



St Mary's Church Lytchett Matravers



Annual Report
2014-2015

The Parish of St Mary the Virgin, Lytchett Matravers. Annual Report Year ending 2015

Background

St Mary's Church Lytchett Matravers is responsible, with the Team Vicar the Rev Ali Mephram, to enable worship of God and to promote the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical in and for our geographical parish community.

The *Parochial Church Council (PCC) of the Ecclesiastical Parish of St Mary's the Virgin, Lytchett Matravers* is a charity excepted from registration with the charities commission. St Mary's is an independent parish within the *Benefice of The Lytchetts and Upton in Poole Deanery*. The Rev Jean de Garis is the Team Rector and Parish Priest for the Parish of Lytchett Minster and Upton.

The Benefice is part of *Diocese of Salisbury* within the *Church of England*. The PCC for the Year 2014-15 consisted of the following members:

| Ex-Officio Members: | Office Held (if any) | Post Ends |
|----------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Ali Mephram | Vicar & Chair | |
| Annie Mitchener | Church Warden | |
| Mat Riddell | Church Warden | |
| Jackie Cannings | Deanary Synod Representative | |
| Heather Argent | Deanary Synod Representative | |
| Elected Members: | | |
| Frances Tomlinson-Mynors | Treasurer | <i>Office holder re-election 2016</i> |
| Debbie Phipps | PCC Secretary | <i>Office holder re-election 2016</i> |
| Bill Carter | PCC Vice Chair & Fabric Team Chair | 2015** |
| Kat Mephram | Associate Pastor | 2015** |
| Claire Coakes | | 2015 |
| Nikki McGee | | 2016* |
| Kat Riddell | Children's and Families Worker | 2017 |
| Elizabeth Carter | | 2017 |
| Jo Spekes-Jones | | 2017 |

The method of appointment to the PCC is set out in the Church Representation Rules.

*Stood-down during 2014-15 as result of house move.

**PCC requesting re-election as for Office Holders at the end or of their 3-year term.

The PCC

The PCC April 2013 - April 2014

Meetings

The PCC met 10 times during the year since the last APCM (12 March 2014, 30 March 2014, 8 June 2014, 18 June 2014, 16 July 2014, 17 September 2014, 19 November 2014, 14 January 2015, 6 March 2015, 24 March 2015, 12 April 2015). All PCC meetings are advertised in the newssheet and all members on the Electoral role can request to see the minutes of these meetings after they have been accepted by the PCC (with any confidential matters removed). A summary will be added to the newssheet following a meeting.

At the final PCC meeting the PCC approved the accounts of the Church.

Appointments

Kat Riddell was appointed by the PCC to take up the voluntary position of Children and Family worker.

Jo Sepkes-Jones was appointed by the PCC to take on the role of Safeguarding Officer.

Fundraising

The Fundraising Team are now in the swing of organising events both in the church and in the community. This year they organised a Plant and Produce Sale in the church (£500), Book Stall and cream teas at the Lytchett Fayre (£400), a Festival of Brides in the church (£1,018.06), Quiz night (£1,600) and a Christmas market in the church (£696.40). The fundraising is to go towards the Ministry and upkeep of St Marys including community events.

On 13th September 2014 some of our congregation joined the Dorset Historic Churches Ride and Stride to raise funds both for our church and this invaluable charitable organisation.

Children In Communion

The PCC have been exploring accepting children to communion – only by permission of parents. There is a tradition in The Church of England that children don't receive communion until confirmed. In 2006 it became part of Canon law that children from the age of 7 or 8 can take communion where Churches have an agreed policy in place. They must have been baptised and need to have done preparation for communion. The PCC would like to discuss this further before consulting with the wider Church communities.

Community Café

There is a small group looking into the possibility of starting a community café to meet once or twice a week somewhere in the village and run by the church on a Not for Profit basis. The cost and manpower would need to be considered and once this has been established the group will come back to discuss with the PCC.

The Minister who assists at some of our services has requested that his ashes will be interned in our ashes area as he works tirelessly for St Mary's and wishes to rest here eventually. This was discussed and agreed by the PCC.

St Mary's Electoral Roll Report 2015

The roll was revised on the 5th April 2015

There were 3 deletions

There were no new names added.

The roll is now stands at 80 of which 5 live outside the parish.

Review of the Year

*These were his instructions to them: "The harvest is great, but the workers are few.
So pray to the Lord who is in charge of the harvest;
ask him to send more workers into his fields" Luke 10:2*

Our year St Mary's started in an unexpected place with Ali's absence due to illness and phased back to work up to the summer. Frustratingly for our wider ministry this did mean that a number of things we had hoped would be up and running, or in discussion were put on hold or postponed. Huge thanks go to Kat and the Wardens for keeping things running through this difficult time.

