

# ANNUAL REPORT

2019 - 2020

St John the Baptist Church  
Boldre

## ANNUAL REPORT - PRIEST IN CHARGE

In seven years' worth of Annual reports at Boldre I must have said all that needs to be said, in all the ways that what needs to be said, needs to be said. So this year I'll refrain from rehashing, restating, reiterating, reworking, rephrasing or paraphrasing past reports. Instead just a paragraph or two and then, in place of the usual litany of thankyou's, a second airing, with slight adaptation, of the "thank you" ballad composed for the reception held at Walhampton School last year.

St John's appears to remain in as good heart as it was this time last year. Our worship and many and varied activities are a credit to us all and a boon to our community. Your parish priest's strategy remains well focussed, in place and constant. Namely, to offer to all and sundry, without restriction or proscription, but with perzazz and pride, good quality, lively traditional worship, thoughtful preaching and teaching, attentive parson to person pastoral care and open Vicarage hospitality. This in the belief that it is ideally what parish priesting is all about, or used to be all about. To do so occupies a part time priest and wife pretty well full time, but as we love doing so, it is a form of self-indulgence and so merits no accolade.

It is a strategy and modus operandi that leaves little time for some of the activities that play an important part in the lives of larger benefices with full time clergy. The likes of Alpha courses, lay-training and education programmes, liturgical experimentation and innovation, seminars, workshops and pilgrimages, or even assiduous and enthusiastic attendance at diocesan meetings and gatherings. All of which are largely absent from our Benefice's life. However, our vicar is the Vicar of Brockenhurst, a fine, full time priest and man of many parts. Activities missing in our own St John's program are present in Brockenhurst. An aim this year is to advertise more widely and encourage participation in what goes on in Brockenhurst, for those so inclined.

The most significant initiative last year was the formation of a talented and well-focussed Stewardship Committee under the very able guidance of Simon Derrick to help get on top of our finances and giving. That we don't fully pay our allotted Diocesan Share renders us vulnerable to diocesan censure and even possible future retrenchment. To ask for money can tighten people's mouths, fists and hearts, but the Committee has worked sensitively and imaginatively and there are signs of generosity of spirit and financial improvement.

One of the greatest and not fully realised assets of our Benefice is William Gilpin School. We do need to make more of it. With a view to so doing I have signed up once more to be a Governor, and since Neil's departure take regular school assemblies. The children come to St John's on a variety of occasions during each year and help at the Fete, but pupil and parent participation in the ongoing life of St John's needs creative ideas and initiatives. Some of these we hope to generate and explore this coming year.

### THE BALLAD OF BOLDRE'S ST JOHN'S

By butter-cupped and daisied fields,  
well away from town,  
Boldre's ancient church, St John's,  
snugly hunkers down.

More ancient than the age-old trees  
of nearby Royden Wood,  
The veteran of a thousand storms  
weathered and withstood.

Unpretentious, unassuming,  
no hint of overreach,  
As natural in its landscape  
as oak and ash and beech.

On breezy days its churchyard shimmers  
with life above the grave,  
snowdrops, daffodils and bluebells  
bow their heads and wave.

Weathered, lichened, rubbled walls  
uphold a steep pitched roof  
Of russet, terracotta tiles,  
for centuries weatherproof.

This block of space so framed and shaped  
by tile, beam and stone,  
Suggests to all who enter in:  
Alone, you're not alone.

We're blessed by those, nine centuries gone,  
who faithfully conceived it,  
Then planned and built and passed it down  
just as we've received it.

It took them years and years and years  
to bring to such perfection,  
A church that still holds pride of place  
in everyone's affection.

As then, so now, we bless all those  
who keep St John's alive.  
Who still today in cash and kind  
enable it to thrive.

Two churchwardens, Graham and Sally,  
never shirk a task,  
Undertaking so much more than  
anyone might ask.

A willing, expert fabric team  
in constant to and fro,  
Mending, fixing, painting, sorting,  
always on the go.

The church and village fete committee  
annually impress,  
By motivating one and all  
they guarantee success.

