

All Saints Church
Fishponds

2019
VICARS REPORT
&
ORGANISATIONS

for the
Annual Parochial
Church Meeting

18th October 2020

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ALL SAINTS AND ST MARYS

INCUMBENT REPORT: APCM 2019

BENEFICE MISSION AND MINISTRY

As a benefice we have continued to worship, pray, support and uphold each other in a number of different ways during 2019. We have shared, youth work, lent groups, school mission, trips, meetings, planning and worship. It has been a great joy as a parish priest to see two communities come to know and rely on each other and I hope and pray that these bonds of peace and fellowship will continue and be strengthened in 2020. It is also a delight to know that legally we are now a Multi Parish Benefice and we are awaiting a licensing date which will mean a change of role for me from Priest in Charge to Vicar.

YOUNG PEOPLE

- * **Holiday Bible Club** ran for its 10th year in July, and this was a joint effort by people across the East Bristol Partnership, hosted by All Saints and based on the “Lord’s Prayer”. We focused on encouraging the younger age groups to connect this year and that resulted in a bigger green and yellow group, a source of huge blessing. The Red and Blue and Black groups were led and supported by leaders from across the churches. My thanks to all those who helped prepare resources, facilitate the running of this and give encouragement to our young people in their journey of faith. It continues to be a huge blessing to our communities.
- * **Harvest Trail** was a new undertaking and was a delight to see facilitated at All Saints but a joint benefice effort.

- * Similar to other trails (Easter Experience and Christmas through the Keyhole) it allowed children from the local schools to come and explore the goodness of God in harvest and creation. Diane Simms and Dave Williams facilitated and helped the large team to bring to life water cycles, bees and trees, bread making and allotment growing all in one space. My thanks to all those who were able to lead on stations, and also to St Marys Stoke Bishop and Hazel Trapnell for lending us some of their resources and ideas that helped us develop and expand what this could look like for Fishponds.
- * **Generations 11+** It has been a great pleasure to lead Generations into 2018/9 and I am helped in this leadership by a number of people at different sessions – my thanks to Mrs Katie Leaver for her help and also to Mr Nigel Heath who has become a regular leader over the last year. One of the highlights was taking some of this group on the EBP camping weekend in May 2019 during which we went to a new site in Brean. The group numbers have steadied at @14 with a couple of new people joining. They continue to surprise me with the depth of conversation and their desire for fellowship and prayer. The young people come from 4 different secondary schools from around the local area.

DISCIPLESHIP

- * **Lent Group** – In 2019 the lent course that we ran used the material based on the TV series “Broken”. It follows the story of a Catholic Parish Priest and his congregation and community in the mix of their lives. It dealt with some very challenging issues, and yet that chance to share with each other about vulnerability and

- * brokenness has also been a way in which we have grown together and in Christ. It was the first time a TV series had been used instead of a book and it was well received.

COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL ACTION

- * **Saturday Lunches and Easter Lunches** - Together through ideas and thoughts at a Joint PCC we decided that energy and a joint focus could be put into the Saturday Lunches at St Marys, whilst also piloting Easter Lunches aimed at school families at All Saints. The Easter Lunches had were received well and we promoted it through the school and those who did come and take part provided some positive feedback. As a pilot scheme there was lots to take away and review in terms of promotion and need but it was felt to have been a great way to connect with the community and families in the parish.
- * **EBP Rucksacks** – This initiative ran for a second year and was again very well received and the generosity of the community and churches matched the need of the people who find themselves homeless at this time of year. We were able to collect approximately 60 rucksacks and then these were distributed to people in Fishponds and the city centre.

ALL SAINTS

- * **Ministries** - All Saints has been part of the mission and ministry of the benefice, but it has also seen people develop and leaders and move to new roles and pastures in that ministry. Diane Simms having been accepted to train for ordination as an Assistant Minister started her training at Trinity College in September 2019. Sarah Heywood was also accepted to train for