Our pattern of regular services has continued with our 8am Book of Common Prayer Communion, 9:30am Holy Communion with Service of the Word on 3rd Sundays and the @eleven in the Village Hall on Sundays.

The monthly mid-week communion service on the 1st Wednesday of every month has continued to offer a small, but important, community worship at a time that is more accessible to those unable to attend on a Sunday morning, although for a number of reasons this service hasn't been able to meet over the winter months.

We continue to offer a monthly Evensong service on third Sundays which is attended by a dedicated but small number of worshippers and we are extremely grateful to Revd Stuart Timbrell who continues to regularly lead this Book of Common Prayer service.

At 9:30 We continue to explore how to be traditional Church in the 21st Century ensuring our preference for a particular style of worship and our call to mission can go hand-in-hand as we worship together. At the beginning of the year Ali's illness meant a wide range of priests to lead and preside and we have been enriched by their varying styles and passions. Also the challenges of our building have also impacted on how we worship together.

Under the ministry of our Associate Pastor the St Mary's @eleven service has continued to grow both numerically and spiritually. All Age Worship can be challenging but our aim is that all members of the community can share, learn and grow together in their relationship with God. It is challenging but rewarding to see all members, young and old and everything in between, growing in their faith and relationship. At it's heart the @eleven seeks to be an Acts 2 community that shares together and cares for one another, spiritually and practically.

Sadly our home for the past 3 years has become less and less suitable for our needs and the @eleven team discussed returning to St Mary's. It has been important to meet in the village but we have also been conscious that the two venues have impacted on relationships between our worshipping services. So it will be exciting as this new phase of @eleven enables more interaction between the 9:30 and @eleven services. This will be coupled with termly outreach events on Sunday's in the village.

As a whole Church we have remained committed to our ethos of being "One Church Worshipping in Different Ways" providing different and varied styles of worship across a broad spectrum of styles. This approach brings both joys and challenges as each of our communities has it's own identity and integration between the varied parts of our community can be difficult to facilitate.

We re-launched *Community Wednesday* in September but with twice-monthly study groups and rather than the once a month we'd met in the previous year. It has been good to have a more regular meeting for these groups and having extended a wider invitation for our Lent series "40 Acts of Stewardship" we've seen some of these groups grow. A feature of *Community Wednesday* as always been a monthly meal together. This event has proved especially successful in bringing our community together socially and has encouraged a number of people from the edges of our services to be more involved in the life of the Church. Most of all it has helped us to get to know each other better. Sadly it has not had a great impact on our more traditional services with only a few people attending regularly from those congregations.

Deeper our Praise & Worship style service has not been able to meet over the winter months and we are looking forward to a relaunch in May 2015.

In the PCC year 2013-14 we agreed to meet our biblical call to give on our income and support the wider Kingdom in Mission. We have continued to develop our links with *Compassion* and *The Wisdoms in Burundi* and it was a joy to have Jeremy Wisdom speak to our Church communities in August about how our Church is changing lives in that country through our support of their ministry.

Francis Tomlinson-Mynors has continued in her role as Church Treasurer and has done a fantastic job developing and updating our procedures. Although our finances continue to challenge us we paid our Parish Share in full for the fifth year in a row. In previous years we have only been able to do this by utilising the "run off" period in January each year that allows us use New Year income to complete payment of the previous year's share. This year we were able to pay the entire Parish Share without using this facility giving us a much stronger base starting the new accounts in January. Parish Share continues to be a challenge, but we remain committed to meeting these needs of the wider Church of England in this way.

We have of course faced great difficulties with our ancient Church Building and this necessitated the temporary moving out of St Mary's for the winter. This obviously had the greatest effect on our traditional services but with recorded internal temperatures dropping down to freezing over the course of the winter season it was the right move for the benefit of all our health and comfort. The Methodist Church kindly agreed to share their worship space with us and we began joint services in November. While for many of our community this essential move was difficult, all of us who chose to engage with this challenge have felt blessed by our renewed unity and sharing together. A reminder that there are few core few differences between us as Christians and that even our styles of worship are very similar. It is wonderful to see the fruit of this situation in the desire to continue to worship together once a month having now returned to St Mary's. Our united service will be at 10am on the 3rd Sunday of every month starting in April 2015 and alternating between our two Church venues.

