APCM Trustees Report

St Mary Magdalene, Lyminster

Annual Report on 2020

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Introduction

Every year the PCC is required to write a report of our activities in accordance with guidance from the Charities Commission. This dictates the rather formal approach to much of this document, but it gives us a chance to review all that has gone on in the previous year and to look forward. In addition to this report, the audited accounts are available to view in Church, by email request to me and are published on the website.

This review looks back over 2020, which was dominated by the pandemic. I am deeply grateful to everyone in the congregation who had helped during this difficult time, whether practically by activities like cleaning the pews after every service or by keeping in touch with other members of the congregation. We give thanks to God for his faithfulness and continue in the years ahead to know, to love and to follow Jesus Christ.

Vanessa Baron, Associate Vicar. May 2021

Website: [www.lyminsterchurch.org.uk](http://www.lyminsterchurch.org.uk)

Incumbent: The Revd Tom Robson

Associate Vicar: The Revd Vanessa Baron [vanessa.baron@lyminsterchurch.org.uk](mailto:vanessa.baron@lyminsterchurch.org.uk)

Independent Examiner: Mrs Carol Groves

Bankers: HSBC, Rustington

**TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2020**

**Our aims and purposes as a Church and religious charity.**

The PCC has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent, the Revd Tom Robson, in:

* Promoting the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ according to the doctrines and practices of the Church of England.
* Promoting in the parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.
* Seeking to know Jesus Christ better and to make him better known
* To provide practical care and support for people in the parish, from the young to the old.
* Caring for the church and churchyard of St Mary Magdalene, Lyminster.

**How we sought to achieve these aims and purposes.**

When planning our activities for the year, our incumbent and the PCC have considered the Charity Commission’s guidance on public benefit and the specific guidance on ‘charities for the advancement of religion’.

For 2020 the PCC met largely on line because of the pandemic, but our aim continued to be:

**For people to come to know Jesus as Lord, Saviour and friend:**

* To invite and enable as many people as possible to worship at our church and via our online services; considering how these services can involve different groups of people.
* To assist people from all walks of life to know, love and trust Jesus Christ.

**For people to grow in love for Jesus, through getting to know Him better:**

* To seek to lead church services that allow people to worship, to hear God’s word and pray, in an atmosphere in which they are comfortable: through the variety offered by the 8 am Service, the Family Service and 11 am Service.
* To teach, baptise, confirm and nurture new and existing believers.
* To offer small groups, where people can learn more about the Gospel.
* To encourage one another as we meet together, week by week.

**For people to follow Jesus and be a blessing and benefit to the community**

* To provide pastoral care for people living in the parish and church members.
* To provide practical assistance to the poor and needy of the parish.
* To give practical help to local charitable organisations.
* To reach out to the community through social events and the Christmas Services.
* To support the musical life of the church and the bell ringers.
* To provide a beautiful and memorable setting for significant family events such as weddings.
* To sustain and foster the memory of those who were killed or injured fighting for the country.
* To maintain the fabric of the church building as a historic centre and focus of life in the village.
* To maintain the churchyard as befits the dignity of those buried and commemorated there.

**Compliance and Safeguarding**

The Incumbent, Associate Vicar and PCC have complied with the duty contained under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016, fully recognising its duty to have due regard to House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. The safeguarding policies are displayed both inside and outside church. All the policies are available on the website and the PCC Safeguarding Officer has reported to every PCC meeting. The relevant DBS checks and safeguarding training are kept up to date.

**To know Jesus (To bring people to faith in Jesus.)**

This year was dominated by the pandemic and from 15 March, in line with government guidance, but with considerable sadness, services in church were discontinued until August. Instead, services were posted online, for many months being recorded from the vicarage. During the second lockdown, the 11 am service continued in church but with very limited attendance for many months. During this time the service was recorded and then made available online. We need to record our thanks to the Revd Tom Robson, whose IT skills made this online provision possible and to James Baron for recording all the services.

Considerable effort has gone into sustaining and expanding the Family Service, which meets twice a month at 9.30am. This service has continued to attract new families, even during lockdown. In particular, an online Advent Calendar with regular craft activities attracted considerable attention and enabled a number of children, who do not normally come to church, to join in the activities. We were finally able to come back into church for the Christingle service, but very sadly the Crib service had to be cancelled because of a local Covid outbreak.

As well as proclaiming the Christian message of God’s love, of forgiveness and renewal, this service also aims to foster a sense of community among the people who come to the family service who, otherwise, often lead busy and fractured lives.

A small number of the Year 5 and 6 children attended a Covid-safe Summer Camp run by the churches in Littlehampton. They enjoyed themselves hugely, being able to enjoy outdoor activities and crafts, as well as listening to Christian talks and simply having fun together after a challenging year. The same children and some others from the Family Service greatly enjoyed the online Christmas Club.

A number of these children attend Arundel Church of England school and our links with the school have been strengthened by lay people and clergy taking assemblies there and helping with pre-school activities.

**To love Jesus (To deepen faith.)**

At the beginning of the year the 8am service had provided a home for those who enjoy the quiet, peaceful setting of the Book of Common Prayer Holy communion, but sadly this was put in abeyance under lockdown.