Timothy, the organist,  
is best for miles around,  
He lifts the roof and soothes the heart  
with virtuosic sound.

A four part, keen, melodious choir,  
plus chiming, joyful bells,  
Gladdens hearts and minds, and dull  
despondency dispels.

Dedicated lesson readers,  
devoted chalice bearers,  
Careful, thoughtful intercessors,  
loving pastoral carers,

A team of smiling doorkeepers,  
service-sheet preparers,  
Dedicated floor-sweepers,  
altar linen carers,

Monthly 'Bridge' distributors,  
who're doughty door knockers,  
Dusters, polishers, churchyard keepers,  
daily church unlockers,

The stewardship group, the treasurer,  
planned and unplanned givers,  
The well supported Boldre Trust,  
and help that it delivers,  
Imaginative flower arrangers,  
a mindful PCC,  
Animals who come to church  
for Francis of Assisi,  
The master of our website, Don,  
the waxers of our pews,  
The mission group and Sally's great  
Rwanda work and news,  
The prayer and bible-study groups,  
a mighty dividend,  
As too are those who church and worship  
regularly attend,  
The Sunday children's club assistants,  
summertime's church guides,  
Ten thirty tea and coffee servers,  
all those grooms and brides,  
Providers of each fortnight's meal  
for old folk in the hall,  
The fabric team and car park minders  
in sunshine, gale or squall.  
Those who plan Remembrance Sunday's  
moving celebration,  
Likewise those who organise  
the Hood commemoration,  
And all who lay on entertainments  
concerts, shows, recitals  
As well as bountiful receptions  
The like of which entitles  
Walhampton's David Whately-Smith  
to a grateful, heartfelt toast,  
For he arranged Walhampton School,  
to be our generous host.  
And likewise too does Simon Parker  
deserve a heartfelt toast  
For opening wide his lovely home,  
a gracious generous host.  
Sincere thanks to one and all  
who keep St John's alive,  
By worship, effort and support  
enabling it to thrive.  
Every single one who helps  
is held in high esteem,  
And more especially those who join  
our Parish Giving Scheme!

I  
In butter-cupped and daisied fields,  
    well away from town,  
Boldre's ancient church, St John's,  
    snugly hunkers down.  
  
Unpretentious, unassuming,  
    no hint of overreach,  
As natural in its landscape  
    as oak and ash and beech.  
  
We're blessed by those, nine centuries gone,  
    who faithfully conceived it.  
Then planned and built and passed it down  
    just as we've received it.  
  
It took them years and years and years  
    to bring to such perfection,  
A church that still holds pride of place  
    in everyone's affection.  
  
As then, so now, all blessed be those  
    who keep St John's alive,  
Who do and give so very much  
    enabling it to thrive.

*Canon Andrew Neaum*

## **VICAR's REPORT**

A move to a new parish, or benefice, or even a benefice held in Plurality as Brockenhurst, Boldre and South Baddesley are, can be a difficult thing – so dependent on the welcome given and the colleagues one works alongside, which of course are an unknown quantity before one actually takes up harness!

I have been blessed with both the welcome given and the colleagues to work with. Andrew is, among many things, a gifted wordsmith, and Richard a thoughtful and loving leader of the community given into his care – both are supported by other colleagues equally gifted and generous in the use of their time and talents. I – we – are fortunate to have such people leading our churches and I give thanks to God for them on a regular basis. During my first year in post I have sought to simply support Andrew and Richard in the good work they are so clearly doing and ‘interfere’ as little as possible – trying instead to gently gain a better understanding of the communities they serve. I have done this through the attending of PCC meetings; preaching and/or leading Group Choral Evensong; the taking of assemblies at South Baddesley school and providing support in other ways when asked.

My main focus has been on developing a vision for Brockenhurst and building the teams required to deliver that vision. This work is developing well which means that in due course I will be in a better position to work more closely with Andrew and Richard in exploring a ‘vision’ for the benefice held in Plurality that we are. At the heart of this will be the question, ‘What can we better do together?’ We are already planning meetings at which such a question can be explored together and I look forward to sharing with you our thoughts in due course. Thank you for a wonderful last 10 months.

