

St Peter and St Paul, Holsworthy of the United Holsworthy Benefice Annual Report for 2016

Aim and Purpose

St Peter and St Paul's Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.

Objectives

The PCC is committed to enabling as many people as possible to worship at our church and become part of our parish community. Our services and worship put faith into practice through prayer, scripture, music and sacrament. We try to enable people to live out their faith as part of our community through worship and prayer, pastoral care and missionary and outreach work, and to facilitate this, it is important that we maintain the fabric of our church.

Rector's Report

Rector: Rev'd Christopher Penn SSF

Activities

There has been some development of the parish MAP during this year – setting up a tentative “Friends” group which will need more support and development, and establishing the Parish Giving Scheme which has had a good take up and allows for a more regular income. There has also been a drive to increase the numbers of the Sunday choir, and increase the skills and repertoire by regular practices. Messy Church has been established as an after-school “club” on one evening a month at Holsworthy Primary School and is proving to be quite popular although quite a strain on the (mostly) somewhat elderly helpers! “Open the Book” is also now a well-established part of a “church” presence in the school. The Butterfly Club for the bereaved is now up and running and meets for refreshments and conversation once a month in the Long House.

Our regular service pattern consists of Sung Holy Communion, Order 1, for the first three Sundays of the month and Morning Prayer, which is lay led, on the fourth Sunday. The 8.00 am said Holy Communion service on the fourth Sunday of the month had such poor attendance that it was discontinued at the beginning of 2017. Up until now, Morning Prayer has been BCP but there are plans to move to Common Worship in the near future. We have a said Holy Communion on Wednesdays at midday with a small but regular attendance. Sadly, congregation numbers have fallen slightly during the year, possibly a reflection of the average age of the congregation, although there have been a number of new people joining us. Unfortunately there are rarely young people with us on a Sunday – possibly as a result of the many other demands on their time on a Sunday Morning. The average Sunday attendance is between 45 – 50, with usually more people when the weather is good than in poor conditions. During the year there were 6 Baptisms, all but one of infants and children, 3 marriages, and 7 funerals in the church. In the Autumn we presented 4 candidates to Bishop Sarah for Confirmation.

Throughout the year there have been a number of services and activities of note. The Good Friday Walk of Witness fell to me to organise. Joined by people of all denominations and members of the youth groups, and with members of the congregation of St Peter and St Paul acting as marshals, we walked round the northern part of Holsworthy this year. The town band played at the stopping points and the youth groups took turns in carrying the cross. The Civic service in Fair Week was attended by members of the Town Council, the Court Leet and the uniformed organisations, and on the morning of the last Sunday of the Week, our church led the open-air Service in the Square. Our Harvest Festival at the end of September was followed by a Ploughman's Lunch in the church. The Remembrance Day parade was well attended. The Town Carol Service with, as usual, the Town Band and an augmented choir, was well supported and followed by mince pies and coffee. It has been a joy to welcome pupils, staff and parents from the Primary School to the church for a number of services – an Easter service, a Leavers service in July, Harvest Festival in September, and a wonderful whole-school Christingle service in Advent. In addition to these more formal occasions, a number of smaller groups have visited during the year.

The Pretty Maid for 2016 is Eloise Warren. She was introduced to the town on Fair Day by Angela Blackman who ably masterminded the ceremony and organised the visits of the Pretty Maid to the local care homes.

Major fund raising efforts through the year have been two Coffee Mornings masterminded by Kath Durling, Gift Day on Fair Day (for which over 1500 envelopes were distributed to dwellings in the parish) and an exhibition in Fair Week of local material from the town Museum. The proceeds from the exhibition entrance were shared with the museum. We once again took a stall in the market for the Late Night Shopping evening, and through the generosity of the congregation, collected items for, and sent, nearly 30 shoe boxes to the annual Christmas appeal.

