

ST JOHN THE BAPTIST CHURCH

BOLDRE

ANNUAL REPORT

2018-19

ANNUAL REPORT - PRIEST IN CHARGE

This is the sixth annual report since I have been at Boldre. The year it looks back upon and reviews has been as satisfactory as any of the previous five.

Considering our 'house for duty' status: three days a week of priestly duty, one of them being Sunday, we remain very much active and alive. To a very great extent this is due to a strong core of dedicated folk who manifest their love of God and Church not only in regular worship, but also by hard work, generous giving and the encouragement of their clergy and fellow parishioners.

During the last year we have lost some of the very best of such folk. Out of twenty five funerals last year, nine were of core church members. Although it is risky to mention folk without giving offence to those not mentioned, it would be remiss not to acknowledge: John and Kate Roome, Peter Chitty, Brian Dagnal, Bugs Hughes, John Hudson-Davies and John Stacey. All were faithful and regular worshippers as well as invaluable supporters of St John's. We also lost Colin Walker, a faithful Evensong attender and church supporter, and Ian Williamson an attender of the Wednesday morning Eucharists, as well as a great supporter of the church and encourager of its parson. That our numbers hold up, and activities thrive, in spite of such losses is remarkable.

The greatest achievement of any parish church lies in the quality of its day to day life and worship. Week in and week out at St John's and in St Nicholas' Chapel we offer beautiful worship in lovely locations. This equips us all to go out into the world spiritually enriched to fulfil our weekly obligations and duties in the world. It is a team effort. Churchwardens, musicians, sides-persons, flower arrangers, sacristans, readers, intercessors, church cleaners, coffee and biscuit providers all perform at a high level and are motivated, I'm sure, by both love of God and Church. We are a good parish church of which to be a part, I certainly am proud to be so, and look forward to Sundays. Do we not we all? The happy buzz over a cuppa after Sunday worship at St John's and after Wednesday worship at St Nicholas' is indicative of harmonious church fellowship and community. Those unable to attend church have Holy Communion taken to them each month and pastoral care of them and others is provided by a surprising number of our people.

Highlights of the last year were many and varied. There were the usual Australia Day, Africa Sunday, the Hood Memorial Service, Harvest Festival, Pet Service, All Souls' Requiem, Patronal and the major liturgical festivals of the year. All of them a joy to participate in. Of particular note was the Confirmation, a lovely service for a group of fine candidates. Felicity and I enjoyed getting to know them during their preparation. As it turned out it was Bishop Jonathan's final visit to us. We wish him joy as Dean of York. Then there was the Nine Lessons and Carols service, the very best we have ever achieved, a truly splendid offering of fine worship and a tribute to the dedication and ability of our organist and choristers.

The Fete, the Pot Pourri, the Barn Dance, the Benefice Quiz, the Harvest Supper, the Africa Luncheon, Organ Recitals, the accomplished concerts of the St Nicholas Choir, as well as a variety of other concerts, were all shared with our local community. Such activities help build up our own sense of community and worth. The Fete in particular is an important

church and village community event. As such it transcends its mere money-raising potential. We again donated from its record proceeds, £500 to the Pilley Community Shop.

One of the big changes of the past year was the departure of our Benefice Vicar, Neil Smart. We said farewell with a presentation and festal Evensong in August. Neil has been very kind, good and supportive both to me and to our Benefice. His departure has reminded me of just how good it was to be able to leave so much diocesan red tape, regulations, directions and bumpf to him. Since his departure my waste paper basket has perforce ceased to be my favourite filing cabinet. I look forward to the arrival of Simon Newham as Benefice Vicar in June, as does the waste paper basket. Before he went Neil donated £200 to us for a new carpet in the priests' vestry. When installing this we carpeted that back alley of the church as well and put in a children's corner, a welcome and useful addition for parents with young children.

Another great boon to us has been Sally's growing connection to Rwanda and her regular visits there. To have someone so well qualified, able, experienced and compassionate on the ground in Rwanda is wonderful. She reports back beautifully, directs and monitors our charity, inspires us to look beyond the immediate horizon and authenticates our Africa Sunday, ensuring that it is so much more than mere nostalgia. Many thanks Sally. Thank you as well to Jeremy Utton and his family who have also taken Rwanda to their hearts, visiting it and supporting Sally invaluable.

The less parish priests have to do with finance the better. However we do need to note that we are not meeting our financial obligations. We don't pay our full quota to the Diocese. To remain fully appreciated by our Diocese, which is important to our future, we should be paying our way. There is a need to encourage folk to join our Parish Giving Scheme.