- * ordination as an incumbent and starts her training in September 2020. This is a real blessing for not only Diane and Sarah and their families but also for us as a parish. All Saints has been critical to nurturing both these vocations and it is a delight to see that recognised. We also look forward to welcoming Revd Janey Hiller as an Assistant Curate in June 2020.
- * **People** - 2019 was also a year that we grieved the loss of a number of people in the parish and church. Most particularly we mourned and celebrated the life of Heather Simms who died suddenly at the age of 19. It is a testament to Heather's parent's courage and faith that they have shared this vulnerable time with us and I thank Mark and Diane and all of you for your support for them during this time and into the future.
- * **Fabric** - In terms of the fabric and the building we were able to appoint a new architect – Wilkins – who have completed the quinquennial. There are a number of fabric items that need looking at in the near future, but the overall picture was very positive. Please do ask for the report if you are interested, our churchwardens Elaine Seretny and Nigel Heath would be happy to talk to people about it.
- * **Land** - The diocese have also asked us to look again at the potential sale of the driveway that attaches to their land which the previous vicarage was situated on. We have had time to consider and reflect on a number of options and have presented these back to the Diocese of Bristol.
- * **Home Group** - has continued through 2019/2020 and it is such a blessing that Ruth and Columbus are able

- * to offer their home in this way for continued discipleship and fellowship.
- * **Prayer** - Our midweek Wednesday Celtic prayer goes from strength to strength and is now well established and has since February 2020 been offered both on a Monday and a Wednesday. It is a precious time of sharing and holding each other, the community and the world in prayer in God's presence. I encourage everyone to come and see if one of these places may work well for you in the middle of the week.

Many people work tirelessly in preparation, worship, music, hospitality and welcome at All Saints and it has been noted by many people who come to All Saints the depth and warmth and welcome that is present when people came through the doors.

ST MARYS

- * **Ministries** – We were delighted to celebrate with Revd David Jones his ordination to the Diaconate in June 2019. David and all his family have been deeply involved with St Marys and All Saints and the East Bristol Partnership and we wished him and all the family well in their move to Winterbourne for his curacy. We also were able to celebrate in February 2020 the news that Sharon Gleed had been accepted to train for ordination. We look forward to learning how that shapes and thank her for her ministry in many ways to our church family. St Mary's like All Saints has been critical to nurturing both these vocations and it is a delight to see that recognised. We also look forward to welcoming Revd Janey Hiller as an Assistant Curate in June 2020.

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- * **Organ** - One of the main focuses of this year for St Marys has been the restoration of the Organ and it is great that we are now in the position to sign a contract for that work. It has been a time of fundraising and we still have a little to do, however it has more than that been about reconnecting with different parts of the community through concerts and fairs and teas and places to meet. One person who was instrumental in this effort was Richard Morgan who sadly after a heroic effort died on Ash Wednesday 2020. Our prayers and thanks for his life and his example of generosity will remain with us. Thank you to everyone for their time and generosity and efforts in this.
- * **Metropolitan School** – A delightful connection that was made in 2019 has been with the Metropolitan school who used St Marys to film some of their performance of Sister Act. Matt Timms was key in making this opportunity work and developing that relationship so that in the coming years we hope to be able to connect more with our local secondary school.
- * **Spiritual Direction Course** – This began in September 2019 and was based at St Marys. It has been a fruitful relationship and a real chance to see how the building can be used for such courses. It has been a learning curve in terms of space and how to utilise them well for small groups over the course of a winter and summer season.
- * **Open Church** – St Marys continued to be open during the year on specified days and it has been a joy to know that people can walk through the doors and pray in this place. Thank you to all who make that possible.

My thanks as always to both churchwardens and their teams for their commitment and hard work over the last year. Many tasks go on without many people noticing that contribute to the smooth running of systems. Many people's work is unsung and done with a faithful and humble heart, it is noticeable that that reception and warmth from all at St Marys is viewed positively and widely beyond the physical walls and that is a tribute to you all.

FISHPONDS CHURCH OF ENGLAND ACADEMY

During 2018/19 we have continued to have good connections and a fruitful and close relationship with Fishponds Church of England School. We are blessed by many different contributions of people from our churches and particular thanks to the time and skill that Mrs Elaine Jones, Dr Becky Taylor, Mrs Katie Leaver give to their roles on that Local Board (Governing Body). We were sad to lose Elaine as a governor as her and David moved away for David to start his curacy, and I want to thank her for the many years of service that she has given to our church and school in this role. We welcomed Ms Zoe Faulhurst as a foundation governor due to the vacancy arriving and are blessed to have her skills for this role for the future. The churches were able to welcome children for different services and worship across the benefice at Easter, July, Harvest and Christmas.