*Revd Simon Newham*

## **CHURCHWARDENS – including Fabric**

2019 was another busy year for the churchwardens, with St John’s growing popularity, through the influence of our charismatic parish priest and his supportive and energetic wife, reflected in the growing demand for special services at the church. There were a total of 20 marriages, 22 baptisms and 18 funerals, thanksgiving and memorial services, all requiring the attendance of a churchwarden, and 11 burials and interments of ashes. Sally James made three trips to Rwanda during the year to continue her invaluable work in supporting a new primary school, a nutrition project for poor families and a charity for orphans in Byumba, and, in her absence, Nick Walford acted as a willing and able deputy.

Special services, such as Africa Sunday in March, the Easter services, including Maundy Thursday and Good Friday, in April, the HMS Hood Memorial service in May, the Remembrance Sunday service in November, and the Christmas services were all well attended. The Choral Patronal Evensong in June with a Deanery Choir of over 50 won special praise. A confirmation service led by Bishop Debbie Sellin of Southampton took place on 12 January 2020 when she confirmed 6 Boldre parishioners.

Tim Farquhar and Bob Barlow continued their excellent work as our Fabrics team, carrying out several repair jobs at St John's and in St Nicholas's Chapel themselves, and commissioning redecorating work in the church at a cost of £796, and reglazing in the chapel at a cost of £840.

Members of St John's played a full part in the institution and induction service for the licensing of the new Vicar of Brockenhurst, the Rev Simon Newham, in June, and he has since led and preached at evensong at St John's. He has made a good impression on all concerned and works harmoniously with St John's.

Since St John's current income is not sufficient to cover the church's required contribution to the diocesan budget in full, our treasurer has launched a stewardship campaign and receptions for parishioners were held in September and in January 2020. The response has been encouraging.

St John's Quinquennial Inspection is due to take place in June 2020. *G Edmiston*

## **SOCIAL AND FUNDRAISING**

St John's programme of music and entertainment has been strengthened in recent years by the arrival of our renowned organist and choirmaster, Timothy Rice, from Hordle, and the enterprising John James from Milford, and their influence was reflected in an increased number of concerts and events organised at or by the church in 2019:

**16 March – Concert by Vox Serenata**, a vocal quartet of two women and two men, led by Rob Dishington, director of music at Durlston Court School. Their programme of classic, sacred and popular songs was entitled 'Songs in Springtime'.

**27 April – The St Nicholas Singers' Spring Concert** A packed church enjoyed a selection of music from stage and screen, accompanied by Helen Woodgates, the compere, on the piano, and featuring a number of soloists, a trumpet part played by David Woodgates and a virtuoso violin performance.

**8 May, 6 June, 4 September, 5 October – Organ Recitals by Timothy Rice** at St Nicholas Chapel and St John's. These all drew appreciative and enthusiastic audiences, reflected in the retiring collections for the church.

**11 May - Barn Dance** at the War Memorial Hall, again organised by John James with the Old Pull and Push Band from Poole and a hog roast supper provided by Gates, the butcher from Milford. The event was much enjoyed by all who participated but did not produce a profit for the church.

**6 July – Church and Village Fete** A successful event, organised by an enthusiastic team of helpers, and, on the day, benefitting from good weather and a good attendance. Highlights were John Conway's Jazz Band, an equestrian display by Patrick Kempe, and Maypole dancing by pupils from William Gilpin School. Raffle tickets were sold in advance and the grand draw raised £2,366. The overall net profit was over £8,000.

**20 July – Concert by Cantaras Ladies Choir** performing songs from the musicals, accompanied by a pianist, and featuring guitarists from the Dorset Guitar Society and a 'Local Vocals Choir' of mothers from Willam Gilpin School.

**24 August – Summer Classics Concert by St Nicholas Singers and Nova Foresta Quartet** This concert of classical music featured choral pieces by the Singers and orchestral pieces by the Quartet of three violinists and a cellist who play music from the baroque, classical and romantic eras, led by the cellist, Philip Daish-Hendy, and Martin Penrose, organist of St Thomas's, Lymington. The Singers sang a selection from the 'Messiah', two pieces by Hubert Parry and Howard Goodall's setting of Psalm 23.

