

Rector's Report – 2022

As I sat down to write this report to review 2022 and what my priorities are for 2023, I was struck by how much more life is getting back to 'pre-Covid' normal.

A lot of what I say will be repeated within your individual reports, but I feel it is important to let each of the churches have a flavour of what is going on around the Benefice, just so that you know how much we are serving our communities and perhaps you may wish to join in with some of what is happening.

I have to begin by saying THANK YOU to all of you who contribute to the life of these churches and without whom, I would be at a loss. Our retired priests, Revd Doug Adams, Revd David Daley (as invited preacher), Revd Pam Kemp & Rev Richard Ward-Smith; our Readers, Mark Sinden & Tim Symonds; our Local Worship Leaders, Val Barker & Sheila Waring, Richard Painter & Shorne Tilbey, Annemary Davis & Sandy Cheshire. The Church wardens & Office holders, the PCC members, Organists, Bell ringers, flower arrangers and those who faithfully keep our churches clean; those who tend our churchyards and those who serve refreshments, all so much a part of the life of our churches.

As I review the year, it seems to have been dominated by our Royal Family. First, we remembered and celebrated Her majesty Queen Elizabeth II ascension to the throne in February followed by her Platinum Jubilee celebrations in June. Then with great sadness the nation mourned her death on 8th September. Kilkhampton PCC was due to meet that evening, but instead we held an impromptu service an hour later which was attended by 50 people. The mourning continued for 10 days and my thanks go to the bellringers in particular who played such an important role during that period and to those responsible for the appropriate raising and lowering of flags. My thanks also to all those who lead our worship so appropriately during that period and to the churchwardens who made sure our churches were available for the people in our communities to pray and to write messages of condolence.

We also quickly responded to the ascension of King Charles III, hailing him as our new King and making the necessary amendments to the Book of Common Prayer, prayers for the royal family.

Next, I move on to the 'ordinary' yet extraordinary work within our Benefice. In 2022 we married 21 couples and here I give my thanks to Dee Wynne-Morter (Wedding Administrator) who helped me to keep my sanity by ensuring every detail was attended to &

all the legalities adhered to, so that we priests could simply get on with preparing and marrying the couples. What a joy those weddings were.

2022 saw increasing work with children, through schools, as Open the Book started up again, and three of the churches, Launcells, Poughill & Stratton pooled resources to work with Stratton Primary school. There is a strong connection being built with St Andrews which is being used for Harvest & Christmas services, Experience Christmas, Experience Easter and half termly visits for curriculum work. The school is also engaging with the church in Care for Creation work, including the building of a magnificent bug hotel. St Marks at Morwenstow also attended Experience Easter at Shop chapel which people from both the church and chapel ran. The Patronal Festival was also a real joy after two years of not being able to hold a full service in the church. Children, parents and teachers all dressed up to tell the story of John the Baptist in true Open the Book style.

Poughill continue their excellent Children's work through Socks, Pants!!?! & Sunday Club, extending it to occasional meals for the whole family.

During Lent there was a series of Sermons on relationships across the Benefice, which was supplemented by midweek Bible Studies on the same topic. In 2023 there will be a series following Pentecost on Acts 2.42, which I'm looking forward to.

Through Christians Together in Bude and Stratton, an enormous amount of work takes place and with which, our churches make a huge contribution. This includes Transforming Lives for Good, Street & Prayer Pastors, the Good Friday Walk of Witness, which this year was a walk of peace for Ukraine. Also the continuing work of the Foodbank, which has extended to include Christians Against Poverty, the warm rooms, in response to the Cost of Living Crisis, and not forgetting the Free Family Fun Festival. CTBS meets regularly and also has separate leaders meetings and prayer meetings.

The lives of our churches has also included flower festivals, fayres, lent lunches, pet services, blessing of the sea, gift days & Remembrance services.

Our pastoral care has included funerals, baptisms, Home communions for those no longer able to come to church and for those in nursing homes. 2022 also included a focused time on discussing Living in Love & Faith, and I thank all of you who participated in this important discussion.

We continue to focus on safeguarding and Creation Care with people championing both within our individual churches.

I feel so very privileged to serve you as priest and thank you for all your support and encouragement during 2022.

My focus for 2023 is to employ a Benefice Administrator so that I may focus on my calling as your priest. I also wish to enable more lay ministry, through identifying, training and commissioning more Local Worship Leaders; taking first steps towards local ministers through Sens Kernewick and working closely with members of the Deanery to put the On the Way Deanery plan into action. This includes employing a Deanery Missioner, deepening our personal faith journeys through prayer, discipleship & welcome. And increasing our work with families and children.

I look forward to reporting to you again in 2023.

Yours in Christ,

Teresa

Reverent Teresa Folland