As churches we were able to assist in May 2020 with the much needed food boxes for half term for some of our families and children and this was a tremendous effort on behalf of the whole church and community. I ask your prayers for the school and its children and for Mrs Debbie Coker and her whole staff team.

PERSONAL

- * **Sabbatical** – On a personal note after 11 years of ministry I was able to take a Sabbatical in June – September 2019. I cannot express enough thanks to everyone that made this possible. I was able to spend some much needed time at home, as well as being able to pilgrimage across the Brecon Beacons over the course of a midweek in June. We then spent 6 weeks in Europe as a family, visiting places such as Taize and Rome and Krakow and the Black Forest. It has been an almighty blessing to not just me but to the whole family. THANK YOU. I will look to ways to share some of that time and the rest discovered with you all.
- * **Advisor for Spirituality** - I continue to act as Advisor for Spirituality for the Diocese of Bristol, and enjoy the discreet role that this gives me. If you would like to know any more about this role and what it involves then please do feel free to talk to me about it, I would be delighted to hear from you.

CONCLUSION

As we are all aware this APCM was delayed due to the Covid 19 Pandemic. Our churches were asked to close in March and at the time of writing this they still are. During this time we have learnt to worship in different ways, in isolation and online. It has been a hugely challenging time for everyone in a multitude of circumstances. We are unsure of when we will be able to worship together as before, or indeed what that might look like. We will be changed by this, but we will not be broken. I am assured by the promises that God makes to us throughout time, whether that is in times of plenty, or times of exile. God is a creator of goodness and light. God's goodness will redeem

and uphold us and when we look to that time of hope and glory when we can once again gather, and in time sing and break bread, that we will truly give thanks for the small blessing of each other. When I was on study leave one psalm read and prayed through was Psalm 139 and it has always been a comfort to me in challenging times. – It says

O Lord, you have searched me and known me.
You know when I sit down and when I rise up;
you discern my thoughts from far away.
You search out my path and my lying down,
and are acquainted with all my ways.
Even before a word is on my tongue,
O Lord, you know it completely.
You hem me in, behind and before,
and lay your hand upon me.
Such knowledge is too wonderful for me;
it is so high that I cannot attain it.

Where can I go from your spirit?
Or where can I flee from your presence?
If I ascend to heaven, you are there;
if I make my bed in Sheol, you are there.
If I take the wings of the morning
and settle at the farthest limits of the sea,
even there your hand shall lead me,
and your right hand shall hold me fast.

God's right hand will hold us fast. That is the promise and the hope that we have as a Christian Church. My thanks to you all for all you are doing and being for each other at this time.

Revd Lizzie Kesteven

PARISH SAFEGUARDING

As in previous years, we have continued to meet together to ensure that we comply with any new directives and policy amendments of the National Church, and to keep our records of DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) vetting, and training requirements up to date.

On February 16th we hosted a Level 1 (C1) Safeguarding Training session led by a Diocesan Volunteer. We were very pleased that the majority of members who needed to undertake this module were able to attend. We also welcomed two people from St. Mary's, along with the two paid crèche workers who at that time were employed by All Saints.

We have also encouraged members in roles where other levels of training are called for to attend a relevant session. It was brought to our attention by the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisor that, contrary to what we had been led to believe, all volunteers also need to complete the Online Basic Module (C0). We wish to record our thanks to everyone for their co-operation in this matter.

We updated the All Saints Safeguarding Policy, which was re-adopted by the PCC in March, when the Domestic Abuse Policy was also adopted.

All our Safeguarding Policies were updated on the All Saints Church website. Our thanks go to Elisa for her assistance in this matter.

Safeguarding Role Responsibility Forms were distributed to all our DBS-verified volunteers, along with information

sheets relevant to specific roles. These were then collated, and are in secure storage.

We currently have 35 members of All Saints who have successfully passed the DBS vetting procedure.

Helen Whitehead Jenny Macey



Connect Group Report

As you maybe aware we have divided the parish into 6 geographical areas. Each one has a coordinator. They are called Connect Groups. The purpose of the group is for pastoral care. For informal social contact and support.

