

# **St Andrew's Church, Reading Street**

## **Churchwarden's report 2021**

**APCM - 18<sup>th</sup> May 2022.**

I am pleased to be able to report that the fabric of St Andrew's church and the Community Hall is in good order. All major items of the Quinquennial report of 2020 have been attended to, and a small number of reported items will be addressed during the remaining term of that report.

The fabric matters of St Andrew's are monitored by the Fabric sub-committee of the PCC, and at present comprises Simon Kemp (Chair), Philip Springett, Graham Silsbury, Richard Collins and Clive Jackson, plus Jenny Lambert (churchwarden) in an ex-officio capacity.

Committee meetings have been being held via Zoom, but future meetings should now be possible face to face. Whilst meetings have been few, work has been continued by the fabric team.

### **Storage facilities:**

Some progress has been made, but further work is required to facilitate additional usage of the hall.

The Junior church has been accommodated, and the Toddler group have their own storage in the newly built extension. This area is also being used by the martial arts group for their equipment and for the storage of the hall chairs and tables. As a major user of the Hall, the 14<sup>th</sup> Broadstairs Scout Group has been given a storage area for their equipment.

A major achievement has been the renewal of the Voyager's book sales area, and the provision of an additional storage area above the stairs to the Upper room, thanks to Mr N W Holbrook (Carpenter) and Graham Silsbury.

The Choir music cabinet has been removed from the back kitchen area and placed in the Lady Chapel, and an additional bookcase for new music has also been placed in the Lady Chapel.

Further work has still to be done to check and maximise other storage locations around the church and hall.

### **Flagpole**

You will have noticed that the flagpole has been taken down, and is currently stored at the side of the church, whilst refurbishment of the equipment and pole structure is carried out. The pole will be re-erected shortly.

### **Hall piano**

In order to provide extra storage, the hall piano is being disposed of. The electric piano in the upper room will be available for use in the hall.

### **Budget :**

A budget for this year and successive years has been prepared by the committee and lodged with the Treasurer.

As a community, we are continually reminded that Covid is never far away, and that we should still be taking all reasonable precautions to ensure that we are adopting best practice in our health and hygiene regime. Gradually we are getting back to normal, and we continue to review how we run our church services, with a view to removing remaining restrictions soon. We will consider returning to using the collection plate/bag during the service, and restoration of the giving of the wine during communion, bearing in mind that this will be entirely optional for the communicant. There are still members of our church family who are not ready to return to worshipping in church, and we must pray that the time will soon come when they feel ready to return.

Our achievements during this last year have been most satisfying, given that we have once again paid our full Parish share with the help of a tremendous fundraising boost, and the Community Hall is now starting to show its potential, and may well be our saviour this year, if fundraising doesn't raise the same level of income as 2021! Graham's vision is proving well-founded!

The Youth ministry of our church continues to grow, with the numbers in Junior Church, Junior choir, Messy Church all growing. The newly reformed Toddler Group has become a real success story, and also continues to grow. Our challenge is to encourage into church the families of the young people we serve.

When reading the report pack for this APCM, I am encouraged by the number and variety of activities which are happening in and around our parish, and it proves that St Andrew's is alive and flourishing.

But there are challenges ahead: looking forward, St Andrew's is walking a tightrope, with one Vicar, one Lay Reader, just two Servers, and much reduced numbers of sidespeople, intercessors, Sunday morning coffee teams, etc. As demonstrated recently with Philip's absence in Uganda, we struggle to find a celebrant, and we have been unable to have our Sunday 8.00 am and Thursday 10.00 am communion services. As our older members of the church family become more frail and less mobile, we need for more of our younger church family to step forward and pick up the roles that are becoming vacant, but, sadly, this does not appear to be happening yet. For St Andrew's to have a secure future, we need to come together as a church to address these issues.

Also of concern is the financial future of St Andrew's; as mentioned in Graham's report, we are continuing to pay our way, just, but we are not meeting our loan repayment commitments, and there are several substantial capital projects looming up in the near future, which means that we must not just "pay our way", but build sufficient reserves to be able to fund our future projects such as phase 3 of the hall project (kitchen refurbishment), replacement heating for the church and hall, a major organ overhaul and cleaning, to name a few. This means that, as well as reviewing our personal giving, we need to give more support to our fundraising events; this can be achieved by bringing more people into church on a regular basis, as demonstrated when we have major services with the school choir of Holy Trinity Ramsgate in attendance alongside our regular choir. I ask all who are present today, and those who will read this report in the future to consider in what ways we can improve the future of St Andrew's.

The Voyagers Mission Group managed to gift £1,000 to each of our three charities, largely due to a significant donation; but the future of the Voyagers needs to be addressed, given that they provide the Mission giving element of St Andrew's commitment to the Diocese. We need to relaunch the Voyagers so that it is attractive to all parts of the church.

My thanks go to Philip, who is now busier in his role as Area Dean, for all that he continues to do for St Andrew's.

My thanks also to Jenny Lambert, my co-Churchwarden, who has taken on and is growing into the role of churchwarden with commitment and enthusiasm.

My thanks also to the Leadership team, who have continued to meet over Zoom throughout the last year and managed the parish through the vagaries of the pandemic, ensuring that we are able to provide the support where and when necessary.

The last year has been a tough personal challenge for me, and it was originally my intention to stand down at this meeting, but because of the change in my circumstances, I have decided to continue for another year to support Jenny and the Leadership team. My thanks go to the church family for their continued support of me through this last year. I now truly appreciate what it means to have the support of this lovely church family.

Thank you.

Richard Collins.