team' for keeping the packs up to date.

Tony Corlett, Welcome Pack Co-ordinator

Annual Report of the Parochial Church Council (PCC)

Administrative Information:

St. John the Baptist Church is part of the Haldon Team Ministry, Kenn Deanery in the Diocese of Exeter. The correspondence address is The Vicarage, 3, Moors Park, Bishopsteignton, TQ14 9RH.

PCC Membership:

Since it was not possible to hold an APCM in April, the members of the PCC who were in office on 1st January continued until the APCM on 11th October. From that time the composition of the PCC was

Team Vicar: The Rev'd Jane Frost

Team Reader: Mr Richard Frost

Church Wardens: Mr Keith Hutchings (who also has responsibility for *Safeguarding*) and Mrs Liz McNamara

PCC Treasurer: Mr John Plumb

PCC Secretary: Dr Roger Avery

Elected Members: Mr Alan Gillespie, Sir Andrew Ridgway (who is *Chair of the Church Maintenance Committee*), Mrs Finella Whitehorn, Mrs Belinda Wollen

The *Deanery Synod Representatives* of the PCC are Mrs Liz McNamara and Dr Roger Avery.

Structure, governance and management

The PCC comprises ex-officio, elected and co-opted members in accordance with The Church Representation Rules and operates under the Parochial Church Council Powers Measure. It is a *body corporate* established by the Church of England. A 3 year term of office applies to elected members. It is a charity excepted from registration with the Charity Commission.

All church attendees are encouraged to register on the Church Electoral Roll and stand for election to the PCC.

Safeguarding

The Parochial Church Council has complied with the duty under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 (duty to have due regard to House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults). A copy of the church's Safeguarding Policy is displayed on the Notice Board.

Committees

The Church Maintenance Committee, with The Church Architects, Benjamin and Beauchamp, manages the major works required to the church. This committee reports directly to the PCC.

Objectives and activities

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is responsible for co-operating with the Team Rector (vacant for the last five months of 2020) and the Team Vicar in promoting, within the ecclesiastical Parish, the mission of the Church, pastoral and ecumenical.

Achievements and performance

Church Membership: As at 31st Dec 2020 the Church Electoral Roll stood at 81. Because of disruption caused by "lockdowns" and the restrictions imposed in response to the pandemic, Sunday and other attendances (where they were possible) are not recorded here because they cannot usefully be compared with data for previous years.

Review of the Year 2020

The PCC held 3 regular meetings during the year (average attendance just over 70%), with a short meeting following the APCM, and 2 meetings using Zoom (average attendance 85%). Voting on

matters of importance which occurred between meetings was conducted by the Secretary using email. All Zoom meetings were minuted in the usual way, and business conducted by the Secretary on email between meetings was recorded and copies are deposited in the Minute Book.

The PCC have met the full Common Fund request of £33,901 in 2020. Social & Fund Raising events continued to be held, although at a reduced level compared with previous years.

The Rev'd Jane Frost
Team Vicar

Keith Hutchings
Churchwarden

Liz McNamara
Churchwarden