As the country moved into lockdown and services went online, we were very conscious that not all our regular congregation were able to access the services. As a result, in Lent, a set of printed reflections and services were printed and distributed to all those who we knew were not able to participate online. In Advent, a considerable number of people participated in the devotional activities of the online Advent Calendar.

In August, following the Government and Church of England guidelines on social distancing and cleaning, we were able to meet back in church. However, as no singing was allowed and many people needed to isolate, numbers were low, and many people continued to be part of the worshipping community online. During the second lockdown, although an 11am Sunday Eucharist continued, in church, each week, the congregation was minimal. We were able to have two, socially distanced services on Christmas Eve with almost the maximum numbers of people permitted and small services on Christmas morning.

The pastoral care of the congregation became even more crucial than ever during 2020. At the beginning of March the congregations were divided into small, pastoral groups and members of the congregation took responsibility for keeping in touch with their group members, phoning them weekly and meeting practical needs such as shopping.

Of great encouragement was the arrival of Mark and Laura Rodger in June, 2020 together with their family. Mark was licensed to work in the parish and then ordained deacon in the Autumn. His enthusiasm and Laura’s creativity have enhanced the worship in the church and the pastoral care of the congregation. It has been difficult for them to get to know people during the pandemic, but their warmth has been greatly appreciated.

**To follow Jesus (In loving service of the community.)**

Demonstrating the love of God to people in the local community became even more important in the pandemic.

A number of the congregation took on the responsibility for visiting and shopping for isolated people and the church became part the Arun Council’s community of volunteers.

Many people continued to support Turning Tides and the Littlehampton Food Bank, both by donating food and clothes and helping at the centres. Others continued to support the partially sighted in Littlehampton, although this too moved to be telephone support. For the most part, visiting Ford Prison and the Littlehampton Town Chaplaincy were not allowed during the year.

Working with All Saints, we were able to provide a Marriage guidance course for 8 couples at the beginning of the year, although some of the weddings have been postponed to 2021 or beyond.

Vanessa Baron has continued her work for the diocese in acting as a Bishops’ Adviser for Selection for Ordination, attending two online BAP conferences during the year. She also serves on the DAC which meets each month to advise the Chancellor of the Diocese on the Faculty Application Process. This has entailed some exciting site visits to look at proposed stained glass projects and other art projects.

**Financial Review**

**Overall situation:** The church is in a similar situation as the last few years. Basic regular giving does not cover the costs of running the church. There has been a deficit this year of ***£7129*** (about 10%). This means that the church needs extra income streams to help fund costs as there are few savings that can be made. This position is not sustainable going forward.

This has been funded by reducing the Bank net balance by about £7100. Bank reserves are now £18,244 (£25,373 in 2019). Our investments are valued at about £210,000, slightly down on 2019.

***Expenditure £54,000:***

Costs of regular expenditure continue to be driven down, but there is little room to maneuver now. This is around £54,000 for the year (£73,000 in 2019).

It is worth noting that there are extra costs associated with having a historic building. The heating system continues to pose problems and is expensive. Resources were drained redoing the roof and before, which means there is little largesse to tap. In fact, for a small church, members have been extraordinarily generous in their sacrificial giving for these projects.

**Looking ahead for 2021:**

We will continue to have significant costs associated with the boiler and boiler house repairs and refurbishment (already £4122.58, maybe another £500+ to get it going). If we decide we have to move the boiler inside the church, then costs will be very significant.

There will be costs bringing our electricity up to the latest safety standards (maybe up to £5000).

We are also having to get a full tree survey done.

We also hope to complete the change from a composting loo to a proper flushing loo and septic tank in 2021. The planning applications have been slowed by Covid 19. All this will put further strain on resources going forward.

***Income £47,000:***

Total income received this year was about £47,000 (£78,000 in 2019). This was enough to cover our costs with the reduced Bank reserve.

**Regular giving:** There has been a generous increase in the regular direct debit giving for the church to just under £21,000 (£15,000 in 2019). This has made an enormous difference. If we can all encourage all to transfer onto a giving by covenant it makes an enormous difference. Relatively few have transferred to the Parish Giving scheme, which I firmly believe is the best way for us to give. So although cash collections are much reduced, this has not caused the financial stress feared.

**The fete and fayre** produced no income. (£11,000 in 2019). These are under review for 2021.

**Fee income** from wedding/funerals was around £3500 (£5000 in 2019). This was much reduced because of restrictions. 2021 already has increased bookings for weddings but early ones are cancelling.

**Investments:** Income was bolstered again by a healthy but decreasing £8500 (£10,000 in 2019) a year from our investments.

**Looking forward to 2021** A significant push is still needed in 2021 to drive up regular covenanted giving. The coronavirus situation has put further strain on all our resources and income.

**Conclusion:**

The church needs to increase its regular giving if it is to be sustained on a more secure footing going forward.

**James Baron, PCC Treasurer**

**Fabric Review**

The last twelve months have been a year unlike any other as the whole country has been affected by the Covid 19 pandemic. It has been a very difficult time for many people and sadly, restrictions have meant that our attendance in church has been severely restricted, and many of our regular events have not been possible. Consequently, this report is much shorter than in previous years.

