

# **HOLY TRINITY**

Potten End

*The Church at the Heart of the Community*



## **ANNUAL REPORT**

Year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2021

# **HOLY TRINITY CHURCH OFFICERS**

**Vicar:** Revd. Joseph Roberts

**Churchwardens:** Julie Griffiths and Andrew Smith

**Deputy Churchwarden:** Nigel Chadwick

**Deanery Synod Representatives:** Julie Griffiths, Jane Drake and Mike Wallis

**Team Council Representatives:** Julie Griffiths and Mike Wallis

**Treasurer:** Katie Bett

**Sacristan:** *Position vacant*

**Verger:** Daniel King Smith (part-year)

**Music:** Richard King, Daniel King Smith and Andy Smith

## **Members of the Parochial Church Council:**

the Vicar, Churchwardens, Deputy Churchwardens and Deanery Synod representatives; Simon Barnard; Katie Bett (Treasurer); Ann Charlton; Jane Drake; Esther King-Smith (Electoral Roll officer); Bev Hamilton (Safeguarding officer – co-opted); Hilary Matheson (Secretary); Jörg Normann; Sara Raybould; Chris Sharpe; Claire Wallis; Revd. John Russell (ex-officio); Revd. Stuart Owen (ex-officio).

*The PCC is a body corporate (PCC Powers Measure 1956, Church Representation and Ministers Measure 2019) and a charity excepted from registration with the Charity Commission.*

*Holy Trinity is one of five parishes which together constitute the Berkhamsted Team Ministry.*

## **Stewards (formerly Sidesmen):**

John Ansell, Anna & Simon Barnard, Bett family, Ray Bull, Alan & Toni Butler, Robin Charlton, Julie Griffiths, Harris family, Carole Harrison, Sigi Heath, King Smith family, Hilary Matheson, Michael & Barbara Mitchell, Chris Normann, Roberts family, Andy Smith, Doreen Turnley.

## **Vicar's Introduction**

It's been quite hard in writing this brief introduction – not because we're well into 2022 and I've forgotten what happened last year, nor that there's been little going on at Holy Trinity. It is just that going through a second year of the pandemic, lockdown lifting, living with various restrictions while trying hard in keeping our worship, ministry and fellowship going through the 'usual' rhythm of the church year, things start to blur into one. It's hard to differentiate what happened in 2020 and 2021, especially as we're in 2022 which is currently 'looking' more like 2019. If you're confused so am I!

I do think however that it's a testament to all the hard work, devotion and dedication of so many of the church family that we have once again been able to continue and in some cases grow and refine the various facets that make up the life of Holy Trinity.

Even though we've remained out of lockdown since 8<sup>th</sup> March 2021 and we have been able to gather, worship and socialise in person, there can be no doubt that the last year has continued to be hard and difficult for so many. I might have complained about the many risk assessments I've had to write and the administration of our church booking system but that really pales in compassion to the struggles, loss, isolation and fear that so many have faced. It has been an immense privilege in ministering to people at this time, and it is vital that we all continue to pray and hold on our hearts those that have suffered and those that continue to do so. We remember too the faithful members of our church who we have sadly lost over this last year and all those who mourn.

As you will discover reading this Annual Report, Holy Trinity has once again been able to respond safely, sensitively, creatively, pastorally and friendly during 2021. Our vision to be the 'church at the heart of the community' has never been more important. More so in trying to draw people together in support, fellowship, care and love.

I am reminded of the diocesan Living God's Prayer, and with thankfulness and sincerity, I truly believe that Holy Trinity has more than tried to inhabit it over this period and continues to do so in moving forward. There has been such generosity, joy, imagination and courage by so many. All this needs to be celebrated, recognised and lifted up to God in thanks and prayer, for his abundant provision and friendship.

Thank you everyone. It's a joy and privilege to live, serve and minister alongside with you all.

My continued love and prayers, the Revd. Joe Roberts.

*Please note that this Annual Report is a narrative to the **Financial Statements of the Parochial Church Council for the year ended 31 December 2021**. A copy of the Financial Statements is available to view in church and copies can be obtained by either contacting our treasurer, Katie Bett ([treasurer@holytrinitypottenend.org.uk](mailto:treasurer@holytrinitypottenend.org.uk)) or by visiting our website and clicking on the 'annual reports and financial statements' on the 'Welcome' drop down list.*

*In this report we are trying to tell the story of what the church has done over the past year, providing a vision of what the church is here to do, how it has been managed and held to account by the PCC.*

### **Financial review**

2021 saw continued challenges for Holy Trinity. The year started with a third national lockdown resulting in a closure of the Church for public services. Fortunately, the restrictions eased as the year progressed, allowing us to worship together in person, engage in fellowship with social events and re-open the Church Hall for the local community. The financial implications of the Government measures continued to have a detrimental effect on the financial performance of Holy Trinity in 2021, although we have seen an improvement in certain areas compared to the previous year, as explained below.