**21 September – Harvest Supper** 80 members of St John's congregation and local residents enjoyed an excellent supper of traditional fare, cooked by volunteers, organised by Carole Morris. The after-supper entertainment was provided by Jeremy Utton, playing his guitar and singing 1960s pop songs, with the words appearing on a large screen, to enable the company to sing along with him, which they did enthusiastically. It was a most enjoyable evening.

**12 October – Pot Pourri Concert** organised by John James. Heavy rain had led to a power cut and there was hectic activity in finding, placing and lighting sufficient candles around the church for the concert to start about 30 minutes late, with power resuming about 30 minutes after that. Bruce Clitherow, who has many family links

with St John's, was an excellent compere of a varied programme of music, comic sketches and verse. Durlston Court School Chamber Choir, conducted by Rob Dishington, led the singing and soloists included Jeremy Utton, with his guitar, Sophie House, Tansy Bulkley, Bruce Clitherow and John James. St John's choir and Timothy Rice also performed and Sally James recited a Betjeman poem.

**16 November – Benefice Quiz** The twenty-first annual inter-parish quiz with St Mary's but the first with a new quizmaster in succession to Lewis Scard, David Woodgate. None of his questions were easy; they demanded a high standard of general knowledge and, for many, specialist knowledge. This was the first occasion on which participants brought their own supper, which was preceded by a witty grace in verse from Andrew. We learnt at the end that it had been a very close contest between all the tables, with the Milford Mob, led by Maggie Cobb, winning by a very narrow margin

**8 December – Christmas Concert by St Nicholas Singers** The opening was impressive with solo voices spread around an unlit church singing the recitatives before 'Glory to God' burst forth and lighting was restored. The choir sang a variety of music, from two excerpts from the Messiah to more recent works by John Rutter, John Joubert and John Tavener. The audience were invited to join in the singing of a number of carols and did so vigorously. Timothy Rice was also given the opportunity to display his talents by playing Bach's 'In Dulci Jubilo'.  
*G Edmiston*

## **ST NICHOLAS CHAPEL**

The chapel is used for Holy Communion services on Sunday and Wednesday mornings and, with the electronic organ, for Choral Evensong in November and January. The church choir uses the chapel for its practices during the winter months and the St Nicholas Singers do so for their practices on Monday afternoons throughout the year. Sally-Anne Whittle continues to use the chapel for her Vintage Fitness classes on Thursday mornings. It is also used for PCC and other church meetings. It also houses the benefice office for St John's and St Mary's, which the benefice administrator, Karen Ashurst, attends on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday mornings.

During the year chairs in need of repair were recovered with a material so similar in weave and colour to the old material that it is quite difficult to tell them apart. Also the beading of the windows on the south side of the chapel was renewed, as they were no longer completely watertight. The chapel remains an oasis of calm and a very valuable asset for the church community.

It is due for a Quinquennial Inspection in 2020. *G Edmiston*

## **MUSIC**

Music continues to play its part at Boldre. St. John's enjoys what many churches elsewhere have long lost - a church choir - in double figures - and enthusiastic to boot. Regular Sunday services, weddings, funerals and other occasions are all supported musically. Beyond that, St. John's is a most excellent venue for a variety of concerts and recitals throughout the year.

In June, St. John's hosted the annual Deanery Choral Evensong service, which coincided with our Patronal Festival Sunday. A large choir gathered from 12 churches across the area for this.

St. Nicholas' chapel with its organ has been put to extra use again, with a couple of winter Sunday Evensong services transferring to there from St. John's, as well as the Thursday evening choir practices during the colder months. *Timothy Rice*

## **FLOWERS**

In May 2019 I took over running The Flower Guild from Annette Ridout. The last year has been a fantastic learning curve. We now have a wholesale account and are able to order direct from Holland. This has improved prices and the range of flowers we can offer.

Last year we had the pleasure of arranging flowers for 16 weddings and 3 thanksgiving services, as well as all the church services.