The Fabric team has continued to work very hard maintaining the St Mary's building and working on solutions to the large number of issues arising over the course of the year. As they've explored the options available to us with the Diocesan Advisory Committee and English Heritage it has become clear that our desire to simply replace one form of heating with another is not a possibility. This has necessitated the need to really explore how we wish to use this fabulous resource of our building. The forms of heating we are going to need to meet the requirements of an ancient building will require a large amount of work and disruption. The knock-on effect of which is that we feel the right thing to do is to explore a potential reordering of the Church to accommodate this heating and to create a flexible worship space that better suits the needs of a 21st Century Church. Great care must be given to this process, but we also recognise that the current state of the initial problem, the heating, also means that we must move quickly. As part of a wider consultation the PCC has facilitated an open meeting and an open weekend to solicit

comments and suggestions for this new phase in the life of St Mary's. The team remain open to wider discussion and comments about these plans.

Messy Church

Messy Church has had a fantastic year last year we have moved from meeting monthly to meeting every six weeks which we did due to difficulties getting helpers and hall bookings this new six week format has meant we haven't needed to cancel any since our last APCM and has been well received with no drop in numbers attending. We have covered a huge variety of topics from looking at our relationships with God, talking to God, his journeys, looking at bible stories bigger barns, Messy love and our big events such as Christingle and Easter.

Messy Church on the whole has had great attendance with many families coming regularly and where some of our regulars have moved on they have been replaced by new families coming regularly this has meant whilst still being a mixture of ages the general population of Messy Church has changed from being mostly 6 to 10 year olds to more birth to 7 years. We have adapted to this by introducing a proper baby area with a divider and more sensory activities with more age appropriate crafts. We have also tried to ensure that we are still appealing to our older audience so as to attract those that have left back by having more activities and games as well as crafts to meet every child's interest. It has been great to see so many of our helpers coming regularly to run crafts and the team has got a lot stronger allowing us to engage in some fantastic conversations with children asking questions over crafts.

The general running of Messy Church has been a key focus this year we have introduced systems to allow better transitions between crafts we have also looked at our room layouts and timings which has all helped to develop the comfortable buzz and happy atmosphere enjoyed by everyone at Messy Church.

We have implemented yet more lists and procedures to our planning ensuring we are well prepared and managing our advertising better we have kept people well informed using Facebook, flyers and posters. We have learnt from Christingle about checking what local competition we may come across when looking at setting dates.

As far as spending We had a big stock-take and have planned ahead allowing better use of resources keeping our spending to a minimum.

Looking ahead we are introducing Messy specials our first one will be for the last Messy Church before the holidays as this is a Time when children are tired of working and this has been previous poor attendance. If successful we may plan a special day for during the summer break. We are looking at banner for Messy Church and A-frames as well as a few school assemblies to link in with Messy Church.

Deanery Synod Report

The Deanery Synod met three times during the year. Each meeting focus is explained briefly.

The June meeting was held at St John's Church Broadstone

At the June meeting we were welcomed by Church Warden Elaine Mellers, who gave a sketch of life at St John's, in the absence of Cannon Nigel Lloyd. We were informed this large parish had good supported main services with popular social activities and a successful Messy Church. Nigel's arrival at the church had brought fresh ideas and vision, with the main aspects being, to grow in numbers, grow in discipleship and attract youth.

Social Justice Programme Manager for the Diocese of Salisbury Colin Brady explained about the new working group set up to tackle this issue. The group's main themes are; Food, Finance, Fuel and Franchise. All of these are troublesome areas for those experiencing hard times. Colin discussed social justice being at the heart of the gospel, and that as Christians we are all included in this statement. Further details explained that

people needed assistance to understand how to access help available to them. Colin is keen to see churches and communities, passionate about Social Justice, come together and share ideas. For those with a passion or expertise Colin can be contacted. (colin.brady@salisbury.anglican.org).

Credit Unions, whereby Savings and Loans Co-Operatives are owned by its members, was explained by Anthony Macro-Wood. These are aimed at not to compete with Payday Lenders, but rather to help increase the capacity of the CU sector by providing credible and a variable alternative which also teaches people to save. The object was to train clergy and lay people to be advocates of community finance, and support those with problems. Pilot studies are taking place in various parts of the country to include Liverpool, London and Southwark. Anthony went on to say that clergy and churches are well placed to assist CU expansion, being a natural mutual society, able to work together and help each other.

Pat Southgate and, newly appointed co-worker, Neil, talked about Routes to Roots. This is a Christian based Charity helping homeless and vulnerably housed people in Poole. They talked about the complex circumstances affecting all aspects of the difficulties faced by people who had become imprisoned by their circumstance. Pat and Neil worked alongside people supporting them to break the downward spiral and help them to have hope and stability enabling them to access the assistance needed. A wide variety of services were on offer, including social (trips out) and much needed advice and support (meals, shelter and chiropody).

(Further insights into the above issues can be found on the Diocesan web site.)

The November meeting was held at St James Church Poole Old Town

The Reverend Lucy Holt welcomed us to St James and described first coming to the church. Her first task was to write a mission statement, which was not, as she indicated, a good idea for a new arrival! She gave a brief insight into life at St James and was pleased to share news of the growing congregation.