I would like to offer my thanks to all those who help with the life and witness of the church: our hard working and dedicated Churchwardens (who make my life so much easier!), the members of our PCC, our Crucifer, Sacristan, Acolytes and Thurifer, our Organist and her deputy, our Choir Mistress and those in the choir, our Tower Captain and the maintainer of the bells, Carillion and clock, our bell ringers, Sidespersons and Welcomers, all those who read lessons and intercess, all who clean the church and the brass, the flower arrangers, everyone who helps with Coffee Mornings and provides refreshments after a Sunday service, all those who help with Pretty Maid day, Fair Week, the Carol Service, fund raising and Magazine production, and the brave people who venture on to the roof to clear the gullies, hoppers and downpipes. Apologies to anyone not mentioned – it is not a deliberate omission.

Churchwardens' Report

2016 Wardens: Mr Robert Beckford, Mrs Helen Young

In the Autumn, Fr Christopher applied for and was appointed to, a post in the Hereford Diocese. Preparations were made for a Vacancy starting immediately after Christmas with a revised Service Rota for the Benefice, but a few days before Christmas, it was announced that his starting date in the Hereford Diocese had been delayed, and so at the time of writing, Fr Christopher is still in post in Holsworthy. In anticipation of Fr Christopher's move, Roger Young volunteered to take a weekly Assembly at the Primary School, and has been doing so since January 2017.

Care of the church

The churchwardens are particularly grateful to all those who volunteer to help keep the church and churchyard clean and tidy and to all those who freely give their time to look after our magnificent church.

There is much that we would like to do to improve the building but unfortunately we just do not have the money to enable us to do the work we would like to do. In most cases the work undertaken is of a maintenance nature, keeping the building watertight and safe, has to be our priority.

Our regular little gang has again cleaned gutters and drains and we are very grateful to them for undertaking this rather dirty but important job.

The roof slates continue to give us cause for concern, and twice during the past year we have had to use a contractor to replace slipped slates. The nails holding the slates in position are badly corroded so this problem is likely to occur more frequently with the passing of time.

Our fire extinguishers were replaced in the autumn and we have taken out a contract that ensures they are inspected annually, a legal requirement. We are currently waiting for steeplejacks to come and check our lightning conductors.

For the Queen's 90th birthday celebrations a gas fired beacon was installed onto the church tower roof. Initially we were somewhat apprehensive but on taking advice from our insurers and church architect, we carried out the necessary risk assessment and provided a safe system of operation for the event. Luckily, the beacon, purchased by the Town Council, was lifted into place with assistance from the Holsworthy Fire Service. The Queen's 90th birthday celebrations coincided with a Fire Service training event where the officers were able to learn how to use the large turntable ladder. A team from the Town Council along with our Rector controlled the beacon on the celebration evening.

Unfortunately, a proposal from The Friends of Holsworthy Church to offer guided tower tours had to be refused on Health and Safety Grounds. Again, we consulted our insurers, but in undertaking the risk assessment, it soon

became clear that to make the visits safe would require a very large amount of expenditure on our part before the activity could take place.

During 2016, following training by the Diocesan Buildings Adviser, we have used the Online Faculty Application process for the first time. It is a legal requirement to gain permission to carry out most building work in a church when it either falls within that which is listed where the Archdeacon's permission to carry out work is required, or when a Full Faculty to carry out the work must be obtained.

So far we have made three applications, the first being for permission to install a bench, donated by the Royal British Legion, which has been placed on a concrete plinth by the war memorial. Archdeacon's permission to do this work was granted on 02/06/2016.

Our second application was for a Faculty to allow us to fix in the church near the pulpit, the carving of praying hands carved and kindly donated by Mr Christopher Osborne, a local parishioner. The carving was timely because the Rector was keen to provide a focus for personal prayer and had already introduced the pebble pool during the previous year. On 04/01/2017 a Faculty was granted for the installation of the 'Praying Hands'.

The final, biggest, and most costly piece of work we have undertaken this past year that required Archdeacon's permission has been the replacement of our oil storage tank.

Having been notified by our oil supplier that the plastic storage tank was split, they were legally bound to issue a notice that no further oil would be supplied. At first we thought it would just be a case of getting a new tank of the same type but that was wishful thinking.