Forty one years' worth of Annual Reports have all ended with a long and exhaustive list of 'thankyous'. The gratitude is heartfelt. The list is cribbed from the year before, with a few necessary additions and subtractions. Enough of that. Far too mechanical. Let this year, like last year, be different. So instead, a general thank you to all and sundry. Diana and I are happy among you. Thank you. To those who come regularly to church, thank you. To those who challenge us by rarely coming, thank you. To those who beautify and clean our churches so regularly, thank you. To those who open and lock up St John's each day, thank you. To our web-page manager, thank you. To those who by effort and generosity keep the show on the road thank you. To those strong in faith, thank you. To those with little or no faith, but yet who remain a part of us, thank you. To all who love St John's and St Nicholas', thank you. To the wider community at large, thank you.

There have to be a few particular thank yous. To Felicity, a kindred spirit, good to have around as helpmeet and friend. To the PCC and Liz Rolfs its amiable and dutiful secretary. To the Churchwardens supportive, willing and so very hardworking. Thank you as well to Karen our Benefice Secretary: invaluable, efficient and prepared to walk the second and third mile.

CANON ANDREW NEAUM

CHURCHWARDENS – including Fabric

After four years as a churchwarden, and still learning on the job, as new challenges arise, this is my first report. It has been a great relief this last year that Sally James has shared the load. She has taken up the role of churchwarden with great enthusiasm and energy, in addition to her outstanding missionary work in Rwanda, and has been a great support. Worship and activity at St John's have increased through the influence of our charismatic parish priest and his supportive and energetic wife. The church is popular for weddings, with 16 last year and 17 scheduled this year, for funerals, with the churchyard still open for burials, and, indeed, for baptisms, with 18 taking place last year. In the absence of a dedicated vergger, Sally and I perform this role, with help from Nick Walford, with Sally concentrating on weddings, and myself on funerals. Attendances at Sunday morning services have increased and the special services, such as Africa Sunday, the Hood Memorial Service and Remembrance Sunday are very well attended.

Tim Farquhar and Bob Barlow constitute a very dedicated, competent and efficient Fabrics team, and perform several repair jobs themselves. Works commissioned last year included the replacement of joists and floorboards at the rear of the church. New notices directing church visitors to the car park have been installed along Church Lane to satisfy the parish council.

Sally and I both played roles in the recruitment of the next vicar of Brockenhurst, following Neil Smart's departure in August 2018, and Roger and Ruth Liley played major roles in the drafting and production of the required Benefice Profile. We look forward to welcoming and supporting Neil's successor.

GRAHAM EDMISTON

SOCIAL AND FUNDRAISING

Our Committee has been strengthened by the arrival of John James from Milford, who has contributed significantly with new ideas, enthusiasm and energy, in addition to his own performing skills.

The St Nicholas Singers' Spring Concert took place at St John's on 21 April before its usual full audience which enjoyed a rich variety of choral music from Faure to Chilcott, Vaughan Williams to Arthur Sullivan with excerpts from *Pirates of Penzance*. There was also a performance by the recently formed St Nicholas Recorder Ensemble.

John James proposed, and initiated the organisation of, a **Barn Dance** which took place in the War Memorial Hall on 19 May. He engaged the Old Pull and Push Band from Poole and arranged a hog roast supper provided by Gates, the butcher from Milford. Despite other local events taking place the same evening, there was a full attendance, limited to 100 by the size of the Hall, and the event was considered a great success, and will be repeated this year on 11 May, with no seating in the main Hall to allow greater space for the dancing.

The Church and Village Fete took place on 7 July during the extreme heatwave which led to the absence of the usual bouncy castle and slide for children – their use had been banned by the Government following a fatal accident – and the entry of very few dogs in the dog show. As in 2017, a large number of raffle prizes had been solicited for the prize draw, enabling tickets to be sold in advance, and the draw raised £2,674. Despite other events taking place on the same afternoon, including an England match in the football World Cup, the fete offered most of the usual attractions and drew a good local attendance. The net proceeds amounted to £6,462.

A good crowd attended **St John's Harvest Supper** in the Hall on 29 September and enjoyed the usual excellent supper of cottage pie and apple crumble cooked by volunteers recruited by Carol Morris, with food enough for the largest appetites. Jeremy Utton brought his guitar and, after supper, was persuaded to play it and sing pop songs of the 60s and 70s, which his audience joined in enthusiastically when the words were remembered. He was the surprise star of the evening and has been asked to repeat his act this year.