The Reverend Carol Longford presented an overview of How Adults Learn which would be helpful when implementing the Discipleship courses. A brief overview was given on different learning styles.

Overviews of Discipleship Courses were given. These are all available to churches.

Shape –Which look at the different gifts, personalities, experience and abilities people have.

Christianity Explored- This course is based on the Gospel of Mark and offered as a change from Alpha.

Growing Leaders This course is not necessarily considered for people intending vocations or ordination, but ministry in other areas in both the church and community.

Pilgrim This course is described as a focus for a journey in discipleship, including a pattern of contemplation.

(All can be found on the Diocesan website).

After hearing these presentations, we broke into small groups for a few minutes to discuss

'How are adults expected to grow in your Benefice?'. This was then shared generally with Synod.

The involvement of local churches was appreciated by Alistair Doxat-Purser, from the Faithworks Wessex initiative. This is a local charity which includes working with the elderly, lonely and those in most need. It was hoped this would continue and grow in the future.

Youth workers Chris Trent and Ruth Wells gave an update on their work with young people in the Deanery and asked for prayer for their work.

(All of the above offered further details which can be emailed by request.)

The January Meeting was held at St Georges Church Oakdale.

This meeting took on a different stance. Before the session began the Bishop of Salisbury presided at a Eucharist Service.

The Bishop then led thought about leading questions which face the Church of England today.

Other members from every parish were invited to attend and share in discussion, led by Bishop Nicholas on the theme 'Renewing Hope'. As a church we shared our thoughts on Renewing our Hope, as it meant to us.

Bishop Nicholas' visit follows on from the 'Let Us Talk', the listening process from 2012-13.

Bishop Nicholas talked of many churches that are bursting with stories of people whose lives have been transformed, and who have gone on to transform the lives of others.

All congregations can be part of the discussions, and details can be found on the web-site

Churches Together

The Churches Together committee met three times in the passed year.

The question of whether the name "Churches Together" was understood in the village by people not familiar with the churches was discussed. It was decided to send our annual Christmas Cards from 'The Village Churches' and this was felt to have been effective.

In July we visited the Lighthouse Family Church for a united service and hope to continue to share together in this way.

In September the Harvest Supper took place as usual and in November, the Community Remembrance Service was held in a full Village Hall, concluding at the War Memorial, where many more joined those who had gathered in the Hall. This annual Act of Remembrance continues to grow and our Community Service seems to meet a need in our village.

In December, the joint Carol Service was held in the Village Hall – the Hall was again full which is always encouraging. Our Traditional Carol Service at the Church was held by candlelight with Churches in Harmony and, of course the usual Christmas card was delivered to every house in the Village, detailing all the Christmas events.

Fabric Committee Report for APCM 2015

We looked at sorting the heating and learned that we would need to spend well over £100,000. This then led us to consider how we could justify that sort of expense – certainly not possible on the basis of 4 hours use a week plus the odd wedding and funeral – and that led us to think about who and how we could encourage to use the buildings during the week. What would we need to do to encourage other use of our wonderful buildings? So what started off as a relatively simple task has now grown into a more complex re-ordering. Over the last year much of our time has been spent on this with the result that we will soon be in a position to put some concrete proposals to the PCC.

Whilst this was rumbling on we have also continued with our ongoing maintenance programme, painting the rainwater goods, that's gutters and drainpipes and they are nearly finished, treating the exterior woodwork, repairing window surrounds, replacing broken glass and clearing the North Aisle of the old pews from Sherborne Abbey. Closure over the winter months allowed the South Porch exterior doors to be repaired and rehung on a new frame. We have also replaced the gate from the car park to the churchyard

Finance report

We have had a positive year financially for the church. Although our expenditure in the general fund has exceeded our income by £682, this is partly due to the final payment of £5,000 remaining of last year's share being paid in January. We have paid this year's share of £34,179 to the diocese in full, and within the calendar year, which is great news!

Regular giving and collections have increased, although there was an expected reduction in collections in December compared to the previous year, due to the church closure resulting in fewer Christmas services in the church.

We have continued our giving to mission, giving 10% of our planned giving. We are supporting the wisdom family in Burundi, and Compassion. There have also been some discretionary payments, to help those in our local area who have approached the church when in need.

The fundraising group have been very active, and have been very successful in helping to contribute to the church's income this year. Income from the magazine is also significant, and we would like to thank all those involved in fundraising, and in the printing, production and distribution of the magazine for their hard work.

As in previous years, we have had to spend significant amounts of money maintaining our beautiful building. We have a restricted building fund for this purpose.

Reserves Policy

The PCC would like to have reserves for the general fund, but this is not possible with our current financial situation.