Unfortunately, this turned out to be somewhat more complex than just swapping an old tank for a new one. Since the last single skinned plastic tank was installed there have been two major changes in legislation with regards to what we could do. Firstly, a church is now considered as 'Commercial Premises'. The significance of this is that the classification of the premises determines which regulations have to be followed. Secondly, as a result in the change of premises classification, the regulations we have had to comply with did not allow for a tank to be installed where the plastic one was, the proximity of the large chancel window was the problem along with the length of the oil supply pipework that would be required. The tank, being at the rear of the church is at a distance that some oil suppliers are unable to reach with the delivery hose fitted on their delivery vehicle.

After taking advice from the Exeter Diocesan Adviser and several installation companies, we decided on using a steel fireproof tank which has been placed at the back of the boiler room.

On 01/11/2016 the Archdeacons permission was granted to replace our oil tank - the work was carried out on one of our very wet winter days!

In addition to obtaining permission from the Archdeacon, we also had to obtain Full Planning Permission from Torridge District Council because the installation was classed as new work. There is at the time of writing some tidying up work remaining to be done around the tank and boiler room.

The urgent need to replace the oil tank meant that we had to postpone our application for permission to install a new church notice board facing North Road. Work has now commenced on selecting a suitable design and we will seek the necessary permissions when we have decided on what we want. The size of notice board we choose will influence the decision as to whether a Planning Application will be required.

Other work in progress

Whilst investigating the options for our new oil tank, the opportunity was taken to meet with our church architect, John Alexander. The meeting was very useful and one of the suggestions made by him is that we should prepare a bid for grant aid to not only repair our ageing slate roof but to also consider building improvements such as toilet and kitchen facilities. He has kindly offered to give us guidance to get the paperwork in place. We will have to do the form filling ourselves, but it will benefit us financially and will put us in a good position should a future bid for funding be required.

Previous grants have been available but the timescale between notification of a grant and closing date for bidding have often been short. Sadly, we have not so far managed to be successful with a bid for a grant from the Church Roof Fund because we have not been considered as needy as some other churches that have roofs in a far worse

condition. After the 2017 AGM, and if agreed by the PCC, work will commence on getting this application ready for submission. A positive point in our favour is that our church architect did refer to his last quinquennial inspection in which he did mention work on the roof that would have to be dealt with after the next quinquennial inspection, which is due in July 2018.

Other work to be undertaken this year is to complete the new Log Book that has been issued to us, logging all fixed and non-fixed items in the church. Whilst doing this we are, on the advice from Ecclesiastical Insurance, going to photograph everything.

Church Bungalow

Kivells, acting as letting agents, have been very efficient, and minor problems have been very promptly dealt with. A consideration for this year is that a Legionnaire's Disease check will be needed. Despite several reminders to the solicitors, there has still been no progress on recovering the deposit made by the previous tenants who left owing nearly £3000 in unpaid rent.

Thank you to the deputy wardens who cover in our absence.

Financial Review

2016 Treasurer: Ms Helen Narborough

Total receipts in the year amounted to £35,195 which included £20,361 from voluntary giving, £2,380 generated from fundraising activities and £7,500 from the rental of the church bungalow. The church bungalow was let for the full year. As part of the voluntary giving we received £4,465 through the Parish Giving Scheme, and the associated gift aid amounted to £1,056.

Allocations of receipts include £1,052 to the designated fabric fund, £5,063 to the restricted fabric fund and £322 to the restricted fund for the upkeep and maintenance of the church organ.

Total payments in the year amounted to £28,036. £14,400 was contributed towards our diocesan parish share.

The net result for the year was a surplus of £7,159. The balances of funds at the year-end were as follows: unrestricted £7,370, designated £2,366 and restricted £9,168.

Electoral Roll

Electoral Roll Officer: Mrs Mary Beckford

The Electoral Roll for 2016 was 49. The updated Roll is 52, with 6 additions and 3 deletions.

