

ANNUAL PARISH CELEBRATION



AVON VALLEY
CHURCHES
FORDINGBRIDGE

Fordingbridge PCC, Monday 26th April, 7:00pm via Zoom

Opening Prayers

Apologies for Absence

Review of the Year

- What have been our highlights? Any lowlights?
- Photographic Memories

THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING (The Vestry Meeting)

1. Minutes of the Meeting of 19th October, 2020
2. Election of two Churchwardens

THE ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

3. Minutes of the Meeting of 19th October 2020
4. The Annual Report of the PCC - *written*
5. Finance - Annual accounts – *circulated, for questions and approval*
6. Churchwarden's Report on the fabric, goods and ornaments of the Churches of St Mary's Fordingbridge and St Giles', Godshill – *written*
7. Electoral Roll Report - *written*
8. Deanery Synod Report - *written*
9. Reports from other groups – *written*
10. Elections (*All those who stand for election to PCC are required by the Charity Commission to have a DBS check as Charity Trustees*):
 - 3 representatives to the Deanery Synod – not required this year, next election 2023
 - Elect at least 1 Parochial Church Council Member and fill casual vacancies
 - Appointment of Independent Examiner
11. **AOB** – Questions for discussion or recommendations to the PCC

Behind the Scenes – Celebrations and Thanks

Looking forwards

Closing Prayers

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Item 1: MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH CELEBRATION, 19th October 2020

Present	Rev'd Canon Gary Philbrick (Chair)	Ian Newman	Nigel Spratt
	Judith Dowsett (Minutes)	Martin Calver	Janet Spratt
	Jane Calver	Sarah Perrelle	Helen Tague
	John Dowsett	Mark Ward	Andy Finch
(15)	Michèle Gosling	Margaret Ward	Viv Finch
via zoom	Jennifer Craythorne	Hazel Banham	Rev'd Mike Trotman
	Barry Craythorne	Pat Bloomfield	Rev'd. John Towler
	Ann Beynon	Graham Fry	Annette Young
	Melvyn Beynon	Alan Moore	Gillian Benfield
(14)	Dorothy Ashford	Gwenda Moore	
Apologies	Alison Steven	Mary Melbourne	David Melbourne
	Trevor Tague	Jean Godden	Sue Ledger
	Janet Newman	Sarah Newman	Mark Newman
	Rosemarie Price	Sally Johnson	

1.	Welcome and prayers: Rev'd Canon Gary Philbrick led the opening prayers and welcomed all to the meeting both in church and joining via Zoom.
2.	Apologies: were given and are recorded above.

3.	<p>Review of the Year: Canon Gary shared a Photographic review of 2019 and 2020 to date which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anton du Beke day • Choir May Day • Mike's ordination • New logo and branding • Sanctus launch • BCM commission • Visiting new houses • Gourmet Grocer Carols • Unity Week service • Thinking Day • Broken – Lent Course • VE Day service • Farewell to Nicky • Mike's Sanctus farewell • Messy church, • Music & Arts Festival • Mike's 1st communion • Banners for each church • Teddy bear zip wire • Diocesan conference • Rectory choir rehearsal • Christingle service • Candlemas • Allsorts • Godshill • Learning to Zoom • Distanced VE parties • Nicky's new church • Farewell the Trotmans • Open the Book • Kinkiizi visitors • Ministry team • Summer holiday club • Remembrance Sunday • Stories on the Streets • Fellowship meal • D4G • Model Train event • Fairtrade Fortnight • First streamed service • Easter Pack • Opening Churches • Sandleheath Village Hall • Mike's Induction <p>Canon Gary had not got a suitable photo of Clive's farewell, and the esteem and affection in which Clive was held was emphasised. It was noted that there were many highlights and blessings despite the overall difficulties experienced during the Covid-19 restrictions, which were ongoing at the time of the meeting.</p> <p>Looking to the future: Canon Gary reported that Hazel Ricketts had just been appointed Joint Musical Director to work alongside Tim Ruffer. More details will follow in the coming weeks.</p>
4.	<p>Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Parishioners to Elect Churchwardens held on Thursday 3rd April, 2019 These had been circulated prior to this meeting, were approved and signed without change Proposed by Ian Newman, Seconded by Martin Calver. Agreed unanimously.</p>
5.	<p>Election of Churchwardens (2020): Two nominations had been received, Ian Newman and Nigel Spratt There being no other nominations Ian Newman and Nigel Spratt were duly elected. Rev'd Gary thanked the wardens for their committed service and for all they had been doing behind the scenes this past year.</p>
<p>Signed byCanon Gary Philbrick (Rector, Chairman) Date: 26/IV/2021 (APCM 2021)</p>	
<p>Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting Monday 19 October 2020</p>	
1.	<p>Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting held Thursday 3rd April 2019 These had been circulated prior to this meeting, and on a proposition by Helen Tague, seconded by Janet Spratt, were approved and signed without change.</p>
2.	<p>The Annual Report of the PCC 2020: this had been circulated as two documents prior to the meeting a. Agenda plus Reports from the Parish and b. The Annual Report and Financial Statement, including the Churchwardens' report. The Annual Report and Financial Statement had been audited and circulated via the AVC Website. Copies were available at the meeting. It included a detailed account of the PCC proceedings during the year and reports under the headings Growth in Faith, Care and the Community, Mission and Outreach, Worship and Prayer. Finally, there was the Financial Review. Questions were invited by Canon Gary, there were none.</p>