I would like to begin my report by giving my heartfelt thanks to Viv Prior for joining me as my fellow church-warden. On a personal note, she has been a great help in covering my duties in recent weeks so that I have been able to begin re-building my business following the numerous national lockdowns. I would also like to thank her for taking on the cleaning of the church after each service, so that we have been able to comply with government guidelines.

This past year has seen yet another saga involving the boiler. During the summer James Baron and Ian Birbeck spent a few days clearing the soil from the boiler house roof which enabled me to coat this in bitumen. James and Vanessa then re-covered this and made good the grass. It was hoped that this would prevent any problems with damp in the boilerhouse. However, between October 2020 and March 2021 it was clear that this had not rectified the problems and that damp had caused damage to both printed circuits and various other internal components.

Heatcraft then replaced the printed circuits and this worked for a while until the boiler began to blow fuses inside church. Heatcraft attended again and found a problem with the internal workings of the boiler where a component had completely rusted. Discussions led to the suggestion that these problems may be being caused by the heat pump. After discussions with both Tom and Vanessa it was decided we should have this replaced to avoid further costs. (Thankfully, at the time of writing, this seems to have worked.)

Whilst these works were being completed, we took the opportunity to have the leaking radiator in the chancel repaired but these works led to the discovery that we had no outside stop-cock. Following several visits by Southern Water, this has now been rectified.

In March 2020 we had a review of fire safety procedures by having a fire practice in church. This took place immediately after an 11am service and enabled us to check our routes out of church in the event of a fire.

In July 2020 our fire extinguishers were checked and replaced.

In December 2020, Barkers Electrical came and spent the day completing an Electrical Installation Report. This was required for insurance purposes.

Many thanks are owed to James Baron, Ian Birbeck and Mike Lee for all their hard work in mowing and strimming the churchyard. It is very much appreciated. Now that we are getting back to something approaching normal it would be great if we could now put together a bigger team to help with this. Please let me know if you think you could help with this.

Thanks also to all those in the congregation for their hard work during the church working party. The ivy on the church walls has been sprayed and some removed but the pointing work that was due to be carried out last year still needs to be done. This should be more easily achieved now that government restrictions are beginning to lift.

Covid 19 restrictions have meant that we were unable to have either our Summer Fete last year, or our Christmas Fair. This has obviously left a significant shortage in our finances and then, due to the uncertainty caused by the pandemic it was decided that we would not have our Fete in 2021. However we are hoping to arrange something this Christmas.

Having now dealt with matters affecting the fabric of the building I must come now to further thanks. Without the help and support of the following individuals and groups, we simply could not function as a church family:

Firstly, many thanks to Tom and Vanessa for their continued leadership and guidance. Thanks also to Michael and the choir who, in very difficult circumstances have continued, where possible, to provide beautiful music . Thank you to Michael for playing every Sunday and for the work he did to facilitate the choir joining together online. Thank you to the choir for recording various hymns for online services and for recording a number of carols for our Christmas services. We cannot wait for the time when we are all able to sing again.

Thank you to those ladies and gentlemen who in the months of fewer restrictions, helped keep the inside of the church clean and sparkling. Thanks also to Diana and other ladies who provide the flowers. A message too for the bell ringers – We have missed you!

Thank you to those who have helped to keep the 9.30am service an important part of our worship. Thanks especially for adapting to online so that these services could still go ahead.

Here’s hoping that my next report will be full of thanks and praise for a more ‘normal’ year.

**Roger Davies, Church Warden**

**Structure, governance and management**

St Mary Magdalene, Lyminster is part of the Diocese of Chichester within the Church of England. The PCC is a body corporate and a charity currently exempt from registration with the Charity Commission, under Section 30 of the Charities Act 2011 (It is governed by the PCC Powers Measure 1956, Church Representation Rules 2006).

The Benefice is made up of the following parishes and clergy:

All Saints, Wick: Incumbent, the Rev’d Tom Robson.

St Mary Magdalene: Associate Vicar, the Revd Vanessa Baron (House for Duty).

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. At St Mary Magdalene the PCC consists of the Incumbent, the associate vicar at Lyminster, church wardens and others elected by members of the congregation who are on the Lyminster Parish Electoral Roll. A Treasurer and a Secretary were co-opted by the PCC. The PCC are responsible for making decisions on all matters of general concern to the PCC, including how the funds of the PCC are to be spent.

PCC members who have served at any time from 1 January 2020 are:

Ex Officio Members;

* Incumbent: The Revd Tom Robson
* Associate Vicar: The Revd Vanessa Baron
* Curate: The Revd Mark Rodger (from June 2020)
* Church Warden: Mr Roger Davies
* Church Warden: Mrs Viv Prior

Elected Members

* Mrs Margaret Russell
* Mrs Sarah Davies
* Ms Ann Nash
* Mrs Carol Hatton

Co-opted members

* Mr James Baron (Treasurer)
* Mrs Jo Lark (Secretary)

Deanery Synod Reps

* Mr Mike Harris
* Mrs Rae Harris