We have only met once this year to share how it was working and we generally felt that it gave us a sense of responsibility to look out for people.

We thought it would be a good idea for those on welcome duty to give out a small card to any newcomers to our congregation. This would have the details on of their coordinator. Anita has produced a card and poster for the board based on Luci's jigsaw design.



CHOIR, MUSIC AND..... CHOIR +

I must admit to being a little 'stumped' as I start to write this. It feels so long since choir things have happened (6 months now). It feels like a much longer break. Choir+ continued until "lockdown" prevented us in meeting with a consistent 11 children enjoying a range of songs. The

favourites seemed to be the more reflective pieces. They each had their favourite warm up pieces – and most loved to sing 'Amazing Grace' given any opportunity. They sang at Harvest, Remembrance and at Christmas. Plans were afoot to sing at Mothering Sunday too, but church had closed at this point.

Choir+ will be back in due course – just need to plan how we do this safely for all. Let's see what we can do for Christmastime. The creative thinking caps are on – so do send through thoughts of what you would treasure most.

Adult choir wise – there was a little less activity, but we did form with a lovely size choir for Christmas and did our annual trip (with friends) around the pubs. As we start to introduce music again to services, we welcome back anyone who wants to sing to make up a quartet each Sunday.

Our merry band of musician continues with John, Ruth, Keith, Tam, Nick and Dave. The music group continued to grow in confidence... hopefully we'll be able to dust off the instruments again soon! With many thanks to them for their continued commitment to supporting music at All Saints. We know music was a loss for many people during worship when we did restart – and we hope we are bringing it back sensitively until everyone can sing out loud and strong in future... Nothing says we can't play cymbals.... So....

"Praise Him on the loud cymbals,
Praise Him on the loud cymbals,
Let everything that has breath praise the Lord."

Thanks, Elisa.



TINY TOTS

We are a thriving group, meeting on Monday mornings in the Halls, providing a structured session for pre-school children aged 0-4 years, along with parents, carers and grandparents.

Our weekly attendance has ranged from 20 children to almost 50 children in a session, plus at least as many adults. As part of the Church's outreach, there is no charge for a session. Instead we have a voluntary collection which pays for refreshments, Christmas books and gifts, birthday books and cards, and Easter gifts. Any surplus is given away to worthy causes. We are pleased that this year has been our best ever for charitable giving. We have made donations to Barnardo's, Bristol Young Carers, All Saints PCC, The Julian Trust, Friends of Eastville Park, the Shoes for Uganda Appeal, and the Shoebox Appeal.

On special occasions such as Christmas and Easter we also use the Church itself. We had a wonderful time visiting the Harvest Trail in Church, which the children and adults enjoyed. We were pleased to join in the Nativity service this year as Angels.

Parents, Grandparents and Carers are all made welcome, and we have a very loyal group of people, many of whom now volunteer to help in preparation or clearing away.

All of our leaders have attended safeguarding training this year.

We share prayers and songs, brilliantly accompanied by Keith, and there are drinks and biscuits for children, with a cup of tea for the adults too. We celebrate Birthdays with a cake specially made by Cynthia or Sue. The session ends

with free play using a variety of toys, bikes, scooters and buggies.

We have provided all children with books at Christmas and Easter through the Bible Society. All children receive Christmas gifts and Easter eggs. This year we coordinated the Christmas Gifts under the tree in church, delivering sacks of presents to Barnardo's and Bristol Young Carers.

Tiny Tots is a good way to start the week, and provides a welcoming meeting place for both adults and children. We have our own Facebook page : "Tiny Tots at All Saints" which helps us all to keep in touch. The Facebook Group contains many of our songs.

2019 saw a number of our 'graduates' join the successful Holiday Bible Club in Summer.

A special thanks to all the adults who help at Tiny Tots.

Cynthia Powell, Judith Badman, Sue Britton, Keith and Joy Hodges, Tom Young and John Waldren.



HOME GROUP

The Home Group continues to flourish. We meet most Wednesdays throughout the year from 7 30-9pm. There is a core of around 10 people who come to the group. Generally the meeting starts with a time where we share what has been going on for us - our insights, thankfulness and concerns. This moves into a time of reflecting on the Gospel reading for the following Sunday. We end with a time of prayer. During Advent and Lent we usually take a break from this routine and study a set book.