3.	<p>Finance: NB. Martin Calver, Treasurer addressed the meeting later in the proceedings under AOB regarding the financial situation, but his comments are recorded here as they relate to the Financial Review.</p> <p>Martin reported that in 2018 we expended far more money than we received. It was the same this year and situation had been made worse by Covid. The financial situation on a day-to-day basis had not improved over the last two years; we have expended more, and the gap had widened. Last year £30k was taken out of the Lillington Legacy and into the General Fund to make us solvent, and Martin was about to ask the PCC to do likewise this year. He stressed that the wider congregation need to understand that. Currently there is the buffer of the legacy but if it is spent on other small things it won't be there in future.</p> <p>Andy Finch proposed that the Annual Report and Accounts presented to the meeting be accepted. This proposition was seconded by Sarah Perrelle and agreed by all present.</p> <p>Canon Gary said that we owe Martin an enormous debt of gratitude. The financial side of things is complex and the meeting expressed their appreciation for all he does. Canon Gary thanked the whole PCC team for their work over the past 18 months.</p>
4.	<p>To Receive the Annual Report from the Churchwardens concerning the Fabric, Goods and Ornaments of the Church of St. Mary's Fordingbridge and St. Giles Godshill (2019-2020)</p> <p>The report has been circulated as stated above and was received. There were no questions or comments.</p>
5.	<p>Report on the Electoral Roll 2019/2020</p> <p>The Electoral Roll Officer Jackie Rowe had presented a written report which was circulated. The figures are recorded below:</p> <p>In April 2019, the number of people on the Fordingbridge Electoral Roll was 129, this year there were 131 reported to Winchester Diocese in April 2020. A revision will be carried out in March/April 2021.</p> <p>Jackie Rowe reported that since April 2020, 2 people had sadly passed away and 2 had moved, or were about to move, away from the area.</p>
6.	<p>To receive a report on the proceedings of the Deanery Synod (2019/2020):</p> <p>A written report by John Dowsett had been circulated and was duly received, there were no questions or comments.</p>
7.	<p>Reports on the Parish Activities 2019/2020:</p> <p>All the written reports from the church organisations were received and accepted without questions or comments.</p> <p><i>Post meeting Note: A detailed report from the Benefice Safeguarding Officer Melvyn Beynon had been received and had been omitted from the main report in error, a summary is given here. During 2019 Mr Melvyn Beynon, Safeguarding Officer for the Avon Valley Churches, organized checks and then certificates from the Disclosure and Barring Service for those in the Parish working with children or vulnerable adults. Also, a revised Safeguarding Policy was approved in each of the four AVC Parishes.</i></p>

8.	Elections and appointments:															
8a.	<p>To appoint 3 members of the Laity to the Deanery Synod (2020): There are 3 members of the laity to the Deanery Synod who were elected in 2017 for 3 years and therefore there are 3 vacancies. Nominations had been received for John Dowsett, Michèle Gosling and Ian Newman. There being no other nominations these 3 were duly elected. The new members are: John Dowsett Michèle Gosling Ian Newman - proposed by Nigel Spratt and Sarah Perrelle at the meeting Mark Ward had been the Lay Chair for 4 terms of office, and a very active member of the Deanery Synod for 12 years and had not sought election. He was thanked for his tireless and enthusiastic work on behalf of the Deanery. Mark will continue to serve on the Bishop's Council and as a LLM will continue to be a member of Fordingbridge PCC.</p>															
8b.	<p>To elect members to the Parochial Church Council 2020: Pat Bloomfield, Andy Finch and Gwenda Moore have stood down. NB. No longer an elected member to specifically represent St Giles. Nominations had been received for 1 person. Ann Beynon (had completed a 3-year term, willing to stand again) No further nominations were offered. Ann Beynon was elected unanimously, on a proposition by Jane Calver seconded by Nigel Spratt. Therefore, there are now 8 elected members to the PCC out of a possible 12. Leaving 4 casual vacancies. It was confirmed that the following 14 people are the members of the PCC to serve for 2020-2021: (Officers TBC at next PCC meeting)</p> <table border="0" data-bbox="209 1137 1394 1285"> <tr> <td>Canon Gary Philbrick (Chair)</td> <td>Mark Ward (LLM)</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ian Newman (CW & Deanery)</td> <td>Nigel Spratt (CW)</td> <td>John Dowsett (Deanery)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Michèle Gosling (Deanery)</td> <td>Martin Calver</td> <td>Judith Dowsett</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Jane Calver</td> <td>Ann Beynon</td> <td>Melvyn Beynon (Safeguarding)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sue Ledger</td> <td>Sarah Perrelle</td> <td>Janet Spratt</td> </tr> </table>	Canon Gary Philbrick (Chair)	Mark Ward (LLM)		Ian Newman (CW & Deanery)	Nigel Spratt (CW)	John Dowsett (Deanery)	Michèle Gosling (Deanery)	Martin Calver	Judith Dowsett	Jane Calver	Ann Beynon	Melvyn Beynon (Safeguarding)	Sue Ledger	Sarah Perrelle	Janet Spratt
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8c.	<p>To appoint an Independent Examiner of Accounts: Fawcetts are happy to continue and were duly elected on a proposition from John Dowsett which was seconded by Mark Ward. It was noted that Fawcetts make no charge, and it would be £1500 to £2000 if we were invoiced. Martin was asked to pass on our thanks by letter. It was noted that Fawcetts have been very helpful with the IT equipment and support in the Church Office.</p>															
9.	<p>AOB: Questions and comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Martin Calver noted that the reports received contained nothing specific on the work of the Youth, Children and Families Development Worker or Avon Valley Partnership Youth and Community Trust. It was agreed that this would be of interest to this parish and the wider Benefice. • Canon Gary outlined his initial plans for Christmas. Staff Team will be discussing plans this Thursday. He had written a paper on possibilities and said booking will be needed for some services. The Advent service here will be a trial to see how booking would work. There might be two Fordingbridge Carol services on consecutive evenings and would be booked. Christingle families could come as booked groups to collect bits in a bag (CS providing these this year), there would be a prayer before they leave, and the next batch arrive. Service online to follow the next day. Christmas Day unlikely to be too many people to require booking. Just Carols being discussed with Mark Ward. Thinking of care 															

