

**PARISH OF BITTERNE
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**CHURCH LIFE REPORTS
2019**

HOLY SAVIOUR CHURCH, BITTERNE

Sunday 18th October 2020 in

Holy Saviour at 12.00 noon



CHARITY NO. 1157949

CHURCH LIFE

The Church's ministry and mission is divided into the following "Ministry Areas" :-

1.) Worship and prayer

We continue to provide a varied diet of worship.

On Sundays – 9 a.m. Traditional Service, (with a robed choir); 10.30a.m. "Service for all" (with a music group) and 7.00p.m. "Relaxed Worship" (with music groups). The number of young families attending worship at 10.30a.m. continues to increase.

On Wednesdays there is a weekly morning Communion Service held in the Church Room.

On Saturday mornings monthly there is **Messy Church**, which is an All-Age Congregation, (coordinated by Barry Brand, our Families Worker), a church service helping people explore faith, through creativity, worship and sharing a meal together. Numbers now average 100 adults and children.

The **Church Prayer Group** meets on Monday mornings during Church open time, any wishing to join the group would be very welcome. Several people pray for Messy Church as it meets.

2.) Spiritual Growth & Discipleship

HOMEGROUPS continue to play a key role in the life of Holy Saviour strengthening our fellowship and spiritual growth. A good percentage of church members belong to one of the groups. There are 84 members in the 8 groups which meet every two weeks and the Young Families group, which meets monthly on Sundays, has seen an encouraging increase in numbers to 30. In 2019 the groups began by following the first part of a course on 'Meeting Jesus', which we hope to complete this autumn. In the summer we thought about ecological issues using Operation Noah's 'Tenants of the King' course. This helped us towards the Bronze Eco-Church Award. In the autumn we explored how the Trinity - Father, Son and Holy Spirit – impacts our lives as we learnt about 'The Transforming Trinity'. We are grateful to the team of leaders who shape the lives of our groups.

Prayer Ministry is provided at the end of all services on the 2nd & 4th Sundays of the month.

3.) Children, Youth & Family Support

MESSY CHURCH

On Saturday mornings monthly there is **Messy Church**, which is an All-Age Congregation,

(coordinated by Barry Brand, our Families Worker), a church service helping people explore faith, through creativity, worship and sharing a meal together.

Numbers now average 100 adults and children.

A **CRECHE** runs weekly during the 10.30 am service (except All- Age Service). We continue to see growing numbers of children in the crèche.

HIZ KIDZ (for young people aged 3 to 14) meets during Sunday morning worship.

The numbers of young people in Hiz Kidz has grown during 2019, to an average of 25 to 30.

There was the usual **ALTERNATIVE HALLOWEEN EVENT**, coordinated by Barry Brand, the Families Worker, which was enjoyed by everyone.

DREGGS' CAFE continues to meet weekly on Tuesday evenings during term time, providing a successful club night for young people aged 10 to 18. Numbers vary with 10 regulars.

Dreggs has now been running for ten years demonstrating an ongoing positive effect and a great place for young people to spend time.

RAINBOW continues to meet Monday and Friday during term and is seeing more and more new parents and children.

POP UP PLAY CAFE meets instead of Rainbow during the summer holidays and was well received.

ENERGY YOUTH GROUP Meets once a month on a Sunday evening for youth yr6 and above for games, Bible discussion, prayer stations, hot chocolate and toast.

GAMES CAFE Meets once a month on a Saturday for everyone to meet and have fun together playing board games and eating snacks.

YOUTH BAND WITH NO NAME A new youth band has started up for yr6+ meeting on the 1st and 3rd Saturdays of the month. Run by Ric and Ruth they play, pray, eat and chat rehearsing to play at all age services.

Our partnership with **Bitterne C. of E. Primary School** remains strong.

Emma Isles, Katie Donnelly and Tony now Governors.

Barry Brand speaks at the weekly Collective Worship at the School. The school had special services in Church attended by parents, at Easter, Harvest and Christmas and a Leavers' Service at the end of the Summer Term.

Greggs School held their Christmas Service in Holy Saviour with Tony giving the talk.

We have an annual Sunday '**Church School's Celebration All-Age Worship**' in February, which is well attended by church members and school families.