We now have a team of 20 ladies. I have recently restructured the arranging calendar and the pricing for weddings and hope this will offer a clearer choice for our brides. We have increased our funds by £500 mainly through donations from happy brides.

*Elaine Fenning*

## MISSION REPORT

The PCC Allocation to Mission in Rwanda for 2019 was £3,000.

£500 was sent to the Church Mission Society to support our mission partners at Gahini hospital, Doctors Steve and Catriona Bennett. £2,500 was given to Sally James to fund her three visits to Rwanda.

The *Deanery Lent Appeal 2019* was in aid of the Kigali Anglican Theological College, which supports all the dioceses of the Anglican Church in Rwanda and hopes to provide the necessary qualifications for existing pastors, now required by the Rwandan government. With the addition of cash from the *Lent Walk* on April 16<sup>th</sup>, £525 was donated by St. John's including Gift Aid. In total, the Deanery collected £3,644.30.

The second *Africa Sunday*, complete with live African drums, was held on March 3<sup>rd</sup> and was deemed a great success, raising £340 for St. John's Rwanda projects.

Our Mission to Rwanda continued its' earlier success under the supervision of Sally James. The *King Saloman Academy* has been provided with a water filter so that the children may have a drink during lesson breaks, and the standard of education has improved considerably with the introduction of new teaching methods. The *Nutrition Project*, providing livestock, kitchen gardens and nutrition education for poor families, is expanding as the livestock multiplies and the nutritional knowledge spreads. Finally, three children from the *Hannah Ministry* are now in school and are supported by private donations from St. John's and other sources.

*C Nash*

## LOCAL MISSION ACTION GROUP

A group consisting of Andrew N, Jen DC, Ruth and Roger L, Jo Humphries and Nicholas W and has met on a number of occasions to talk about

### **How the church can be brought closer to the local and wider community.**

Currently the church offers the community the following:

Community focused services eg, Remembrance Day Service, the Hood Memorial Service, Annual Africa Sunday and Australia Day services, All Souls Requiem, the Carol Service, Renewal of vows, a "Married at Boldre" Service, Pet service, Bible study groups, Lent Groups, Christingle service. The annual fete, Harvest supper, Benefice quiz, "Pot Pourri"

**Focus on Schools:** The vicar attends William Gilpin school assemblies and in his role as an ex-Officio Foundation Governor attends the Governors meetings. There is an annual Christingle Service at the school. Also the vicar holds end of term services for William Gilpin School, and a carol service for Hill House School and William Gilpin School.

Ideas currently under discussion:

- Mother and toddlers group based in St Nick's - (Jo Humphries)
- Baptism preparation volunteers
- Welcome group of church vols for Baptismal parties
- Family services advertised in William Gilpin newsletter and on internet blog.
- Possible William Gilpin school assemblies in the church occasionally.
- Possible Schools Music and Drama festival in the church
- Invitation to William Gilpin and Walhampton to display pieces of art by the children in the church.
- A school choirs festival
- St John's becoming part of the organisation of delivery teams for Basics Bank food parcels

*N Walford*

## REMEMBRANCE 2019

The first occasion of remembrance was Armed Forces Day and Canada Day on 30 June when wreaths were laid at a ceremony at the 23 war graves in the churchyard, of which 15 are of Canadian airmen who died in action in 1942/44.



Prior to Remembrance Day Colonel Hugh Colley OBE marked out a garden of remembrance next to the war memorial in which parishioners could plant crosses in memory of family members who had served and died during the two World Wars. This garden and its crosses stayed in place from October until January. The Remembrance Sunday service at St John's on 10 November and the service at St Nicholas's Chapel the following day, both organised by Hugh Colley, did full justice to the parish's strong military heritage and to the memory of the men from the parish who lost their lives in the two World Wars.

To honour the memory of the 15 Canadian airmen who are buried in the churchyard, Colonel Colley invited the Canadian High Commission to send a representative to participate in the service at St John's, and Lieutenant Kevin Okihiro of the Royal Canadian Navy, currently stationed in Portsmouth, attended, read the second lesson, and played a role at the ceremony of commemoration at the war graves after the church service. Lieut. Okihiro was received and hosted by Val van der Hoven, who will be organising the Remembrance events in the future. In a short address at the ceremony at the war graves, Canon Rev Andrew Neaum said: *"These links are sombre. They are to do with the loss of local lads and Canadian allies who died far from home. In the words of Isaiah, we all long for all swords to be turned into ploughshares"*.