	<p>homes and how these might be reached via card. Canon Gary urged the meeting to let the community know that Christmas will be celebrated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canon Gary and Sarah Perrelle reported that 700 Messy Church bags containing 17500 components were made up and delivered to the local schools for half term. There will be a daily online service for children to open an envelope and do the activity. (AVPYCT funded) • Canon Gary noted that whatever we do we need to do it well. He would like to improve the quality of online streaming. Following his research he believed that £2500 could get all equipment we need for each church. • Jane enquired about Remembrance Sunday. Canon Gary reported that Fordingbridge Town Council were doing a risk assessment. He expected to hold a short said service at 10am at St Mary's followed by 10.50am at the Memorial. People passing by can stop in groups of no more than 6. There would be no uniformed organisations. • Annette asked whether All Souls will be streamed. Canon Gary confirmed that the 6pm service at Fordingbridge would be streamed and all the names from the other churches will be read out.
10.	<p>Behind the Scenes: Canon Gary reminded the meeting that there are many volunteers doing so much behind the scenes and this was an opportunity to thank some of them. The following received personalised certificates:</p> <p>Gwenda and Alan Moore - for all they have done for the care and energy put into St Giles. Judith Dowsett - for being secretary to the Simplification Working Group making revisions etc. Gail Newell and Jackie Rowe or lovely Parish Administrators – for all the work they do, for being so committed and proactive, especially for their work during lockdown. Lockers and unlockers of St Mary's: thanks to all of them Angela Albury, Melvyn and Ann Beynon, Nigel and Rhoda Coates, John and Judith Dowsett, Di and Steve Evans, Mike Ireland, Mark Ward, Ian Newman and Iris Curtis who has been keeping an eye on things.</p>
11.	<p>Looking Forwards: Canon Gary mentioned 3 points to look forward to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Co-Director of Music, Hazel Ricketts. She is a well-qualified teacher with broad experience. The executive head at Breamore, Hale and Hyde was very enthusiastic. • Simplification – PCCs going forward with enthusiasm. • Online services - engaging with new people and engaging with community online. The decision to stream at fixed time of 10:00am and to use Facebook, rather than Zoom, had been good. We are now a Hybrid church. <p>Ian Newman shared 3 things:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on the works for the church and church hall. Nigel and Ian have got applications ready for grants but because of Covid nobody will look at general applications until March 2021. Only Covid work is being considered now. Therefore, in meantime and with the help of the Church Architect there is a plan to seal the roof at the west end of the church using temporary patching to prevent water ingress. The responses from Historic England have been good and therefore hopeful of grants when able to apply. • Second set of estimates is being sought for the church hall works. • Future of Godshill had to be considered, During Covid the small congregation had found new places to worship in the Benefice. May be at end of its life as a place of worship. <p>Thanks to Canon Gary: Ian thanked Canon Gary for all the work he has done over the past year and for his enthusiastic leadership. As a group of parishes, we owe a huge debt of gratitude to him. The fact that all 4 parishes have voted to go as one parish was largely down to work that</p>

	Gary put into this project and for his leadership. It will be an exciting venture. The meeting showed their appreciation in the usual way. In response Canon Gary said that with new lay worship leaders, simplification, different opportunities for worship and further youth work it was an exciting time in the Benefice and he was never bored.
11	Rev'd. Canon Gary Philbrick closed the meeting with Prayers at 8.05pm.
	Signed byCanon Gary Philbrick (Rector, Chairman) Date: 26/IV/2021 (APCM 2021)

Item 2: The Annual Report for the year ending 31 December 2020 (see Separate Document)

Item 3: Finance: to receive the Annual Accounts for the year ending 31 December 2020 (see Separate Document)

Item 4: Churchwarden's Report on the fabric, goods and ornaments of the Churches of St Mary's Fordingbridge and St Giles', Godshill, 2020-2021

Please note that the Logbook and Terrier will be available for inspection at the APCM

Fabric

One year ago, plans were in place to move forward with the priorities agreed by the PCC following the last Quinquennial Inspection Report, and other items that were added by necessity. The most urgent being the repairs required to the roof of the main nave.

Due to unforeseen circumstances the priorities have changed and progress on all of them has been limited, primarily because of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Church Priorities

Church Priority 1: External repairs: Roof, rainwater goods, Heating
Windows- damage by vandalism and essential restoration,
The Sound System. Solving the problems experienced with the Sound Advice installation.

Church Priority 2: Accessibility, paths, car park, porch, doors.

Church Priority 3: Internal and electrical work, stone floor repair.

Church Hall Priorities

Hall Priority 1: Decorating, deep cleaning and any essential small repairs. This work needs to be done as soon as possible.

Hall Priority 2: When it is known how much money remains from the legacy and applications can be made for grants the project will need to be re-examined and assessed to decide the way forward.

Church Progress

A detailed official enquiry has been submitted to the Lottery Heritage Fund (LHF) very recently. (It has been impossible to submit any claims for work 'not needed because of COVID' from March 2020 until February 2021).

The submission is available for perusal by request to warden2fordingbridge@gmail.com. It asks for advice to be sure that our proposal is the right way forward to stand the best chance of a substantial grant.

We decided to ask for help with a 5-year project encompassing all the known serious problems with the building and the work and equipment needed for us to be able to protect our Heritage. To obtain their help it is essential to meet the outcome required by the LHF and the focus of the project has to be – to restore, protect and make our heritage better known to everyone and more accessible to the community, especially young people and those with disabilities. We propose to do this by carrying out urgent repairs required to the building, and installing interactive screens to identify, explain, and describe and tell stories about our interesting ancient building and the artefacts it holds.

We are proposing to ask for a grant of £250,000.

Church Priority I (in order of urgency)