Our links with local schools continue to strengthen, with Barry going in to **Bitterne CE, Moorlands and Beechwood Primary Schools** taking assemblies as well as Question of Faith whole days with each year group. Barry has been going in to **Oasis Sholing Secondary School** helping with exams, going on trips as well as some teaching.

Beechwood School have started an after-school club coming to church Thursdays after school rain or shine to litter-pick and tidy up. This is helping towards their Civic Award. They have also come to Shed Club, Table Tennis, Coffee Pot and Luncheon Club to help out.

The **3rd Itchen North Cubs, Scouts and Beavers** attended the 10.30 Service on Remembrance Sunday, and once again conducted a 'graveyard clean up' evening.

4.) Sharing the Good News & meeting social needs in the Church & Community

The Church continues to use a range of **social groups** to meet social needs & to enable members to invite "not-yet Christian" friends.

Mothers Union meet monthly on a Tuesday morning. At our meetings we have a guest speaker or have a social time when we get to know each other better.

We support Away From It All (AFIA) which is a Mothers' Union holiday scheme, primarily funded by Mothers' Union members, to help people who are experiencing stress in their family life. All are welcome at our meetings.

The Luncheon Club (overseen by Churches Together in Bitterne) provides fellowship and a roast dinner to Senior Citizens. It takes place on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month and is run by Churches Together in Bitterne.

The **3Gs (Guys, God and Grub)** for men, continues to meet occasionally in the evenings.

The **Men's Breakfast** on the first Saturday of the month at the Red Lion.

Time Out is a group for men and women who meet on Tuesday evenings once a month.

They have an interesting and varied programme of visiting speakers.

Chill-out, for ladies under 50 provides fun, friendship and food for church members and our local community, through a variety of different evening events.

Connect is a thriving group providing different social events meeting the needs of the over 40's.

Both groups successfully join together termly for a larger event e.g. our Christmas & Summer Socials, averaging about 45 at these events.

Smile is a group set up for adult singles to meet for lunch fun and friendship monthly.

Bitterne Shed Club – Keith Marsh reports

The past year has been one of consolidation for our Shed Club. Membership has increased to 16 full members plus two associates, and we have a weekly attendance of 12 to 14 which assures us that there is a need for a club such as ours. Because our physical shed is too small to work in and can only be used as storage, we work outside on the old bowling green, although we have been forced to retreat to the Parish Hall on a couple of occasions this year (not ideal as it involves moving heavy tools and material across in the rain). For this reason, we have refrained from advertising ourselves, and feel sure that membership will increase once we have a dry and warm workshop.

This is our exciting news! We have placed an order for an anti-vandal unit (a container-like site office that builders often use) which may even have been delivered by the time this is read. Its delivery will create a great deal of work for our members as we opted to save money by doing the internal fitting out (electrics, plumbing, benches, etc.) ourselves. Alongside this we will continue our various projects.

During the year we have attended several events, selling items we have made from a 'pop-up shed' (made entirely of recycled materials) and overseeing games we have made: buzz wire, holey board, giant jenga, nail balancing. Other produce includes garden planters of varying sizes, bird & bug boxes, bird tables, hand crosses, mushroom stools, herb trays, the H O P E sign for the church and a nativity stable for the Mayor's Parlour. Three particular high points in the year: the morning when we hosted a dozen children from Beechwood School for fun activities, the visit of D-Day veteran, the late Ray Reed with his *Ordre National de la Légion d'honneur*, and the 'turning on' of Christmas lights in Bitterne precinct using the plunger we made.

Our finances are healthy, thanks partly to the success our Treasurer has had in securing grants, and we hope this will enable us to be financially independent of the church.

Finally, I would like to thank the PCC, in particular Brian Gaffney, for their continued support, our committee for their time and effort (mostly unseen), and our members who turn up week after week,

whatever the weather, for their comradery. If anyone would like to know more about our club, please visit our website at <https://sites.google.com/view/bitterneshedclub>

We hold four **Seniors' Teas** each year, usually on the second Wednesday of March, June, September and December. In March we had a visit from Terry Smith from Open Sight. He gave an interesting and informative talk on eye health care and how to avoid sight loss.

In June we enjoy the company of some year 6 pupils from Bitterne Primary who entertain us, help to serve the tea and fill us with life through their energy and enthusiasm.

September we were singing with 'Uke Box Glory' which was great fun.

In December we celebrated Christmas with readings, singing carols. There was a free tombola with a small gift for everyone to take home.

