

St Augustine's Thorpe Bay



Annual Parochial Church Meeting 2021

Report on the activities of the Parish and the PCC

2020 was the year of coronavirus lockdown, and there were many things which were severely curtailed as well as some remarkable signs of encouragement. Public worship was banned, then allowed with restrictions, then banned again, and then for the last few weeks of the year allowed once more. Congregations grew steadily after the second lockdown back to about 70, and a striking 200+ came to the outdoor carol service. Schools work, children's work and youth work effectively ceased (the planned trips to and from Sweden, and the trips to Istanbul and Canterbury were cancelled). In the interstices between lockdowns a splendid Requiem by Faure was sung for All Souls' by the Trinity Consort.

Fr Chris Giles moved to be rector of eight parishes in Suffolk, though was unable to have a proper farewell as planned. During the year Fr Frank Smith joined the team, and he and Canons Burdett and Barnard continued to be an invaluable part of the ministry team. The PCC continued its work by correspondence and Martin Everett handed over after a distinguished tenure as churchwarden to Mark Wilcox. The stewardship renewal, the switch of many members of the congregation to standing orders and great generosity both in terms of regular giving and contributing to a whip-round for £10,000 in the autumn enabled the church to remain financially stable, notwithstanding the considerable difficulties occasioned by normal fundraising becoming impossible. The extension project is on hold for the time being.

Baptisms, understandably, were down in 2020 at 5, (2019 – 41, 2018 – 23, 2017 - 24, 2016 - 18, 2015 – 26), a confirmation was held with 6 candidates (2019 – 0, 2018 – 5, 2017 - 4, 2016- 17, 2015 - 5) and there were 20 funerals (2019 – 26, 2018 – 25, 2017 - 21), 3 in church (2019 – 7, 2018 – 7, 2017- 8), 17 at the crematorium or cemetery (2019 – 19, 2018 – 18, 2017 - 13), 1 wedding (2019 – 6, 2018 – 7, 2017 – 7). The website continued to be an invaluable instrument of information and outreach.

The PCC has complied with the duty under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 (duty to have regard to House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults).

The work to the church fabric is dealt with by the report of the churchwardens, but it would be wrong not to express gratitude to our anonymous donors who paid for the relighting of the sanctuary, complete restoration of the bells, the lighting of the bell chamber, the polishing of the vestry floors and the refurbishment of the doors at the west end of the church.

Report on the activities of the deanery synod

The deanery synod met only twice, once in person welcoming Mark Tiddy as area youth adviser and once on Zoom to hear Canon Mike Power, the area ministry and stewardship adviser, speak about the financial crisis afflicting church finances. The deanery will need to lose several stipendiary posts, and a number of parishes have fallen a long way behind on their parish share payments.