- **The Roof** of the main nave: Permission has been granted by the NFDC and the DAC to replace the existing lead with Ternecoat Stainless Steel; this has already been used on the North aisle roof repair. The architect has drawn up detailed plans for the work required and the next step is to obtain quotes and appoint a contractor. Included in this work will be replacement and repair needed to the rainwater goods.
- **Heating:** In October 2020 on trying to make the church heating work, it failed. Specialists were bought in to inspect the heating and it was concluded that the jet in the burner, installed in 1984, to a 1961 heating system had failed. In that time the fail safe and safety regulations have increased dramatically. A long period ensued whilst the heating chamber was checked for asbestos and to obtain a new heating jet. Several companies were contacted to supply the heating jet but only one would give an estimate and so a new Nu-Way burner was eventually ordered. In the meantime, temporary heating was installed, but for a building of our size, it is not desperately effective. At the time of writing there are problems calibrating the jet and we await a specialist from Nu-Way to come and inspect the ongoing problem. We have had a report, commissioned in the meantime, to investigate other sources of energy, including ground source heating and solar powered. Heating is likely to be a major problem over the next few years. We are sure that this expense, if the boiler is condemned will be a major part of our grant application.
- **Windows:** The North Chapel window needs to be removed and re-leaded. A quote for £10,000 was received last year from Salisbury Cathedral Glass. The application to the Worshipful Company of Glaziers for a grant was unsuccessful, they only give grants for ancient glass and for conservation, not restoration. They were not keen on having new lead beading fitted, although that comment was likely made by someone who had not properly read our application, as we will not be replacing ancient leadwork as the window was fitted in the 1970's. The work was included in our 5-year plan in the Project Enquiry to the LHF. The quote from Salisbury Cathedral Glass included the work required to repair the damage caused by vandals to two four other windows and some repair work to the Millennium window. Money to cover these has been paid by our Insurance Company.
- **Sound System:** Problems with the sound system are still ongoing. We are very concerned about the impression that it gives to visitors, the bereaved at funerals and memorial services, wedding parties, and to those people, near and far, watching services online during Covid-19. Complete Production Services Group from Christchurch and Salisbury, who reported on the problems and made recommendations in July 2019 have visited again and met with the wardens and Canon Gary. They endorsed their opinion already expressed that the system is poorly installed and designed and made recommendations on what needs to be done to put it right. They have been asked to talk directly with the PCC on zoom from the church so that a proper understanding by the council can be achieved. Some of the problem is caused by the poor Wi-Fi reception in the church caused by the thick stone walls and a solution has been put forward to use the broadband provision in the Rectory and running a cable from that router across to the church, underground, to carry the broadband signal into the building.

Church Priority 2

Accessibility: The plans to improve accessibility are as follows.

- Relaying the surface and increasing the size of the Accessible car park area to provide more bays and space for vehicles to access them. Two paved drop off spaces for visitors with mobility problems will be provided.
- Relay the existing stone paving to join up smoothly with the new bays, from there lay a new 'Breedon' clay bonded gravel path round the church via the West door to the North Door. Lay a similar Breedon path from the South 'gateway' to the South door.,
- Lay a new and wider clay-bound Breedon gravel path from the north boundary of the accessible car park to the North door, via the East end of the building. This would mean the whole church is surrounded by clay-bound gravel.
- Wheelchair access through the North door will be created excavating a slope starting in the path from the Lych Gate about 6 metres from the North door. The slope will continue through the porch into the church. There will be automatic doors replacing the outer glass doors and automatic sliding glass doors inside the existing wooden doors. The South door will not have automatic opening.
- Replace the Edwardian Veneered north doors which show signs of considerable wear and are not accessibility friendly.
- Fitting time-controlled locking on North and South doors.
- Repairing the West Doors, and the steps at the west entrance to St Mary's. The doors are not weatherproof or draught-proof, and the steps are uneven, worn and do not comply with accessibility requirements. Appropriately matching timbers and stone to be used.
- The T.H. Russell Trust came to the church and met with the wardens. We showed them the site and they have since indicated that they were impressed and there is every chance we will get financial support from them.

Internal:

- Electrics – The church electrics are in good condition but were installed in 1974, and new points are required around the building as worship changes and develops and to make large amounts of trailing cables a thing of the past. Also, there is an intermittent fault with the light under the tower and as we move towards a greener footprint, energy consumption will be important.
- Stone floor repair – there are 32 broken flags in the central stone aisle of the church, which will need lifting and replacing. None of them rock, but this work will be planned in conjunction with the heating, as the scheme for heating may well require the lifting of the stone aisle, if this is found to be necessary.
- Decorating: some damage has occurred to the recently decorated South Aisle due to the cold, damp conditions resulting from the lack of heating. This needs attention. It is also intended to decorate the rest of the church to a similar standard to that in the South Aisle.
- Sacristy (Priest's Vestry) – The Sacristy has not had any improvements since 1987 and contains our beautiful vestments, as well as other items which are stored there. The plan is to remove the ad hoc furniture which has been in the Sacristy, in some cases since the 1930's, and refit into a purpose-built Sacristy to store our vestments etc. worth at least £25,000.
- Goods and Ornaments – The goods and ornaments for the church have not experienced many changes or breakages in the last year, and are in good condition, but the storage will become an issue if not attended to. There has only been one small addition to the goods and ornaments during the last year. The late Rosemary Durant donated a beautifully embroidered picture that she did herself, featuring and illustrating the hymn 'All Things Bright and Beautiful' it will be displayed in the 'Children's Corner'.

Church Hall:

With the extent and likely cost of the work required in the church, and uncertainty about grants, the work planned on the hall has to come last, when we know how much money remains.

It is likely that the plans drawn up may have to be changed, perhaps drastically. However, there is essential work that needs to be done to make it useable and rentable, as given in Hall Priority 1 above.

St Giles, Godshill

The small but loyal congregation of about 8 people at St Giles, Godshill have decided that this little Chapel-of-Ease, without any modern facilities, except electricity has come to the end of its useful existence. The congregation has dispersed to other churches within our group and have decided that St Giles should be closed. We are therefore investigating what use this building may have.

There is already an existing village hall and there is no other obvious community use for the building, so we suspect that St Giles maybe sold. The future of its goods and ornaments may well see them bought to St Mary's from which the Chapel-of-Ease was created at the beginning of the 20th Century. 2021 will be the year in which decisions about St. Giles will be made.

Sandleheath Village Hall (St Aldhelm's)

Sandleheath Village Hall, formerly St Aldhelm's is going from strength to strength. The Village Hall committee who have a lease for 25 years, have done a fantastic job in providing new toilets, roof and windows, a new main floor, making the building very user friendly and a good centre for the village. They are now fundraising to build a new purpose-built kitchen, to the north of the building and to create a new carpark at the front.

We congratulate the village hall committee on all their efforts and the village hall stands testament to their hard work and commitment and what can be achieved when a building passes from the church to the community.