We welcome everyone who would enjoy an afternoon out. Come as a visitor, helper and friend.

The 2019 Alpha Course attracted one person and so therefore the Alpha team plus one attended Highfield Church Alpha course. This was a positive experience for all.

Many other Church Groups continue to meet, with the purpose of meeting social need and providing a way-in for those on the fringe – **Coffee Pot, Craft & Chat, Table Tennis Group & Ecumenical Ramblers.**

Other Church Organizations have continued to run successfully throughout the reporting period.

A number of church members died during 2019, including Doris Collings, Rosemary Wallis, Kath Blake, Margaret Andrews, Bill Hope, Merle Rourke, Marjorie Lange, Raymond Hunt, David Daw and John Martin.

We are grateful to all those who use their gifts to serve the Lord, in so many different ways, in order to build up the "Body of Christ" in Bitterne Parish Church.

5.) Sharing with others the mission of Jesus in Southampton & the Wider Church.

World Church Action Group continued to encourage interest & support for our Mission Partners and Agencies at home and overseas, both through our mission giving, fundraising and thanks to the church representatives for keeping us up to date, through our monthly mission focus.

We were delighted to have a visit from our CMS Latin America partner Levi Santana In September when he preached an inspiring sermon at our morning services and met some of the congregation over lunch.

Namalemba and Bumoozi Partnership

During 2019 we sent £2100 directly to pay salaries in Bumoozi Health Centre, £847 to Enable Busoga who have provided mobility aids for children in the two parishes, and £500 to Busoga Trust who are repairing 17 concrete tanks which have been collecting clean roof water since around 2006. Twenty-three more tanks will be repaired this year. We decided to work through these two charities for the time being as the surest way to improve people's health in the area and to honour our donors here in Bitterne.

It would be great if another small group could visit the area. Three or four ladies are interested in going, but it requires someone to lead the group. We are in WhatsApp contact with folk there and we know how much it would be welcomed. We need to assess what's needed from us once again and to encourage our partners to be more self-reliant. Thank you to our loyal donors and for everyone's prayers.

Stephen Spencer reports from Churches Together in Bitterne for 2019

The CITB committee had three meetings in 2019, in February, June and October. The Chairperson for these meetings was Rev Tessa Henry-Robinson and the Secretary was (and still is) Steve Spencer and Jeanne Robertson was the Treasurer. Ricky Yardley is also a member of this group. In addition, there was, in January 2019 our combined AGM and Service for the Week of Christian Unity, at which Annie Clewlow of Communicare was the guest speaker.

During 2019 CTIB have liaised with and supported Julie Mills' 'Luncheon Club'; organised Lent and Easter events (including the Lent course run by Rev Oliver Bayley and the March of Witness on Good Friday); and organised Christmas events (i.e. The Christmas Lights Switch On singing, singing carols under the tree and carol singing in The Red Lion – which was much appreciated by the staff and customers). We also organised the very successful and enjoyable summer URC roof garden barbecue in July.

The CTIB continues to have these aims (from our Constitution):

That through prayer its members should seek the unity which Christ wishes in His church.

- That its members should be the means to bring about a closer cooperation and understanding between the members of its churches.
- That wherever it is possible to carry out a service jointly for people of the area it will be undertaken.

Eco Church

PCC agreed we should become an Eco Church

Caring for God's creation is one of the five Marks of Mission confirmed by the Anglican Church worldwide, and every church in our diocese is encouraged to sign up to become an Eco Church. Home groups did a bible study Tenants of the King which helped us to consider what the bible has to say about the climate crisis and think about what changes we as individuals could do. After this we were well on our way to our first award but unfortunately for various reasons we were unable to meet the original deadline and have had to re – register this has now been done and hopefully we shall soon receive a bronze award. Thanks to 2 volunteers from last year's meeting we can then begin to move forward to the next level.

CHURCHWARDENS REPORT 2020

As Churchwardens, we are pleased to report that the goods and ornaments of the Church of the Holy Saviour are in reasonable condition and we have given 'due regard' to safeguarding guidance issued by the House of Bishops.

We are, as always, very grateful for the work of the Property Group, Paul James and Lamai in keeping Holy Saviour welcome and available for worship, also caring for all our buildings, and for all the volunteers who work in so many ways inside and outside on site. Without them our job would be much more difficult.

