

Saint Michael & All Angels, Hinton

Annual Report and Accounts for the Parochial Church Council

Year ended 31st December 2020

Aims & Purposes of Saint Michael's:

These remain as published in the Review of October 2007, namely:-

“To provide an opportunity for people to praise God and receive the Eucharist, to find spiritual comfort, and to give and receive the love and friendship of others, in a traditional, well-loved and familiar manner and setting”.

Objectives and activities

We continue to hold traditional language services wherever possible, and ensure that our Church provides a place for focus and quiet when appropriate, maintaining a spiritual atmosphere – but also an atmosphere of love, friendship and support. We endeavour to maintain the Church décor etc in its traditional and well-loved form. Overall we work to provide a sense of continuity – of language and style, traditions, rites and setting.

Through thought, reflection and prayers of intercession, we endeavour to maintain awareness of the larger Church – Deanery – Diocese – National & International, and hope to provide challenge to our thinking through the reading of, & reflection on, Lessons, Psalms & preaching.

By our various activities we endeavour to support each other (and our Aims) by:

- maintaining the Church in good condition and traditional ambience
- being concerned about each other's difficulties, welfare, sickness etc.
- welcoming newcomers and visitors
- maintaining & supporting an active social calendar & events
- raising the profile of the Church whenever possible via posters, notices, press.
- Through our “Gleanings” collections we continue to support the purchase of mosquito nets for the children of Africa through donations to the Christian Aid “Nets Now” initiative.
- Regular donations are made to the New Forest Food Bank throughout the year, with special effort at Harvest Festival time.

The PCC has effectively carried the responsibility of continuing to pursue these aims, developing its relationship with the other churches in the United Benefice and gaining great benefit from friendship and co-operation with them.

Churchwarden's Report

2020 has been a year of worship and social interaction disrupted by the Coronavirus with long periods of time when the church has been closed, open for Private Prayer and, for short periods, open for limited services of Holy Communion.

Achievements and Performance

Services: It has been very difficult to maintain our pattern of services during the last 12 months with focus mainly on Private Prayer. Special services were held on appropriate occasions such as VJ Day at the War Memorial, Remembrance Sunday, the Carol Service, the Crib Dressing Service etc.

In June a VJ day service was held at the War Memorial and run following social distancing by the Churchwarden supported by Steve Burdock. It was attended by a small number of people.

The Remembrance Service was limited to a gathering around the War Memorial which was still well attended following social distancing and safety rules.

Our Priest-in Charge, the Reverend Doctor Ben Sargent, has continually provided services via FaceTime and Zoom. When the rules have permitted he has taken services of Holy Communion within the church where the host only has been offered to the congregation.

The planned church events including a concert by the Military Wives Choir, the Summer Concert and Carol Service by the Sandleheath Band, the Summer Garden Party plus the many Coffee Mornings all had to be postponed due to the Coronavirus regulations. This has had a major effect on our fund raising during the year.

The Friends and Social Committee ran a very successful 'Silent Auction' that achieved a good amount with a contribution made from the funds raised by the committee to the running costs of the church.

St Michael's has suffered with restrictions on the numbers able to attend weddings and, at times, wedding dates being postponed until the following year.

As a church there will be a need ensure that weddings are promoted using the wonderful building and location while ensuring the requirements of the Church of England are maintained. Baptisms have also been affected by the restrictions during 2020.

There are now 56 persons on the Electoral Roll of whom 7 are resident in the parish. Our average weekly attendance at services is 30 when the church has been open. The attendance during Private Prayer has held steady at 12 providing a useful opportunity to those who wished to take advantage of the peace and tranquillity of the building during the difficult time.

The opening of Hinton Admiral Gardens was cancelled due to the pandemic therefore the major fund raising event of the year was lost. The intention is to open the gardens in the future but it appears that it may not happen until 2022. The financial loss is not the only downside of the gardens not being open. The support of the congregation and friends brings a social opportunity to all those involved. It also gives the visitors the opportunity to appreciate the church building and warmth of welcome offered.

Administration:

Parochial Church Council:

The PCC met 4 times during the year. Once in person and 3 times via Zoom. This body has continued to share the decision-making process and much of the administrative and "hands-on" work of Saint Michael's. At the 2020 APCM it was agreed that the members of the PCC would remain as member until the 2021 APCM. Daniel Sanderson was elected as a Deanery Synod Representative with Pat Sanderson.

