

BRIDPORT TEAM MINISTRY

Team Rector's Annual Report to PCC

March 2016 to April 2017

The period 2016-17 has been a busy time for the Team as a whole. With this in mind, I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has been involved in the exercise of our mission and ministry over the last twelve months; for 'keeping the show on the road'.

The year was marked in particular by the signing of the Statement of Local Agreement with the District Church Council of St. Swithun's, Allington on 31st July and which came into effect in November. Under this agreement the PCC sought to enable the views of more traditionalist members of the congregation to continue to be served while recognising the full ministry of all ordained clergy regardless of gender. This agreement settled an issue which has had an effect on the Team since 1993 and had caused much pain and heartache on all sides.

We welcomed Bishop Karen, the new Bishop of Sherborne, to the deanery and to the Team during the year and she celebrated for the first time at Holy Trinity, Bradpole in September.

Numbers attending worship have held steady across the Team. However, while some have shown encouraging signs of growth, particularly at St. Swithun's, in others there has been a decline, for example, in attendance at Xalt. This continues to be a challenge for our Team and there is no room for complacency.

Mission 1

Each of our churches continued to engage with the local communities in which they are set. Other reports, and minutes of DCC meetings held through the year, show the range and scope of these activities so please refer to them for a detailed reflection on the Team's activities.

- The programme of meetings and lunches arranged during Lent were very well attended and enjoyed, helping to raise money for Christian Aid.
- *The Bridge* has continued its publication throughout the year, and thanks are due to the Editor, editorial team, sorters and distributors. The number of volunteer deliverers has declined leading to a reduction in the number of copies being printed.
- The Team website was maintained during the year. Thanks are due to Di Sinclair for her work on this. Looking forward it is time to revamp the website and to ensure it more reflects the scale, nature and diversity of our mission and ministry.
- Churches continue to organise community events, not all aimed at fund raising but at building fellowship. 'Ride and Stride' in September is a means of engaging with the community in new and refreshing ways. The Saturday morning coffee at Bothenhampton continues to be well supported. Walditch has a series of events during the year. St. Mary's, St. John's and St. Swithun's continue to be used on a very regular basis by community orchestras, choirs and groups.
- The centenary of the Battle of the Somme was marked by special services on 1st and 3rd July and there were other civic occasions during the year.
- A Joint Service on the fifth Sunday of the month followed by a bring & share lunch has proved to very successful and it was a joy for us to celebrate together at St. Swithun's on 1st January, 2017 as a fully inclusive Team.

Mission 2 - Families/youth/children's

The development of our work with families, youth and children was a particular feature of the last year. Including outreach to schools, the church family reaches hundreds of the town's children.

- Munch club continues at Church House on Friday although on a smaller scale than in the past. A shortage of volunteers means it cannot always run every weekly.
- Cupboard Love has grown throughout the year. Hundreds of food parcels have been distributed during the year as well as hampers and stockings at Christmas. Particular thanks to Lidl's, Waitrose, Morrison's Leakers and Nina's for their help. We welcomed Carrie Gamble as our paid co-ordinator in March 2017. A majority of our excellent pool of volunteers are unchurched and bring an amazing array of talent and experience.
- Tots@Ten is now well established and continues to thrive
- Tuesday's Together continues monthly at Bradpole.
- Bradpole Brunch is well established and is proving to be very popular. Minty Morning Mayhem has proved popular at St. Mary's.
- The Weycroft weekend was a great success although numbers were down this year'.
- Craft mornings held at St. Mary's Bridport at Advent and Good Friday have proved to be well attended and a large team of able helpers have been involved. Similar events at St. Mary's Walditch have also been well attended and a 'Messy' time was had by all.
- Holiday Club was a great success including this year a bouncy castle in the Rectory garden.
- The Churches Together in Bridport Youth Worker Council has appointed a new part time worker who it is hoped will start in the Spring of 2017.

Mission 3 - Occasional Offices

This continues to be a very busy aspect in the life of the Team in regard of baptisms, weddings and funerals. There were 13 weddings, 2 wedding blessings, 101 funerals, 23 Burial of Ashes and 33 baptisms during the year. This represents an enormous amount of contact with the local community.

Mission 4 - Chaplaincy and Schools work

Members of the clergy Team continue to be very actively involved in local organisations. Chaplaincy ministry continues to be exercised at Bridport Hospital, the Royal British Legion, the Royal Naval Association and Royal Air Force Association. Special services were held to mark Battle of Britain Day and Trafalgar Day. Revd Ayling and Moore undertake regular visits to Sydney Gale House and St. James' Nursing Home. Members of a Signals regiment attended St. Mary's school and all had a wonderful time.

The Team continues to undertake assemblies at St. Mary's School and Bridport Primary School. Canon Andrew Evans acts as a community governor at Bridport Primary School and the Sir John Colfox Academy and is a Trustee of the Minerva Learning Trust (Dorset). Revd Pete Stone is a Governor at St. Mary's CE school and a Member of the MLT.

Modern governorship in schools is a demanding and time-consuming task and this has been particularly true over the past twelve months as major changes in the structures of our local schools have been implemented.

Mission 5 - Ecumenical links

The Bridport Team continues to play an active part in Bridport Churches Together including playing key roles in the Lent Lunch programme, Tea & Chat and Christian Aid. Links between SMB and the Bridport United Church are flourishing. St. Mary's and the United Church share worship together on a regular basis. A joint Alpha course was run very successfully with the Beacon Church in the Autumn of 2016.

General Points

During the year, the Team met its responsibilities in regard of Fairer Share and Team expenses fully. This is a considerable continuing monetary commitment to the mission of the Church and thanks are due to all who have given so generously. Individual churches continue to have considerable financial challenges, however. Revd Stone is working with Treasurers in seeking solutions to this issue.

Our Team administrator, Di Sinclair, has continued to be a real asset to our Team and thanks are due to her for all she does in regard of the Occasional Offices and her other duties.

Each of our church buildings continues to be maintained to a high standard. Holy Trinity, Bothenhampton has had a new servery added to the West end making the serving of refreshments much easier and safer. St. Mary's continues to have an issue with the roof over the north aisle. It was disappointing not to receive a Government grant for the works. The entrance to the church has been much enhanced by a rearrangement of the lobby doors. The meeting room has had a ceiling and new lighting and heating added. The organ at St. Swithun's has been fully refurbished.

Revd Ann Ayling and Revd Janis Moore both transfer to Permission to Officiate but will continue their busy and valued ministry in its many forms.

Mrs Lorna Johnson is now half way through her programme of training at Sarum College and it can be joyfully expected that she will be ordained Deacon in the summer of 2018. Another person is actively exploring a call to ministry.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our ordained and licensed ministers, the majority of whom are volunteers like everyone else in our fellowship, for the amazing ministry which they undertake.

I would like to thank those members of the laity who undertake leadership and missionary roles in the life of the church, their efforts are beginning to bear considerable fruit.

I would like to thank Churchwardens, the officers and members of DCC's and PCC's for the work they undertake

I would like to thank our organists, choirs and members of music groups for their role in leading our worship.

I would like to thank those members of the laity who undertake the myriad of tasks that are necessary for our churches to function as places of worship and praise. Much of this effort is unsung and unseen and yet it is vital to the life of our fellowship in Christ.

Andrew Evans, Team Rector
March-April 2017.