The actual fabric of Holy Saviour continues to delight users and create a list of things needed to be done. The Property group, at the direction of the Church Council and on behalf of us all, continues to concentrate on improving safe use of all our property and projects that are affordable that either improve the usability of our site and buildings or reduce the possibility of damage.

It has been a pleasure to represent the Parish this year and we thank you for keeping us informed of the things that are going on in the life of the Church. Your support is greatly appreciated, and we thank you for your words of encouragement. Please continue to let us know your concerns, your joys and your ideas, so that we can continue to represent you and support Tony.

We would like to thank all of you who play an upfront role in encouraging us in our Christian lives together: by making tea, smiling at people entering church, sharing in home groups, leading us in worship, praying at home or tidying and sweeping up. If you have had to step back and take a less active role, you will be missed. Perhaps you can encourage somebody else to take your place! And an apology if you have sometimes been over- or under-used in recent months, particularly in preparation for Site Redevelopment.

Finally, an encouragement to those who would like to share in some of the things mentioned above but haven't yet done so. There's always room for another helper; a space in a home group; an hour on a Task Force day; a chance to smile. We look forward to working with you.

We are called to share in discipleship and fellowship, in encouraging each other through words and actions, to show everyone that God matters to us and that we have the Holy Spirit to help us do all this day by day. Our evolving Parish Mission Action Plan this year gives us a vision to do this.

Gareth & Brian March 2020

PROPERTY GROUP UPDATE 2020

There have been the usual unsung heroes who work at maintaining our buildings and grounds on a regular basis, but we have also been blessed with additional volunteers as the need arose. One such occasion was the preparation of the vicarage and garden for the arrival of Tony, Ruth and family. There have been other times when groups such as the local scouts have tidied the church grounds. All this enable us as a community to share in the upkeep of the facilities in our care.

On behalf of the congregations and P.C.C. I would like to express our thanks to those who regularly and often quietly, contribute to this.

Certain aspects such as the Parish Hall, are recognised as being past their 'best before date' and it is anticipated this will be addressed over the forthcoming year, in the way of redeveloping our church room building.

There are several days in the year when a concerted effort is put into focusing on certain work, much of which is external and presents a positive image to our community and users of the grounds. This year these dates are Saturdays: **25th April 27th June, 26th September and 28th November**, from 10:00. So we would like to extend an open invitation to everyone, to come along and join the regular (and sometimes weary!) team on these dates. We will always be able to find something to do within your capability, previous age range has been between 7-70 years! This may include gardening, cleaning, painting, minor repairs, tidying or simply words of encouragement or making hot drinks! We would also like to encourage fellowship through bring and share lunches on these dates, so families and well as individuals are most welcome. These are occasions where all our five congregations can unite together. ☺

Also, if you have any concerns or become aware of items of maintenance or repair, including Health & Safety, please highlight these to a member of the property team or PCC.

Gareth Wood

SOUTHAMPTON DEANERY REPORT

There were 3 meetings in the year.

The first was in Bitterne. The dMAP / pMAP process was laid out. As part of the years meetings we were looking at various aspects of the dMAP and some of the projects to realise it. There were presentations from Gordon Randall "Caring for God's Creation" and Jon Oliver "The pioneering journey in Southampton". It was noted that the dMAP process had been overtaken by Diocesan deployment discussions.

The second was at Highfield. There was a question and answer session with our Archdeacon the Venerable Dr Peter Rouch. Erica Roberts gave a presentation on the work of the Caraway trust and Anna Chaplains, who work with older people.

The third was at Saint Mary's City Centre. Rev Jon Finch spoke on Saint Mary's-one year in and Rev Mary Nicholson (St Mark's Archer's Rd) spoke about the new Southampton Churches Night Shelter project.

As Bishop Debbie settles in it is clear that there is a renewed desire to make better use of the deanery to help integrate the work of the Parishes into the work of the deanery, the archdeaconry and diocese as a whole.

The current term for representatives ends in May so I encourage anyone with an interest in how our work in Bitterne integrates with the Anglican Mission in Southampton to put their name forward as deanery representative. It is vital that we have full representation so the Bitterne voice is heard at deanery level.

Phil Robinson

SITE REDEVELOPMENT

At the time of writing this report for the 2020 annual meeting we believe that the Site Redevelopment progress has reached its best stage yet in terms of optimism for the future.