Website – www.holsworthybenefice.org.uk

Webmaster: Mr Robert Beckford

This has been running for 12 months, but unfortunately, despite emailing him direct with a request to do so, Peter Reynolds still has not taken down old website.

The new Site is now linked to Google Maps which enables users to get travel directions from their location to the church and we are also linked to the site "A Church Near You", the Church of England Directory.

In the past twelve months we have had:

1016 Users with 6700 Pages viewed. 42% of users are regular returners; 45.85% are female and 54.15% are male.

76.5% of users are under 50 years of age.

Geographical location of users:

79% of users are in the UK, 8% are in Russia (Spies?), and 3% are in USA. We have a small number of regular users in Italy, Austria, Iraq, Australia, Germany and France.

Technology being used to view our website:

57% use a desktop computer, 25% use a tablet, and 18% use a mobile phone.

The most popular pages regularly visited are:

12% the churches in our Benefice, 11% the Parish Magazine, 9% the Calendar, 5.5% the Weekly Service Sheet, and 5% the Events Page

Parish Magazine

Editor: Mrs Mary Beckford

We continue to publish a monthly magazine, mainly as an instrument for circulating the monthly service rota and publicising events taking place in the Benefice. I am told the readers appreciate it. As it is a Benefice Magazine it does help to promote the fact that we are a group of five churches. Like most magazines of this type, we struggle to get articles. I am particularly indebted to Margaret Stacey who conscientiously writes the monthly Hollacombe news. John Powers deserves a special mention for undertaking the proof reading of each issue, this is not an easy task and he always spots the deliberate mistakes I put in the draft copy to see if he is being observant!

The magazine printing cost is £62.50 a month (£750 a year). This is for a print run of 250 copies. Reducing the number of copies will not result in a very significant saving as the bulk of cost is setting up machines and the time this takes is the same for one copy as it is for 250. We would save just a few pounds on paper costs.

We charge £75 for a ¼-page advertisement. In theory, the advertising revenue covers the magazine cost but because several advertisers did not renew last June, we now have a slight shortfall of income. (£337).

A business manager is required so that we can increase the number of advertisers and manage the income. If we could maintain 12 ¼-page adverts per magazine we would have an income of £900, giving us a £150 surplus. We could probably take as many as 16 ¼-page adverts per magazine and this would provide a surplus of £450.

Administrative Information

2016 PCC members

As at March 2016, the PCC has 11 members:

Fr Christopher Wilson Penn, Chairman (ex officio) Rector of Holsworthy, Hollacombe,, Bridgerule, and Pyworthy with Pancrasweek.

Mrs Mary Osborne (co-opted) Vice-Chair

Mrs Yvonne Lowe, Secretary (ex officio – member of the Holsworthy Deanery Synod)

Ms Helen Narborough, Treasurer

Mrs Susan Bumby, Minutes Secretary

Mr Robert Beckford (ex officio – Churchwarden)

Mrs Helen Young (ex officio – Churchwarden, Lay Chair Holsworthy Deanery Synod, member of Exeter Diocesan Synod)

Mrs Mary Beckford, Deputy Minutes Secretary

Mrs Jackie Beckles (co-opted, resigned Autumn 2016)

Mrs Leslie Hobbs

Mr John Powers

The PCC has met six times in 2015 at roughly 2 monthly intervals, with the March meeting following the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) which is open to all parishioners. If any urgent matters arise between meetings, the Standing Committee meets either to deal with the matter, or to advise whether an extraordinary meeting of the PCC should be called. The 2016 Standing Committee is Fr Christopher, Mrs Osborne (Vice-Chair PCC), Mr Beckford and Mrs Young (Churchwardens) and Ms Narborough (Treasurer). One of the main concerns, ongoing over many years, is how to raise sufficient money to pay the parish share of the Common Fund. The assessment for 2016 was over £19,000. Contributions from the congregation run at a monthly average of considerably less than the £1,500 required for the Common Fund, let alone the additional £800 required monthly for the expenses of running the church and keeping it in reasonable repair.