As in 2017, John James organised a **Pot Pourri of comedy, musical theatre and church music** at St John's on 13 October to raise funds for a music scholarship for two pupils from William Gilpin School to join the church choir. As Andrew reported for *The Bridge*, "an exotic mix of song, chorus, recitation, sketch, wit, humour and pathos delighted a responsive audience". The School and church choirs performed and there were outstanding contributions from visiting musicians on guitar, ukulele, trumpet and piano, in addition to accompaniment on piano and organ by Timothy Rice. There was also a witty tribute to St John's and its vicars, composed by Maggie Cobb from Milford, set and sung to Anglican chant by the choir. The event raised net funds of £632 towards the scholarship.

At St Mary's request, St John's again organised the annual **Benefice Quiz Night** in the Hall on 17 November. This was the last appearance of the question master, Lewis Scard and his wife, Linda, from Hook, after twenty years of setting the questions, having first been invited down to do so in 1998 by a former vicar, Rev Malcolm Riches. The 96 contestants enjoyed a supper of cottage pie, cooked by St John's ladies, led by Carole Morris, and trifle for dessert, provided by St Mary's. St John's had the winning table and were also overall winners.

The St Nicholas Singers' "A Christmas Cracker" Concert took place at St John's on 9 December, before a full house, which enjoyed a wonderful mixture of festive musical fayre from some very gifted local talent, led and conducted by Helen Woodgates.

Forthcoming Events

The St Nicholas Singers' Spring Concert will take place at St John's on 27 April.

The Hall has been booked for a **Barn Dance** on 11 May

The **Church and Village Fete** will take place on 6 July

GRAHAM EDMISTON

MISSION REPORT

The PCC Allocation to Mission in Rwanda for 2018 was £3,000.

£1,000 was sent to the Church Mission Society to support our mission partners at Gahini hospital, Doctors Steve and Catriona Bennett.

£2,000 was given to Sally James to fund her three visits to Rwanda.

The *Deanery Lent Appeal 2018* was in aid of the Gahini Hospital and the Children's Ward which the Bennetts wished to create. In a change of approach, St.John's decided to hand out appeal envelopes with Gift Aid forms for the collection and, with the addition of cash from the *Lent Walk*, £1,943.50 was donated. In total, the Deanery collected £9,537.04 and sent £8,500 to Gahini. The Children's Ward is now in use.

The second *Africa Sunday* was held on April 22nd and was deemed a great success.

Our Mission to Rwanda has made great strides this year, thanks to Sally James with the help of Jeremy Utton and his family team. Under Sally's capable hands, the *King Saloman Academy* primary school is thriving, secondary classes are planned, and the school 'model' is being used as King Saloman Academy 2, close to the Ugandan border and funded by the government. The *Nutrition Project*, providing livestock, kitchen gardens and nutrition education for poor families, has already resulted in an appreciable drop in cases of malnutrition. Finally, the *Hannah Ministry* for orphans has been able to place and support the first child in school thanks to donations from St John's. All projects are ongoing.

CHRISTINE NASH

DEANERY SYNOD

The Lyndhurst Deanery Synod met in June and October 2018 and in March 2019. The meetings are jointly chaired by the Area Dean, Rev Peter Salisbury, Vicar of Lymington, and the Lay Chairman, Bill Andrews of Minstead. St John's representatives are Graham Edmiston and Ruth Liley.

Under the Deanery Mission Action Plan (dMAP) three plans are moving ahead:

Coordination of Alpha and Pilgrim and other courses. A list of courses has been drawn up. The aim is to link up and share experiences. Contact Ruth Liley if you would like to help.

Social transformation projects, run by the Waterside group of churches, are a night shelter and now a homeless drop-in centre called The Crossing, which has run since January. Contact the Assistant Area Dean, Rev Jo Elvidge, Vicar of Hythe, for more details.

For work with secondary schools a Deanery Mission Action Plan coordinator role has been created - and 30 percent of the time of the new vicar of Sway, when appointed, will fulfil this. Contact: Peter Salisbury.

Chair of the finance committee has been vacant for over a year. In the meantime, Martin Taylor from Brockenhurst, continues to carry out this function.