We are all thankful that so many of the members of the congregation have generously contributed by giving and supporting fundraising events. However even more importantly we know that many of you have been praying that the right answers may be found.

At the start of the project we produce a roadmap, today we know that that road was a lot longer than any of us anticipated. Nevertheless, the members of the Site-Redevelopment group have faithfully given their time and experience to help us to reach the current situation.

So where are we today?

Firstly, we have all the permissions we need and the funds to start the church room half of the development. The architect has been instructed to produce the detailed designs so that we can go out to tender and clear remaining detailed issues with the local authority and the Chancellor of the diocese.

Secondly, we have formed a new implementation group under Brian Gaffney who will work with the architects to ensure that the building is completed in a way that allows us to continue with normal church life to the maximum degree possible.

Thirdly, we are waiting for outline planning permission from Southampton city council, for the housing development, which we hope will be delivered in the near future.

Fourthly we are working with the Methodist Church to agree the appointment of a joint land agent to sell the available land after the outline planning permission has been received.

Finally, we will complete the necessary contractual and legal work to finalise the project.

In addition to the Site-Redevelopment group:

The standing committee/PCC have taken over responsibility for fundraising and ensuring that the funds are available to meet the contractual commitments.

And

The new implementation group will ensure that all practical matters including communication with church members will continue to take place during the development project.

Mike & Brian.

BITTERNE EDUCATIONAL TRUST 2019

01/01/19	Balance brought forward	£22,298:84
	Income 2019:	
	COIF Div (on income shares)	£3,041:56
	Expenditure 2019:	
	To Bitterne C of E Primary School	£419:58*
	To Bitterne C of E Primary School	£355:58**
31/12/19	Balance carried forward	
	Lloyds Bank A/C	£24,565.34

*Leavers' Bibles **Heartsmart & Christian Aid Global Neighbours

CAPITAL ACCOUNT 31/12/19

COIF Income Shares	
7,829.02 at 1,351.07 per share	£99,449:86

BITTERNE ECCLESIASTICAL TRUST 2019

01/01/19	Balance brought forward	£ 19,908.65
	Income 2019:	
	CBF	
	Dividends (on Inv Fund Shares)	£7,454.79
	National Savings Interest	£689.97
	(on Income Bond)	
	CBF Interest	£ 123.60
	Expenditure 2019:	£10,000*
	*Secure Storage	
31/12/19	Balance carried forward.	£18,177:01

CAPITAL ACCOUNT 31/12/19

13,379 CBF Inv Fund Shares at 1,912.60	£255,886:75
National Savings Income Bond	£60,000:00

Total £315,886:75

Prepared by Brian Gaffney, Churchwarden



VISION FOR THE FUTURE

Holy Saviour is in an exciting new season as we begin to anticipate all that will be and reimagine all that we are now. The church leadership along with the PCC and other working groups have begun the initial work of discerning where God might be calling us as parish in the future. It appears initially that the key areas for development at the moment are in the discipleship of God's people, in sharing the Good News with others and establishing or building upon ways in which Holy Saviour can best serve the people of Bitterne through the bringing about of more of God's Kingdom here.

The Site Redevelopment Group continues its work in ensuring that all that has been dreamt and planned becomes possible in terms of governance, planning and legal affairs. A new Building Implementation Group has begun to ensure that the practical elements of working with professionals and enlisting the skills of the local congregation ensure that the dream does in fact become a reality during the year 2020/2021. Our task as Holy Saviour is to continue to pray and seek God for this important work and ensure that we equip ourselves to be ready both now and in the future to offer hope, to be a place of sanctuary and be a central community space where much Kingdom work takes place.

There is a challenging time ahead for us as we seek to fulfil the financial obligations of the redevelopment and also continue to grow our ministry and mission here in Holy Saviour. The appointment of a full time Children's and Youth Minister is one step in this process of seeking to engage with our local community, serve the needs of children, young people and families and as a result share the love of Jesus. Yet, this is just a stepping stone, we have plenty of opportunity to build upon the existing fantastic work that takes place week in week out in the life of the parish serving people of all ages and at all stages. We must not fall into the trap of becoming insular or a 'cosy club' rather we exist to bless all people and demonstrate practically the love of Jesus to them – we need to be conscious of how we best serve the least, the lost, the hurting and the broken in the world around us too.

A handwritten signature in green ink that reads 'Tony'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Rev'd Tony Palmer