

## **ST JAMES'S CHURCH, BEERCROCOMBE**

### **ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2018**

#### **Administrative Information**

St James's Church is situated in Beercrocombe, Somerset. It is part of the Seven Sowers Benefice in the Ilminster Deanery and the Diocese of Bath and Wells.

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is a corporate body established by the Church of England. It operates under the PCC Powers Measure and is a charity exempted from registration with the Charity Commission.

PCC Members who have served during the year are:

Incumbent: Reverend Paul Reynolds (part year)

Warden: Mark Humble, Vice-Chairman

Elected Members:

Phil Albrow

Maureen Longstaff

Margaret McEvansoneya (part year)

Grace Warfield (part year)

Lindsay Welfare - Secretary

Treasurer: David Ramsbotham

Grace Warfield resigned from the PCC during the year due to ill health. Grace has been involved with St James's for as long as she or anyone else can remember. She was baptised in the Church and her father sang in the church choir and was a Churchwarden. Her sister Mary was organist until she married and moved to Hatch Beauchamp, where she was organist for 50 years. Grace, reluctantly at first, became organist at St James's, although

she had been playing for the Sunday school while she was still at school; and Secretary of the PCC. She continued even after she moved to Broadway more than 25 years ago. We thank Grace for more than 60 years of invaluable service and are pleased that she continues to join us at our services whenever possible.

Mrs Margaret McEvansoneya also resigned from the PCC after more than 20 years. She has been a loyal supporter of any village or Church event, was a regular Sidesman and used to organise the flower rota. Margaret also stepped down from delivering the Parish Magazine, which she had heroically done in all weathers, but hopes to continue to help in other ways. We give thanks to Margaret.

Mark Humble was re-elected as Warden and Lindsay Welfare and David Ramsbotham were re-appointed as Secretary and Treasurer respectively.

The Reverend Paul Reynolds retired in October after more than 12 years in the Benefice and St Peter's Church in Staple Fitzpaine was packed for his farewell Service on 21st October followed by lunch. We wish Paul and Kate all the best for their retirement in Devon.

A Benefice Vacancy Team has been formed and we hope to be able to appoint a new Rector towards the middle of 2019.

Following the retirement of the Reverend Mary Godin, The Reverend Stephen Jones was appointed as House for Duty minister and we are fortunate that he is now a regular feature at our Sunday services.

The method of appointment of PCC Members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. All habitual church attendees are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and stand for election to the PCC.

## **Objectives and Activities**

The primary objective of the PCC is to promote the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to the doctrine and practice of the Church of England. The PCC consults with the Rector on matters of general concern and importance to the Parish and co-operates with the Rector and the rest of the Ministry Team in promoting in the Parish and the wider Benefice the whole mission of the church - pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.

The ancient church of St James's remains the hub of this small, rural community especially as we have no pub, shop or village hall. We have welcomed several newcomers to the village over the past year but encouraging church attendance remains a challenge. However we are fortunate that villagers are often willing to help out in various ways in spite of not being regular church-goers.

There are 16 parishioners on the Electoral Roll. A completely new Roll is due to be prepared in 2019.

We unfortunately lost Hilda Dawton and Maureen Heap who both died during the year. They are greatly missed.

Hilda and her late husband Sam were both supporters of the church and even after Sam died Hilda continued to help and to attend church services until she became too infirm.

Maureen was a wonderful supporter of all village and church activities, always to be found manning the tea stall at our fetes and as head cook for Harvest Suppers and other events. She served on the PCC and acted as Sidesman and flower arranger until she became too ill. She was a very good friend to our church.

The regular service pattern remained unchanged during the year with BCP Holy Communion at 08h30 on the third Sunday of the month and Parish Communion at 10h00 on the fourth Sunday of the month. In addition, in months with a 5th Sunday, St James's hosts a Benefice Communion alternately with St Michael's, Orchard Portman. We would welcome more monthly services, from both a spiritual and a financial viewpoint. Attendees from both Beercrocombe itself and the neighbouring villages appreciate regular communion services, both BCP and Common Worship Liturgies, but we understand the constraints of the Ministry Team. The Beercrocombe Home Group also meets on alternate Monday mornings.

We are fortunate to continue to have Kate Walden to play the organ at our 10h00 services and at our Christmas Services and hope that this will continue. We also enjoy hearing the bells ringing at least once a month as we make our way to church. We give thanks to Kate and the bell-ringing team.

The interior of the church is always kept clean and tidy and we thank all those involved, particularly the ladies (and yes, they are all ladies) who provide such beautiful flowers each month. We now have fewer people who are willing to act as Sidesmen but we continue to cover all services and we hope that we can persuade more people to volunteer over the coming year.

We also thank Jane Kilgour and Helen Plumbly who deliver the Parish Magazines for Beercrocombe.

The average weekly attendance at the 08h30 BCP Holy Communion Service was 6; and for the standard 10h00 Parish Communion Service 18. The three Benefice Communion Services continued to be well-attended with an average congregation of 30. The three best attended services, excluding two funeral services, were the 22nd July Holy Communion Service with Baptism (55), the Christmas Carol Service (45), and the September Harvest Praise (35). Attendance on both Easter Day and Christmas Day was disappointing with 19 at each Service.

The annual plant sale and church fete was held on Saturday 5th May 2018. It was a glorious Spring morning and although the number of plants available for sale was down on last year visitor numbers were boosted by the sunshine and we raised nearly £600.

The Warden met a representative of Savills in June 2018, at their request, to discuss the small plot of land known as Muskay which is rented from the Wyndham Estate at a peppercorn rent. Savills promised to get back to us but we have heard nothing further.

The Quinquennial Survey was carried out on 19th October 2018. The Survey noted that the church is in good order and has been well maintained and cared for over the last quinquennium. There are still some issues of structural movement but these do not seem worse than they were five years ago and continue to be monitored. Very few minor works of the level of general maintenance are needed to the exterior fabric. The interior is very well kept and little work is needed. The church building and surrounds appear to be in generally good condition. We are drawing up a plan of action.

**SIGNED ON BEHALF OF THE PCC**

**Signed: ..... Rev S Jones ..... Date**

**Signed: ..... M Humble ..... Date**