Ian Newman and Nigel Spratt, Churchwardens

Item 5: Electoral Roll Report

The total number of people on the Electoral Roll as of the APCM, 19th October 2020 was 131. The Roll was revised prior to this APCM and two people have been added to the Roll and seven people have been removed. Of these three people have sadly died, and four people have moved away. 103 people live in the Parish and 23 people live outside the Parish.

The number being reported to the Diocese in April 2021 is 126.

Jackie Rowe, Electoral Roll Officer

Item 6: Deanery Synod Report

At the first Synod meeting of 2020 in February, the Reverend Phil Dykes, the Church Growth Missioner from the Diocesan School of Mission talked about the role of the School in supporting churches by enabling people to fulfil their calling under God. In addition to pioneering in-house training for curates and Licensed Lay Ministers, the School offered the Bishops' Commission for Mission (BCM), a suite of training for lay people. This covered areas such worship, pastoral care, evangelism, growing faith, children, youth and families, pioneering and prayer champions.

Sadly, the Covid19 pandemic and related restrictions seriously curtailed subsequent Synod activities during 2020 but thanks to enabling digital technology it became possible to hold meetings and stream services online. As a result, in May, the Deanery services on Ascension Day and Pentecost to mark the beginning and end of 'Thy Kingdom Come' were streamed from the AVC Facebook page. In June the appointment of Matthew Trick as Assistant Area Dean was announced.

The Saturday Synod in September was the first meeting to be held via Zoom. At the online session, the Rev'd Canon Mark Collinson, Canon Principal at the Diocesan School of Mission spoke about 'Church & Mission after Covid' and introduced 3 terms for the meeting to consider:

1. Ecclesial Polity: how we organize the Church and its life; governance, clergy and lay workers
2. Ecclesiology: theological nature of the Church, being the people, not the building

3. Missiology: the theology of mission; a mission that first and foremost belongs to God

By allowing God's mission to shape our expression of church means that Missiology should be at the heart of what we do as Church. Also at the meeting, author and poet Ann Lewin offered the Joyce Jupp poem 'Old maps no longer work' as an introduction to how we can find our way through the current pandemic. The poem describes an inner struggle between past and future and talks about how, with the removal of so much that previously structured our life, we should now focus on the 'stars' within our souls like hope, trust and compassion to lead us forward.

The final meeting of 2020 and the first of the newly elected Synod was held via Zoom in December. Intended very much as a 'get-to-know-each-other' session, the meeting used Zoom to divide into 'break-out' groups and enable members of Synod to interact with one another. The meeting was also informed on the work of the Diocesan Resilience Working Group that was addressing a significant shortfall in Diocesan income. Old Alresford Place would be closed, and announcements would follow in the New Year regarding restructuring and redundancies. Gary Philbrick gave an update on the Simplification Process taking place in the Avon Valley Churches Benefice, where there were currently 7 churches and 4 parishes. The aim was to remove duplication in matters like finance, safeguarding governance by reducing the number of PCCs to one strategically focussed PCC. At the individual church level there would be a Local Church Council that would address the '3 Cs – Congregation, Community and Church Building.

Throughout the year, the Deanery has continued its support for the Kinkiizi Diocese in Uganda. In the Spring, a Lent appeal to assist the Bwanja Primary School was very successful. This enabled £3000 to be donated towards the fitting of doors and glazed windows and also finishing walls and floors. Unfortunately, the world pandemic had a major impact on the Diocese and an emergency appeal in the Deanery raised close to £2500 to help pay for food and other essentials.

John Dowsett, Deanery Synod Member

Item 7: Reports of interest from other groups

Safeguarding Report for Avon Valley Churches

There are 76 persons across the Benefice with a current Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certification relevant to their current role of working with children and/or vulnerable adults. However, it is not clear that the list is entirely up to date, as some people have moved recently and/or stopped volunteering etc. Particularly as the Benefice moves towards a single PCC and 4 Local Church Committees (LCCs), it will be necessary to check whether all those on the current list are active and continue to require DBS certification, as well as establish any omissions. At the time of writing there are 3 new applications with the Diocese, including a Licensed Lay Minister renewal, as well as a further 8 renewals or new BCM candidates in the early stages of the process. Those people with a DBS certificate are required to complete training at various levels according to their role. Currently there is a significant number of people awaiting relevant training to be provided by the Diocese as a group where possible. However, 37 have completed the required training courses, with a further 16 having completed some.

The Safeguarding Audit is appropriate whilst the churches are closed and activity curtailed. With churches due to open in April 2021, it will be necessary to revisit the Audit. Every church in the Benefice displays a clear notice of who to contact in the case of a Safeguarding concern. The Safeguarding Policy of 2019 has been reviewed in each of the four AVC Parishes during 2020.

Melvyn Beynon, Safeguarding Officer for the Avon Valley Churches

Sandleheath Church

As for everyone, this has been a hard year for Sandleheath Church. Our church has been closed for most of the year and we have had to say goodbye to four members of our congregation, but we did manage to rally ourselves and open for a brief time. With social distancing we could not accommodate our full congregation but those who came appreciated the effort put in by those leading our services and enjoyed worshipping together, even though it was for such a brief period.

However, we have been so lucky to join with both Gary and Steve in their online services and “thought for the day” and are very grateful to all those who have contributed to these.

Sue Ledger

Children’s Sunday Activity Report 2020

Since lockdowns and restrictions have been in place for the past year this has to be the shortest review of all. Children’s activities in Church on Sunday Mornings have in fact been inactive.

It has been sad to visit St Mary’s Church and see the children’s corner untouched and the displays of children’s work that need updating.

At the same time, we are glad that Jo Heath and her team have been busy engaging in great work with children in the community.

However, with optimism for the future, we look forward to an eventual return to Sundays in Church with our enthusiastic youngsters.

During lockdown an exquisite, cross-stitched picture celebrating God’s beautiful creation was donated to the Church in memory of Rosemary Durrant. We are hoping to display this and would love to explore the delights of creation when we are able to meet again.