In July three young people from Sway and Brockenhurst joined a visit to Rwanda and in October gave a talk about their life-changing experiences

Following the departure of Neil Smart, Rev Sally Marchant, Vicar of Calmore, and Jonathan Elliott-Jones of Sway jointly chair the Deanery Rwanda Mission Team

A Deanery visit to Rwanda took place in February 2019, without any representative from Boldre

On other matters, Dean Catherine Ogle, Dean of Winchester Cathedral, spoke at the October meeting about the Cathedral's building programme and 'who is loving the nation?'

There are vacancies on the Diocesan Synod

Parish Mission Action Plans have been launched and the deadline is October 2019. Volunteers are needed to think this through. There will be a Deanery wide celebration in July 2019

The target for new ordinands has already been reached, two years early, meaning that the Deanery is not worried about the replacement of older retiring vicars."

RUTH LILEY

CHOIR MASTER

Music plays an important role in the worshipping and social life of the Church at St. John's, and it is well supported by a team of musicians, the size of which a rural parish such as Boldre is extremely fortunate to have. Regular members of the choir number 16 and, if required, we could quite easily add another 24 to those. Regular Sunday services, as well as weekday weddings and funerals, are all well supported by the choir and their repertoire and the vast music library available at St. John's enables the singing of anthems at regular intervals. St. John's becomes the venue for several concerts and recitals throughout each year where quality music is the order of the day and these occasions provide an excellent opportunity for the wider community to step foot into this wonderful building, where liturgy, prayer, music, floral delights and tranquility all co-exist for God's glory.

The organ at St. John's continues to produce a quality of sound which, from an electronic organ, is second to none and its impressive sound was commented upon favourably by an experienced and knowledgeable service engineer who recently visited St. John's.

Personally, I am most appreciative of the support that the whole church gives to music - clergy, choir, church officers, the "tea-team" on occasions such as Patronal Festivals, and congregation as a whole - and all this and more makes it a pleasure to be part of this church and worshipping community.

TIMOTHY RICE

ST NICHOLAS CHAPEL

Greater use is now made of the chapel with Choral Evensong and church choir practices taking place there during the winter months, in addition to Holy Communion services on Sunday and Wednesday mornings, Vintage Fitness classes conducted by Sally-Anne Whittle on Tuesday and Thursday mornings and St Nicholas Singers' choir practices. It is also used for PCC and other church meetings. It also houses the benefice office for St John's and St Mary's, which the benefice administrator, Karen Ashurst, attends on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday mornings.

The chapel and its grounds are well-maintained and provide a peaceful and contemplative environment.

GRAHAM EDMISTON

FLOWERS

In 2018 there were 16 weddings which help supplement the budget of £70 per month the church provides for flowers. Christmas candles are now part of our provision and we have had to buy a bracket which mysteriously disappeared and had to be replaced. As at 11 April there is £1986.12 in the account.

I will be handing over overall charge of the 19 strong flower team to mother and daughter Elaine and Carol Fenning who are excellent arrangers. I will continue however to take part.

ANNETTE RIDOUT

BOLDRE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL WORKING GROUPS 2018-2019

<p>MISSION</p> <p>REVD. CANON ANDREW NEAUM PENELOPE CHITTY GRAHAM EDMISTON CHRISTINE NASH ROGER LILEY CAROL EDGE</p>	<p>CHURCH & CHAPEL FABRIC</p> <p>TIM FARQUHAR BOB BARLOW</p> <hr/> <p>CHURCHYARD</p> <p>ROBERT JACKSON GRAHAM EDMISTON CHRIS BUTLER</p>
<p>SOCIAL AND FUNDRAISING</p> <p>GRAHAM EDMISTON SANDY WALFORD SALLY JAMES ANDREW & DIANA NEAUM CAROLE MORRIS CHRIS BUTLER JILL MATHEW PAUL CHAPMAN (BOLDRE CLUB)</p>	<p>FINANCE</p> <p>RICHARD TOLKIEN JOHN ADAMS</p>
<p>DEANERY SYNOD REPRESENTATIVES</p> <p>RUTH LILEY GRAHAM EDMISTON</p>	<p>PASTORAL CARE</p> <p>ANDREW AND DIANA NEAUM FELICITY BOOT JENNIFER DIXON-CLEGG NICK WALFORD SALLY JAMES CHRISTINE NASH</p>

Numbers on the Electoral Roll as at 10th April 2019 100

In parish	34	Outside parish	66
-----------	----	----------------	----

Approved by the PCC and signed on their behalf by Revd. Canon Andrew Neaum, Parish Priest

Dated

Signed