

HOLY CROSS, NORTH BERSTED

ANNUAL REPORT 2021



Holy Cross Church making the most of our outside space in a year when that was the best place to be.

Another year, another lockdown

It was difficult to believe at the end of 2020 that 2021 would continue in the same vein. The church moved between being online or in the building, the rules around distancing, mask wearing and singing came and went. Uncertainty was the order of the day, with no one quite knowing what might be around the corner. It was a year of just trying to keep the church going and to keep everyone in touch with what was happening.

With the Autumn there came a little more consistency and a gradual return to a more usual and regular pattern of worship, although with some restrictions and without the joy of our choir. It was great to see familiar faces back in the church again and to begin to welcome some new ones.

By Christmas we were able to welcome many of our community back for our regular seasonal services and it was encouraging to see families again after a long break. We held Christmas services for our local schools and welcomed a larger number of people back into the building.

Engaging with our community

Once again during 2021, we looked for ways to engage with our community in challenging circumstances.

We continued to support the Parish Council with their food hampers, providing Easter chocolate or holiday treats. It was great to be working with our local parish council to support local families in need.



When Prince Philip died, we were able to encourage local people to add a ribbon to our cross as a mark of their respect and to acknowledge his death. Once again our front lawn became our opportunity to

engage with those around us.

In November, we were able to support our community as they mourned the loss of Jan the beloved landlady of the Pink pub. It was great to see packed streets and church as we were able to say our fond farewells.

Engaging with schools

It was another year of engaging with schools from a distance. Jo continued to provide on line assemblies for the local primary schools and in her role as year 10 chaplain at Bishop Luffa. She also continued in her role as governor at Bartons School supporting, challenging and encouraging the team.

It was disappointing that we weren't able to restart Messy Church, there were a few attempts but the year groups still weren't mixing and parents were not yet back in the school building.

Christmas tree trail

This was another successful event with new connections with local businesses and charities made or re-enforced. The Parish Council and schools were very supportive of the event and although less families were seen to be engaging in the trail more people were involved in decorating the trees around the parish.



Some more personal notes!



Worshipping from home, just like everyone else
Here we have our candles lit for Candlemas.



Finally the vicar moved in the parish, it took some time to unpack the books!



The vicar continued to provide Spiritual Care to Bognor Regis War Memorial Hospital.



Mothering Sunday was kept at home with paper flower magic.



Finally a chance to sing, with our hymns and Pimms in the garden, such fun.



Back in the kitchen after our first social in the hall again.



A preaching series on Living in Love and Faith

Engaging with our finances

For the first time in years, Holy Cross is showing a positive balance at the end of the year. This was due to a number of factors, including the payment of grants from Arun District Council to cover lost rents in both 2020 and 2021, the pay back of the balance on the Gas & Electric and the lower expenses as we spent less time in the building and engaging in less activities that might have involved expenditure. There is no place for complacency and with a return to worship after the pandemic we need to continue to be prayerful and faithful looking for an increase in regular giving as we move forward. It is clear that there is much less cash around and we need to make sure that we are finding ways to enable people to donate easily.

Engaging with new projects

Over 2021 the PCC took the bold decision to investigate the possibility of creating an accessible entrance to the church building. During the discussion and conversation with the PCC it became clear that this project should also include creating an accessible toilet within the church building itself. The church architects were asked to create some drawings for the project and an initial costing was obtained. The PCC agreed to push forward with the project hoping to complete the project in 2022.

The PCC also agreed to take the opportunity of the old vicarage being sold to see if it was possible obtain some of the old garden to create a garden of remembrance for the church. An approach was made to the Diocesan Board of Finance who agreed that they would be willing to pass on some land for a nominal fee for this purpose. It was agreed that when the Vicarage was vacated and ready to be sold the PCC would pursue the acquisition of this land.

Engaging with occasional offices

Once again, there was an increase in the number of funerals both at Holy Cross church and at the Crematorium or Cemetery. It is a privilege to be able to walk with families in these difficult moments and sad to say goodbye to some long time members of the church.

We were able to celebrate weddings once more and had a bumper year with five weddings celebrated across the year. It was such a pleasure to be able to pray with families as they start their married life and watch them make those most serious and joyful of vows in the presence of God and their families. Baptisms were still low last year, with families wanting to wait until they were certain that godparents, friends and family would be safe to travel.

Structure, governance and management

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is a charity, but is exempt from registering with the Charity Commission within the meaning of Section 30 of the Charities Act 2011. During the year the following served as members of the Parochial Church Council:

Ex Officio Members:

Incumbent: Revd Jo King

Reader: Mrs Rosemary Towse (also Deanery Synod Rep)

Wardens: Mr Ted Towse and Mr Peter Toone

Elected Members:

Mrs Emilie Coley

Mrs Jan Chartier

Mrs Charlie Fox

Mr Paul Hughes

Mr Steven Hughes (from September 2020)

Mrs Pauline Hastings

Ms Steph Collins (Deanery Synod Rep)

Mr Jonathan Towse

Mr Tony Wightwick-Hotston

Ms Sammy Whiteman

Membership of the PCC is determined under the Church Representation Rules and consists of certain ex-officio members (Incumbent, Lay Readers licensed to officiate in the church), the churchwardens and members of the Deanery, Diocesan or General Synods and 9 members of the church who are elected at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM).

Aim and Purposes

The primary object of Holy Cross' PCC is the promotion of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to the doctrines and practices of the Church of England. The PCC has the responsibility of co-operating with the Incumbent, the Revd Jo King, in promoting in the ecclesiastical Parish the whole mission of the Church pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical."

Electoral Roll

The electoral roll ended the year at 61, a small increase on last year. This is very encouraging when we remember those who have died during the year, particularly Pat Misslebrook and Alan Williams who were both long term and faithful members of the church.

Safeguarding Reporting

There have been no safeguarding reports or investigations. DBS checks & training records are kept up to date by the team. Thanks to them for all their work.

Financial Reporting

Due to the size of our income, we have changed our reporting system for this annual report. As a church with an income of less than £100,000 we are not required to create a Statement of Profit and Loss or account for depreciation or accruals. This means we can use a simpler form of reporting called a Balance sheet report. Enclosed with this report you will find the balance sheet report for the year, it shows how much money the church has received in income and how much we have spent. It also shows our bank balances and monies the PCC have allocated to particular projects. We are still looking to increase in understanding in our financial team and refine our practices. We are looking to ensure we have clear and robust systems in place that will enable us to move forward with greater clarity and understanding.