Nicola and Ruth Daykin

Allsorts

The Mothering Sunday Allsorts service was the first service to be cancelled as Lockdown-I was announced in March 2020. Churches were closed and on-line services began. It wasn’t until October that Allsorts took place in church again for Harvest, but also was live streamed on Facebook. The service was specially planned to involve much action but little moving around the church as expected at a ‘usual’ Allsorts service. It was difficult to capture the same atmosphere, but nonetheless was a fun, meaningful service and much needed donations for the local Foodbank were received. The next, and last service for 2020, was pre-recorded for Advent and was streamed on-line. Since then, there have been no services delivered by the Allsorts team. As we look forward to opening St Mary’s for in church and on-line worship, the practicalities of the old style Allsorts in a hybrid church will need to be thought about. Thank you to everyone who has helped in any way by planning, taking part and recording the few services we have been able to share in 2020.

Janet Newman and the Team

Puddle Ducklings

What a year! We held our New Year meeting with Epiphany as the theme. The children enjoyed dressing up as stars, wise men and pages, then following the star on its journey to the baby Jesus. Pancakes were soon eaten in February and then March saw the children making Mothering Sunday cards. Many new mums and babies were welcomed in the early months of 2020 and then, just as we were all getting to know each other...Lockdown-I! Some of the Puddle Ducklings team, who were not shielding, were able to meet and

record a few videos for the Youth, Children and Families mid-week slots on Facebook to maintain a connection with our families. As restrictions increased the videos had to be limited to members of one household. We have also maintained contact by delivering Easter Eggs and Christmas cards and book gifts for all the children.

It has been a great sadness that we could not continue to meet for most of last year and look forward to when we will be able to gather in 2021. How the children will have changed by then! Babies will be walking, older ones will be talking and some won't return because they have started school! But there will be new mums, with new babies who will be looking for friendship and fun, and the team will be there to welcome them.

Janet Newman and the Team

Avon Valley Youth, Children and Families Development Worker

Messy Church

Unfortunately, Messy Church was not able to restart after Lockdown 1.0 in March, but we began to show online videos from 24th April 2020 when we created a new Facebook page: Avon Valley Churches, Youth, Children and Families. This responded to the need to reach a younger demographic but also to communicate in a more simplified and less ecclesiological way. Of course, we are shaped by who we are as the Anglican church but with a growing number of people who form part of the 'without faith' community, we are being encouraged not just at diocesan but also at national level to rethink how we communicate, and this is particularly important since church has gone online. We are actually one of very few churches to have done this, but it has most certainly allowed for more freedom of content and a chance to experiment with content. The evidence is in the statistics (See report from Laura Cowdery) but if I may share just one of my personal observations, I am able to tell you that when I began working for AVC in July 2018, our main Avon Valley Churches Facebook page had 178 likes and the same number of followers. In less than a year, the AVCYCF page already has 216 likes and 251 followers which is astonishing in such a short space of time. It took the main AVC page four years to gain fewer followers than AVCYCF page did in less than a year, to put that into perspective, and is testament to the effectiveness of Laura's work as well as the engagement with the content. Clearly COVID has encouraged us to think differently about how we identify as church.

Online Youth, Children and Families Work

Our first online offering was Messy Church and this was soon followed by Story Time, Youth Space Online, Allsorts and online assemblies. We began Bible Bedtime Stories in August 2020 and developed our offering to include Celebrate our Community in November 2020, a chance to meet with local businesses, charities and volunteer organisations and showcase what they do. This has been so important in helping us build new relationships with local organisations and allowing us to joint work - more on that to follow. It also shows the local area that we care about promoting and supporting them.

Bible Bedtime Stories has gained attention at Diocesan level. I had seen this done by another church and thought that we could happily offer this on our Facebook page. It is 'trailblazing' by being offered at 6.50p.m. It has always been one of the most popular videos of the week and we have the most amazing team of contributors who are so committed to and excited about writing these scripts. Special thanks to them all and the editors of those videos.

I loved preparing and scheduling online assemblies and again, we had the most amazing contributors, Gary, Irene, Michèle, Mike and Heidi but when we began doing 'real-time' Zoom assemblies, we decided to 'prune' those on Facebook. They represented a lovely window into Anglicanism because people often chose important historical people or church seasons to talk about and we even had the most wonderful assembly on Diwali. Gary and I have enjoyed our Thursday family assemblies, when we were in lockdown with the Federation schools and now we are just on Zoom with the children in their classrooms on a Thursday afternoon.

Open the Book

Since the first lockdown, we were no longer able to continue with Open the Book in school. Since January 2021, we have begun doing Open the Book online and have built a wonderful team to lead these, every other week, for our Zoom Federation assemblies.

The Audacious Ministry of Bags

Irene Canton and I were discussing the challenges of showing online Messy Church videos without having craft materials and, as a result, planned the first Messy Church in a Bag for October Half Term 2020. The success of this, reaching out to 750 primary school children in our area, prompted us to think bigger for Christmas in a Bag and we organised just over a 1000 bags including Forres Sandle Manor, and all of the local preschools and nurseries, Fordingbridge Day Nursery, The Coach House at Gorley, Stepping Stones and Hyde Preschool. For Easter in a Bag, we have extended further to approximately 1040 bags to include two home school groups. The positives to be learnt from audacious ministry is that thinking big leads to a larger impact and, as we are promised that God gives to us abundantly, so giving the community a window to this abundance touches more lives. It is also impartial and inclusive ministry- everyone is treated in the same way, which came as a shock to Forres Sandle Manor at Christmas. In addition, a committed team of helpers prepared the bags, some from home and others in a safe way in St Mary's Church Hall and yet other supported by delivering them. The donations received towards Messy Church and Christmas in a Bag totalled £1,400.

Jo Heath

Digital Communications: Facebook & Online Statistics: November 2020 – March 2021

Our main @AVC page now has gone up from 562 Likes at the beginning of November 2020 to 640 Likes & our Followers (which is key because these people are reading and viewing our content) have gone up from 679 to 778 Followers and is growing every day. We are getting ever closer to that 1,000 Followers mark ('Followers' see content, 'Likers' also publicly associate with AVC).

AVC Page – Posts are collectively 'Reaching' on average between 6-7,000 people per month. Last time I looked, the rate of followers has increased 160% in the last few weeks and followers are up by 175% this month.

On our Youth, Children and Families page (@AVCFamilies), we are now up from 115 Likes in November 2020 to 213 Likes, and from 130 Followers to 249 - an increase of more than 100 in 5 months.