We all feel that the Home Group is a great opportunity to get to know each other better and to support each other through times of difficulty.

This is a open group and we warmly welcome any newcomers.

Ruth Edwards-Mlangwa



FIRST FRIDAY FILM CLUB

We had a late start due to the weather condition at the beginning of the year, but once we started to meet, we showed a variety of films ie - 'About a Boy', 'Shadowlands', 'Goodbye Christopher Robin' and 'Kinky Boots'

Our numbers were low but this didn't stop the enjoyment of those who came.

After the film showings we have a chatter over tea and cake.

Stephen, Chris, Dot!



SOCIAL COMMITTEE

We have catered for the Church Fairs providing lunches, teas etc. The Harvest Lunch went well and was well attended. Carols round the Yew Tree this year raised £120.00 which was in aid of the Julian Trust Night Shelter, thankyou to Lizzie for passing the hat around!. We served Mulled wine and mince pies. It was very well supported by the community.

Cynthia, Sarah, Judith, Sue, Dot!

MRS MOPPS

We are a small band of folks who meet once a month to clean the Church and the Brasses which is now to be done on the 3rd Saturday of the month

We are please to say we have had some extra people come along to give a helping hand.

After our cleaning, we enjoy a bit of social time over a cuppa and biscuit.

Mrs Mopps.



MONTHLY COFFEE MORNINGS

The monthly coffee mornings is always held on the 1st Saturday of Every Month, no matter what the weather and during the holiday period.

We serve tea, coffee and biscuits and just ask for donations which goes to the Church Fabric Fund.

To give an extra boost to the Fabric Fund, we have for sale secondhand fiction books for adults and children.

The coffee morning is well attended even when the weather has been bad.

During the Monthly Coffee Morning there is table set up selling home-baked cakes, made by volunteers, and then sold. The money from this goes to Christian Aid

In February we again held a Craft Fayre, which was well supported by the crafters who booked tables and everyone who came along to browse and buy.

Now into their 5th year the Bristol Repair Cafe join us on from 10.30am until 1pm. The Repair Cafe is proving to be

very popular, as they are always kept busy and at times when it gets close to 1pm some people have to be turned away.

The volunteers that come have a go (and usually succeed) in repairing small electrical items, ie food mixers, toasters, kettles, TV, Video and so on. There is also a person who can mend items of clothing. Their services are all free only asking for donation towards the Church.

The Coffee Gang would like to thank everyone who come along, what ever the weather to support this monthly event.



PARISH MAGAZINE

The parish magazine is published every month at the price of 60p per copy, or £6 for the year, when you will get 12 copies for the price of 10.

The circulation has dropped a little, through older members no longer with us. A number of the magazine are delivered to people who do not come to Church and these are delivered by our volunteers, who we could not be without. (Thank you)

The magazine is made up with information for Church Services and Readings along with the monthly duty rota.

Articles are also taken from a web site called 'Parish Pump' especially for Parish Magazines. Also there are puzzles, crosswords, jokes, pages for children and a few more page fillers.

If you know of anyone who would like to receive the Parish Magazine, please put them in touch with anita@lavis.org.uk

13th BRISTOL SCOUTS

In Scouts this year we have improved so much as we currently have two young scouts that are close to achieving their Gold Scout Award which is the highest award they can get in scouting in their age group, and more roughly halfway there.

James has recently been awarded Head Scout Leader of the section, he has also got his camping permit so we are planning more camps for the scouts in the months ahead.

We are having a slow increase of new scouts coming in through cubs, also we have a few scouts moving on to explorers this year. I (Harry) am roughly halfway through my training to become a leader.

The Scouts are covering a lot of badgework in many different areas.

In May we are attending our first jamboree in a few years, we currently have 10 scouts going.

We are also doing an Expedition next term which the scouts have to do to achieve their Gold Scout Award.

This programme we have covered every challenge available and will be looking to the same in the future.

Recently we have vastly improved our programme with different ideas and activities and looking to do so even more in the future. We have also covered lots of badges and are planning to do much more in the coming terms and also try new things that we as leaders haven't done before. So it will be a challenge for us and for the scouts.