Deanery Synod: Daniel Sanderson and Pat Sanderson have represented Hinton Church.

Charitable Giving: The policy on Charitable Giving continues to be at three levels, namely Church, Local and International, and this year £715 (See Financial Review for details) has been donated to the designated Charities, including informal donations of £75 to the "Christian Aid Nets Now" programme and the collection of tinned and dry goods for the New Forest Food Bank.

Pastoral Care: The majority of our activity in this regard has been carried out by our Priest-in-Charge, the Rev. Doctor Ben Sargent as visits to private homes, hospitals and Care Homes have been restricted.

Church Community: The social life of Saint Michael's has been suspended over this year. The Harvest Service happened with a beautifully decorated church provided by Valerie McCall and Pat Sanderson. The Patronal Festival happened during a short period of the Church being open. The Christmas Carol Service and Crib Dressing Service happened and, as usual, both were well attended by 'non regular' congregation members. The Nearly Midnight Mass service was busy but, as expected, the numbers were not as high as normal.

Buildings and Maintenance etc:

Structurally, Saint Michael's remains in good order with several smaller projects completed in the year.

Steve Burdock had cause to repair a broken window in the large shed at the rear of the church. It is so helpful having Steve who willingly carries's out these tasks when there meaningless damage to the church property.

Projects that are planned for 2021 are:

- Repairing the front fence
- Repairing the Lynch Gate gates

Both of these projects are to be funded by Hinton 21.

There is some deterioration of the stone work at the base of the west wall near the bell tower entrance that will require attention in the next 12 months. It appears that we will need to contact a stone mason to carry out the work as it is a specialist skill.

A group of Volunteers have taken on the task that Sue & Paul Welsh previously carried out – the cleaning of the brass in church. The volunteers now realise what a sterling job Sue and Paul have done for so many years.

Car Parking has been made available in the Old Saw Mill area behind the business unit. The builders debris has now been removed therefore the parking is available once the Church is open for Services once again.

It was suggested that a path is cut through from the Old Sawmill car park (front) to the church to avoid members of the congregation walking on the A35. A pathway has been identified but the space is between two graves therefore the records need to be checked to ensure that there is no burial in the identified space. This work has been delayed over the last year but it is still a planned piece of work.

As churchwarden I feel it is appropriate to offer a ‘thank you’ to all those who have offered so much help and put themselves out during, what has been an extremely difficult 2020. Many people have taken on roles that have helped the Church remain open and kept members of the congregation informed of what is going on when our normal gathering couldn’t take place.

Recognition:

- The “Friends and Social Committee” working tirelessly during a very strange period
- The Bell-Ringers – Gill & Robin Wilson & Roger Liscoe & team
- Our Verger – Lizzie Davies
- Baptisms – Shirley Burke
- The Sachristan - Sue & Paul Welsh
- Hinton Happenings – Editor Shirley Burke
- The Brass Cleaning Team – The team of Volunteers
- Churchyard and Gardening – Overseen by Steve Burdock
- Flower Arrangers – Shirley Messinger, Valerie McCall, Pat Sanderson and many helpers
- Health & Safety Officer – Roger Liscoe
- Jill Hayes as our Electoral Roll Officer

- Ed Lewis as our Independent Examiner
- The Sidesmen, the Chalice Servers, coffee providers and the Epistle Readers
- David Sykes and occasional visiting organists
- Deanery Synod Representatives – Pat Sanderson & Daniel Sanderson
- The members of the PCC
- Chris Waud our Treasurer who keeps us all on the straight and narrow
- Caroline Waud, who assists the Treasurer and is “Giving Secretary”
- Steve & Liz Burdock for their Food Bank collection work

As with many churches St. Michael's faces ongoing challenges following this long period with very little opportunity to do what it does best; offer religious and pastoral care. The Treasurer's report illustrates the financial challenge that faces St Michael's. We have a need to reach out into the wider community to improve, even more, our church attendances, to share the costs of maintaining the building and the future of the church.

2021 offers a new opportunity to our Church and our friendship to one another and also all those who may visit (and stay?) so that St Michael's continues to grow as in previous years and the Pandemic is put behind us. The Military Wives Choir wants to come and perform their concert; the Sandleheath Band wants to return to play at the Summer Concert and Carol Service. The Friends and Social Committee have many ideas to bring the social life back to St Michael's. The Gardens should happen once again in 2022. So much to look forward to!