Doug Barlow of the Salvation Army played the Last Post and Reveille on his trumpet at both services, and wreaths were laid at the war memorial after the service by Andrew Neaum, Oliver Moore, chairman of the Boldre Parish Council, Kirsten Kennedy, headteacher of William Gilpin School, Warrant Officer Hazel Lowe, a local resident but still serving in the Army, and on behalf of the Grenadier Guards Association, the Honourable Artillery Company (HAC), the HMS Hood Association, the Boldre Club, the Boldre Historical Society and the Women's Institute. Children from the Lymington Sea Scouts also participated. The collection raised £487 for the Royal British Legion.

Roger Bell, a Pilley resident, former parish councillor, a HAC veteran and custodian of the parish council's 'Silent Soldier' silhouette, had placed it outside the church for the occasion.

On the following day, Armistice Day, year six pupils from William Gilpin School walked from the school with two teachers to St Nicholas's Chapel to participate in the service there, also conducted by Andrew Neaum, and they read out the names from the war memorial of the local men who had lost their lives in the two World Wars. Ben van der Hoven, now at Priestlands School, recited the poem 'For the fallen'.

The service and sacrifice of these men is an important part of our heritage and must be honoured and remembered. The Remembrance services also offer the church the opportunity to form closer links with the parish councillors and the local community. *Hugh Colley*

<b>MISSION</b> REVD. CANON ANDREW NEAUM PENELOPE CHITTY GRAHAM EDMISTON CHRISTINE NASH TATIANA MACAIRE CAROL EDGE SALLY JAMES	<b>CHURCH &amp; CHAPEL FABRIC</b> TIM FARQUHAR BOB BARLOW
<b>SOCIAL AND FUNDRAISING</b> GRAHAM EDMISTON SANDY WALFORD ANDREW & DIANA NEAUM JILL MATHEW PAUL CHAPMAN (BOLDRE CLUB) FELICITY PELLOW ROGER & RUTH LILEY JOHN JAMES	<b>CHURCHYARD</b> DAVID RIDOUT GRAHAM EDMISTON CHRIS KING
<b>STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE</b> SIMON DERRICK SANDY WALFORD JO HUMPHREYS GRAHAM EDMISTON SALLY JAMES NICHOLAS WALFORD RICHARD TOLKIEN ANDREW NEAUM	<b>FINANCE</b> RICHARD TOLKIEN JOHN ADAMS
<b>LOCAL MISSION ACTION PLAN</b> NICHOLAS WALFORD RUTH & ROGER LILEY JO HUMPHREYS JENNIFER DIXON-CLEGG	<b>DEANERY SYNOD REPRESENTATIVES</b> RUTH LILEY NICHOLAS WALFORD
	<b>PASTORAL CARE</b> ANDREW & DIANA NEAUM FELICITY BOOT JENNIFER DIXON-CLEGG NICHOLAS WALFORD SALLY JAMES CHRISTINE NASH
	<b>FLOWERS</b> JANNY BERNAES, CLARIE BROOKE-SMITH, SANDY BRUCE, ANNABEL COLLENETTE, GILL CRUTCHLEY, MEL DaCUNHA, JACQUI DAVIES, CAROLE FENNING, ANNE HENLEY, SARAH LATHAM, DIANA NEAUM, NETTY OLDFIELD, JENNY PICKANCE, JEAN POTTER, ANNETTE RIDOUT, GWYNNETH UNDERWOOD, JUDY UREN, CHRISTABLE WATERS, JANE WILFORD

Numbers on the Electoral Roll as at 13st August 2020 are 175

In parish 74

Outside parish 101

Approved by the PCC and signed on its behalf by Revd. Simon Newham, Vicar and Canon Andrew Neaum, Parish Priest

Dated: 14 August 2020

Signed



Signed