13th BRISTOL CUBS

The Cubs have had another good year so far. Our numbers have fluctuated between our current highs of 30 and lows of 17. Due to the influx we are expecting from our Beaver Section we have had to introduce a waiting list due to the current demand.

This year we lost Richard as part of the Cub Leadership team as he has stepped up to become Group Scout Leader for the 13th. We also lost Harry as he has moved to the Scout Section in order to develop his own skills and support the Leadership Team there. Luckily, we have had Faith join the team and she is currently going through her training.

The Leadership team have made strides in improving our program by introducing new activities and events such as a Joint sleepover at Flip Out with the Beavers. A Survival Skills weekend with the Scouts, and a history day at the helicopter museum, while keeping some of the favourite things like the yearly water fight, backwoods cooking and camp craft.

This is a year of many 1st for the Cubs and as the 13th we also did our 1st group camp which meant that we took away 66 young people from across all the sections, to the relief of all the parents and enjoyment of the young people. Ben has gained his nights away permit by running his 1st camp in September, and this term we will be presenting several Cubs with their Silver Chief Scout Award. This is the highest awards they can earn whilst at Cubs, these will be the 1st ones we will have awarded in the last 2 years.

As we move forward, we are looking to become more active within the local community and within our own

Scouting district. By taking part in various projects and activities which utilise the skills and knowledge of not just our current leaders, but also those around us, we hope to build up a broad range of life experiences for our young people to attempt and learn from in a fun and safe way.



13th BEAVER SCOUTS

What a strange year it has been. Reading back on last years report saw Beaver Scouts looking forward to their first 2 night camp – and group camp. What an amazing experience it was. It was a great group camp with Beavers, Cubs and Scouts in sub-camps looking after each other. We followed this with a sleepover at ‘FlipOut’ in the November. Alas, that has then been it for a while. Attending the Jamboree was planned for this year but COVID-19 saw that being cancelled. The Beaver Scouts did take part in a ‘virtual’ sleepover though with another one pending.

We took part in a district Beaveree day, the Santa Train Special and a trip to the pantomime (oh no you didn’t – oh yes we did).

A massive well done must go to Anja, John, Jack, William, Eli, Jacob all who earned their Chief Scout Bronze Award in this time and all who have now successfully moved on to Cubs – ready and raring to go on their next adventures. I started to list all the badges they have earned but there are just too many to list. A couple of them have almost filled their arm!

Other highlights have been getting them to start their camp blankets – yes, they all managed to sew a badge on, made bug hotels, did the communicator badge, enjoyed IT at the

college, doing the Builder badge and learning about the animals of Eastville Park (that was the week lockdown started).

We were quick on the uptake – starting virtual sessions with our Beaver Scouts straight away. They adapted really well. The favourite game was bingo – and we did experiments linked to the rainbow theme as well as a ‘catch the fish’ activity and a delicious Cake In A Mug evening. It was the best recipe yet and very simple.

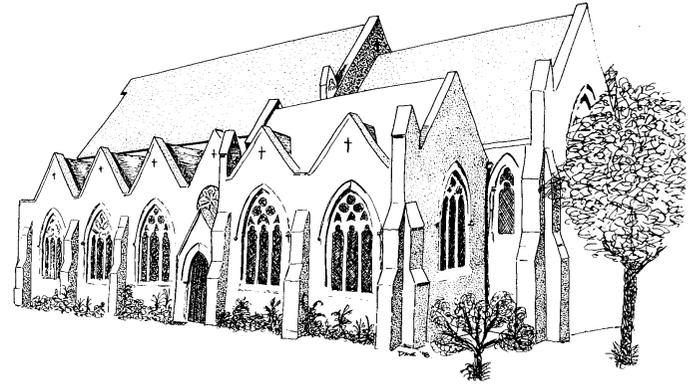
We were able to present Eli Leaver with his Chief Scout Bronze Award during the virtual session – with thanks to Lee for running down the road to leave it on the door-step.

Beaver Scouting continues with a stable leadership team with me, Lynda, Lee joined by Esme as our young leader.

Huge thanks must go to the parents who also regularly step in to help out and, without whom some sessions wouldn’t run so well (like sewing on a badge!).

Thank you for reading – and if you want to know more- just ask.

Elisa



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