YCF Page – Reach is up 90%, in the past month our posts have reached 9,522 people. This recent spike is due to an Easter in a Bag post that went viral and was shared by 21 people/groups, including the National Messy Church page and the Winchester Diocese, and has so far been viewed by 5,223 people. A phenomenal reaction just to one post.

This is all organic, bar 2 paid adverts costing £10 each which ran for 7 days each.

Our videos and services are performing very well with in-service viewers, this week (March 2021) in the high 30s and on last weekend's Mothering Sunday service we reached 50. In-service viewers are those who watch the 'live' service at the time it is first available, but many more watch later at a time to suit them. Altogether so far, the Mothering Sunday service has been seen by more than 783 people. Looking at this week's figures, our Saturday Conversation on Careers in the Church of England has so far had 582 views in just over a week with similar numbers for our Thought for the Days, again which are growing all the time.

The highest video views on the Youth, Children and Families page include Helen Tague and Janet Newman's Fordingbridge Flower Club video with 889 views so far, after sharing locally and individuals sharing. Another

Celebrate Our Community video, an interview with The Gourmet Grocer, has received 785 views so far after sharing. This does not include our YouTube views which we can add a further 10% numbers-wise to each. Winchester Diocese also shared one of our Youth posts about staying positive during lockdown, also shared locally, which has so far been viewed 934 times.

Most interestingly, the times, as mentioned above re Easter in a Bag, when our numbers, reach and engagement has been highest, directly coincide with posts relating to our outreach in the community work. For example, from 26 January to 22 February, our posts reached 17,400, our engagements were 7,494 and we had 19 new page Likes. Our highest-ranking post during this period, about donating cupcakes to children and care homes during half term, reached 3,600 people, after sharing to local groups and people choosing to share our good news online, with 1,400 engagements. This proves that AVC is doing some of its best work outside of the church building, in amongst the community. This in turn led to a significant rise in people Liking and Following our page and in turn to people attending and viewing services, with service views between 350-600 during that period.

Likewise, our Likers and Followers have increased significantly again in the past few days after our Easter in a Bag campaign, thus proving that kindness travels exponentially and has really helped to put Avon Valley Churches on the virtual map.

Facebook ranked us as number 3 in a list of 'similar pages', in terms of followers and engagement, closely behind Love Church in Bournemouth and St James Church Sussex Gardens (Paddington), both of which have far larger populations and congregations. It is not nice to rank these things but we are way ahead, in terms of numbers, in front of Ringwood Benefice, both Alderholt Chapel and Church, Salvation Army, All Saints Mudeford and New Life Community Church.

Recent support from the local and national press, as well as the Winchester Diocese, has further boosted our profile, something that we plan to build upon and continue to grow.

Since November I have also built up the @avonvalleychurches Instagram account from very few followers to close to 100 with regular posts receiving encouraging Likes and responses. I aim to continue growing this platform in order to keep reaching out with engaging content for those with families and the younger demographic. I am also sharing relevant video content here and posting regular Instagram stories. Hopefully this week's BBC interview will help to boost our profile even further!

The new website, which is nearly ready to launch, will also help in terms of marketing and growing numbers. We just need more hours in the week to get it done.

Laura Cowdery, Digital Communications Enabler and Digital Support Worker

Michaelmas

Our last meeting was in February 2020 when Mandy Coombes spoke to us about her work with the Salisbury Hospice at Home service. We gave her a donation at the end of the meeting as the service relies totally on funding from the Salisbury Hospice Charity.

As the St. Mary's branch of the Mothers' Union had closed at the end of 2019, its members were invited to attend our meetings. From February 2020 our programme was expanded to include some afternoon meetings/outings and occasional Wednesday morning services of Holy Communion, followed by coffee, in St. Mary's. Sadly, none of this was possible as a result of the coronavirus pandemic.

Although we were unable to meet as a group again in 2020, several members helped with the Messy Church and Christmas in a Bag projects, and also donated and collected items for the Christmas Shoe Box Appeal, which Helen kindly delivered to Salisbury.

Flowers were sent to two of our members: Joy Tosdevin, who celebrated her Diamond Wedding Anniversary in April, and to Trudi Cotton (one half of the secretarial team) who moved to pastures new in Devon in

October. Trudi was also involved with Traidcraft on Sunday mornings at St. Mary's and at other church events. We look forward to being able to meet as a group again when circumstances allow.

Gillian Benfield

Prayer and Meditation Group

The meditation sessions on a Wednesday evening, like all forms of worship, were not able to take place in St Mary's for most of this year. However, we took the decision that we would all continue to meditate in our own homes, on a Wednesday night at the same time. It has been a great comfort and a wonderful way to stay connected. Sometimes, with two noisy boys in the house, it has been a challenge to find a quiet space but well worth the effort.

We hope to be back in church soon but do feel free to join us for 25 minutes of prayerful silence every Wednesday night.

Sue Ledger

Traidcraft

First of all we would like to thank Trudi Cotton for her leadership of the St Mary's Fairtrade, her tireless work in selling Traidcraft products, particularly during the lockdown period and for her input and energy in supporting the team's events across our churches. Having moved from Fordingbridge last autumn she was still able to take part in our online Sunday service at the end of Fairtrade Fortnight this year. We wish her well in her new home. We are fortunate to have Di Evans and Rhoda Coates to look after things now.

The AVC Fairtrade Team use Traidcraft as the main supplier of goods for our stalls. There are stalls in most of our seven churches. We see our role not as a money-making venture but that of spreading awareness of how people in developing countries start to benefit from fairer trade rules, the support and encouragement to start their own businesses; and the gain they get from the Fairtrade Premium, which in turn helps not only their immediate families but their local communities to prosper. Our goods are sold on at catalogue prices or below if possible, with the 'Fairtrader discount' being sent onto Traidcraft Exchange.

The stated aims of Traidcraft Exchange, the charity arm of Traidcraft plc are:

- to support people to harness the benefits of trade
- to fight against injustice in global trade.

