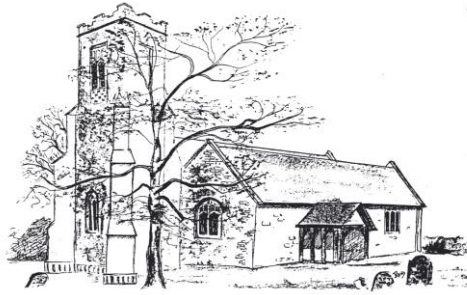


ST MARY'S CHURCH HINDERCLAY

PCC REPORT FOR 2020/21



REPORT TO THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING – 13 MAY 2021

Pandemic

When the year began we had no idea what was to befall us. Little did we know that there would be very few services and no more fund raising by the church for the rest of 2020. When we were allowed to worship it was in a small, socially-distanced way, wearing masks and using hand sanitiser and not being allowed to sing hymns. Never did we expect to have to ask people to book a seat as we did for the Carol and Christmas Day services. Fortunately, we were just able to provide a seat for everyone who wanted to join us. Sunday services were live-streamed weekly by our Rector and for the first lockdown mid-week reflections were put online. Members of the congregation could also watch the BBC religious programmes/services and choose from the C of E weekly Sunday Service or watch one of the many church services that were provided via the Internet.

Remembrance Day

In spite of the restrictions we were able to hold a service in the Churchyard on Remembrance Day and we met at the memorial in the sunshine. It was 100 years since the memorial had been dedicated by Prince Frederick Duleep Singh. It was, therefore, a special occasion and we were encouraged by the large number of people who attended. The last post and reveille were poignant and it was good to still remember those who gave their lives in the past wars.

The Church and Churchyard

Apart from a week or so at the beginning of the pandemic we were able to continue to open the church most days throughout the year. Hand sanitisers, masks and other safety features were put in place, including cleaning after each service. All these measures helped to keep visitors and the congregation safe.

Installation of Toilet

This project's progress came to a halt temporarily during the year due to the pandemic. We hope 2021 will allow us to make further progress.

Finances

Financially it was a hard time for the church as with no services or fund-raising it became difficult to meet our commitments. We were grateful to those who continued to make regular contributions. At the end of the year we managed to pay all our bills and still had £425 in the current account.

Chancel Ceiling

This Chancel ceiling became dangerous at the end of 2019 with lumps falling onto the floor. At the beginning of 2020 we arranged for repairs to be carried out and used £1,884 from a deposit account for this purpose. There is still some work that needs to be done in order to repair the roof above the organ as it is likely to leak.

Events

Rowena Kerslake arranged a Summer Gateway Fair in the village. It was heart-warming that, at her suggestion, most people donated the whole of their takings to the church! The event brought in £1117 in donations. The Sponsored Bike Ride (renamed "Ride and Stride") was the one of two official fund-raising events allowed to go ahead in September – the other being BINGO before the first lockdown.

On January 19th the Rev. Adam Baptised little Eliza Chandler. The funeral of Joy Walker and burial of her husband Ralph's ashes took place on the 19th of August in the churchyard and was taken by the Rector.

Churchyard

During the year we managed to pay for the maintenance of the Churchyard at a cost of £451. You will be aware that the Parish Council was unable to make a contribution at that time. Luckily the dry summer meant that the grass did not grow as quickly as usual, so we did not need as much grass cutting, keeping the costs down. We are thankful that a solution has now been found and are grateful for the support to keep the burial ground looking neat for the whole parish.

Mission

The purpose of our existence as a church is to provide worship, teaching and spiritual help for anyone in the village who desires it. We believe that we should be good neighbours to all, irrespective of whether or not they are churchgoers. The Rector takes gifts from the Benefice churches to the local Food Bank each week, collecting and quietly delivering food parcels to local families who are in need. We have not been able to visit as many folks this year in person but a telephone tree has enabled us to keep in touch with several older folk.

Our church is there for anyone who wants to use it and we try our best to welcome everyone who steps inside.

Ken Smith
Lay Elder