The 'Fairtrader discount' of 10% on food and consumables, and 15% on other goods for a 9-month period, being £49 from St Giles and £114 from St Mary's Fordingbridge, was sent to Traidcraft Exchange at the end of December 2020. Opportunities to sell at Sandleheath have been very limited this last year, but we look forward to better sales in 2021. After our recent stock-take in March 2021, the stock and cash at St Mary's remains at £530, which is a good working level to maintain.

Gwenda Moore and Sue Ledger

Too Old for Sunday School (TOFSS)

TOFSS has been meeting, usually once or twice a month, since September 2016. It has been held at our home in Provost Street. We meet to share our journeys, and to find out more about the Christian faith, often listening to DVD films/talks by eminent Christian Speakers, followed by discussion and a time of prayer.

Anglican in origin, we are now an ecumenical group with some seekers. Before Lockdown, we had an enjoyable TOFSS lunch at the Ship Inn in Fordingbridge in January 2020, and one meeting in February. The meeting planned for March clashed with an appointment, so was sadly cancelled. Since then, the Lockdown restrictions have meant no more in-home meetings for the whole group. However, we have formed a Social Bubble with TOFSS friend and neighbour, Rosemarie Price, and have been able to continue the pattern of TOFSS, using Avon Valley Churches offerings of Thought for the Day, Saturday Conversations, and a Sunday Service, when we have been together. We have kept in touch with other TOFSS people during the pandemic as best we could.

Revd John and Pat Bloomfield

Mission Matters

Since last year's Report, two members have left, Revd Nicky Davies and Revd Mike Trotman. Current members are Revd Canon Gary, Alan and Gwenda Moore (Godshill), Carol Sims (Hyde), Sue Ledger (Sandleheath), Rosemarie Price, John and Pat Bloomfield (St Mary's Fordingbridge), have been joined by Heather Clark, (Hyde), and Bethan Davies (Woodgreen & Hale). We met 5 times in 2020.

The Fairtrade team have worked hard, despite Lockdowns, to market Traidcraft goods, dis-tribute Catalogues and offer home deliveries. Rev'd Nicky was in a Saturday Conversation in June, and this month Rev'd Kate led a service to mark Fairtrade Fortnight: both were online events.

A speaker from The Children's Society visited St Mary's Hale in February 2020 but since then face to face speakers have not been possible. There was an excellent Christian Aid Benefice Service on-line in May, included a short film clip. This occasion was the first use of E-donations, and was very fruitful. Contributions were sent for inclusion in the Parish magazine, Fordingbridge News & Views, including articles on North Korea, Christians Against Poverty and The Lotus Flower Trust.

There were 3 Mission Sundays in July, when the focus was: The Bible Society, Open Doors and Tearfund. Over the year Books to Borrow changed its format and Alan and Gwenda led the work to put every book online, so that books would still be available to borrow by locals. This has recently been completed, and publicised, with Gwenda responding to an email system of requests, and delivering books using strict Covid-19 quarantine/sanitising plan. Open Doors leaflets and Prayer Diaries are circulated to Benefice churches where requested. The sale of Morse Code Bracelets raised funds for Open Doors, and prayers for the countries where persecution of Christians is most severe have been encouraged in a variety of ways. The new Open Doors World Watch List 2021 was delivered to churches which wanted them. Saturday Conversations have been used to inform watchers about One World Week, World Sustainability, the benefice support of Traidcraft, Tearfund, and Christian Aid, Kinkiizi and Days for Girls. Likewise Thought for the Day was used to give a Global View of the Church. In the Autumn, Mission Matters helped to organise a Smartie Tube Fundraiser, which raised over £1000 for Kinkiizi from great generosity across the Benefice.

Four Mission Matters members attended the two-day Partnership for World Mission Conference online. People attended from all over the world. There were 3 topics: Covid 19; Black Lives Matter; and Climate Change. The principal message was that Christians can have a huge impact in the world for good, as there are so many of us! Finally in December, Carols on Hyde Common resulted in a very generous collection for The Children's Society.

Pat Bloomfield and Gwenda Moore

Churches Together in Fordingbridge and District (CTFD)

A joyful and well attended Church Unity Service was held in St Mary's Fordingbridge in January 2020. Sadly, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, plans for a Good Friday Walk of Witness and Service on in April and Kite Flying at Breamore Mizmaze on Pentecost Sunday, were cancelled. However, our Church Leaders of the District continued to meet together online throughout 2020, and Interdenominational Churches Together

prayers were held online in the Summer. The CTFD Prayer Link, published monthly by churches in turn, continued, coordinated by Judith Blake and Ruth Ashby (FB Methodists), and is much valued by many.

During 2020, a White Poplar was purchased by CTFD, and planted with the help of the Town Council, in the Recreation Ground, to replace the one planted in 2013 on the 60th Anniversary of the Coronation of HM Queen Elizabeth II, which had been vandalised. A new plaque replaced the original which had deteriorated. Sadly, before the plaque could be used, this tree too was vandalised. But a small miracle has happened: this Spring, the original vandalised White Poplar is making a come-back! Although more in the shape of a bush, it is looking promising, and the plan is to put the new plaque against this original tree, when conditions allow. Julian Sims (Church of the Holy Ascension, Hyde) has recently been elected as Chair of CTFD. Helen Eales (Our Lady of Sorrows & St Philip Benizi, FB) is continuing as Secretary/Minute Secretary. There was an online Unity Service using Zoom in January 2021, and we look forward to the national event: Thy Kingdom Come, between Easter and Pentecost this year.

Pat Bloomfield

News of Other Groups

The Covid-19 restrictions have meant that many of our connected groups have not been able to meet during 2020 and therefore there is little to report. Everyone is very much looking forward to the time when activities and events can resume with enthusiasm and commitment!

The Tower Bell Ringers and St Mary's Church Choir were able to practice when rules allowed on a rota basis and following strict guidelines. Bells were rung by a 'skeleton' team when services took place in church and a small choir sang on behalf of the congregation. However, since Christmas, the 'Stay at Home' rule has curtailed all activity.

The Pastoral Visitors and Friends of the AVC have remained in communication with the community throughout the year by email and telephone, as well as with each other, using Zoom to hold meetings and training.