Total incoming resources from unrestricted funds were £61,464 (2020 £55,103), of which £46,990 (2020 £43,416) were giving and associated gift aid. £3,791 (2020 £2,527) were PCC fees received and £7,887 (2020 £6,477) related to income received from letting the Church Hall and Newsletter adverts and donations. The Church Hall continued to remain at break-even in 2021 contributing a surplus of revenue over cost of £270. During the last quarter of 2021 we saw a significant upturn in the Church Hall lettings and are therefore optimistic that in 2022 we will see additional funds being generated through the Church Hall.

Total planned giving through the Parish Giving Scheme (PGS), envelopes and standing orders was £31,314 which was an increase of 10% from the previous year (£28,504). The Social Committee planned a number of successful events during the year and organised the sale of Holy Trinity merchandise which contributed ~£2,000 to our income (2020 £950). We are very grateful that we continue to see members of our congregation supporting our Church both through regular giving and through support of our social events during these difficult times.

£74,599 (2020 £66,621) was spent from unrestricted funds. Significant contributors to the increase included ~£2,500 related to the quinquennial inspection and major repairs arising as a result, ~£1,200 related to organist fees for both regular services and life events, ~£1,200 related to an increase in the Missionary and Charitable giving contribution. In 2021 the PCC agreed to increase its level of giving from 2.5% to 5%. Our aim is to contribute 10% of our giving, however given the current environment the PCC felt that it would be prudent to wait for further financial stability before returning to this level. Our Parish Share contribution, which we continue to pay in full, remains to be a significant cost for Holy Trinity and this year accounted for 66% (2020 73%) of the total expenses relating to the work of the Church.

In order to meet the operating expenditure of the Church, specifically given the continued loss in income from the Church Hall, the PCC agreed to transfer £10,000 from the legacy fund to the general fund.

The net movement in unrestricted funds after transfers from reserves was a decrease of £3,135 (2020 £1,518 increase). Overall, the net movement in total funds for the Holy Trinity was a decrease of £6,030 (2020 £70 increase). The decrease is partly attributable to the utilisation of restricted funds (£3,386) received in 2020 for the Garden of Remembrance.

Our investments performed well in 2021 and we recognised an unrealised gain of £8,459 (2020 £2,523).

As we see the Government restrictions related to COVID-19 lift, we are optimistic that we will see an improvement in our financial position in 2022, particularly with the Church Hall returning to normal capacity. In the meantime, we are fortunate that we continue to maintain a healthy level of cash and reserves, which is reflected in our balance sheet.

*Katie Bett*

### **Church Wardens' Report**

When we welcomed 2021 in, we still had no real idea as to how it would unfold. Vaccinations were being rolled out and a large majority of our congregation had had both doses by June. Church life was beginning to look a bit more normal, but the wearing of masks was mandatory and the 2m rule was still in place. Nevertheless, it allowed us to be together and worship in Church for those who felt it safe.

Following the very important maxim that the church is not the building, but the people and the community, Joe continued to reach out to everyone and continued to 'live stream' Services from the Church. The quality of these was greatly improved, due to the very generous donation from the Churchwomen's Fellowship, which allowed us to purchase broadcast quality video and audio equipment. The story of how this developed under his guidance and leadership to include beautifully produced music, videos and recorded input from readers and intercessors has continued to be amazing.

The numbers of people from far and near, including as far away as Greece, who join us online has been remarkable. Joe's enthusiasm and drive and the talented people who have worked with him has been wonderful. Every week, we are constantly reminded just how as a Church, we are extremely blessed by the creative talent we have in our Parish.

Since the retirement of Frank and Mary Mitchell, we have been without a Sacristan (a position that involves coordinating the altar frontals, arranging washing of linen and ordering church requisites) and a Verger.

We are still without a Sacristan, however Daniel King Smith agreed to be our Verger, for which we are extremely grateful.

As well as managing the Covid restrictions and safety measures to maintain social distancing we also had to ensure that Church business continued as usual. This included:

- Churchwarden's routine visual inspection of the church buildings & grounds.
- Maintenance of the church logbook and inventory.
- Annual maintenance of the boiler and required Gas Certificates.
- Annual testing of fire appliances and electrical apparatus.
- Maintenance of the Churchyard.
- Repair to the wall on the corner of Church Road and Water End Road caused by the car accident.
- As per the Quinquennial Report, the wall on Church Road has been
- re-pointed.
- Further development of the Parish Giving Scheme
- Coverage of the role of Sacristan coordinating the altar frontals, arranging washing of linen and ordering church requisites.

Because of the pandemic, the Garden of Remembrance had been severely delayed due to lack and cost of materials and then the weather hindered any progress. However, this is almost finished with just the landscaping of the grass area to be completed. A bench in memory of Frank Seeley will shortly be installed.

The Church remained open for private prayer when restrictions have allowed and many people, despite the Covid restrictions, have put in a lot of time and effort to make Holy Trinity such a safe, beautiful and welcoming place. That the Church is open for so long and remains a place of calm serenity is down to many members of the congregation and we all owe them a huge debt of thanks:

- the Church cleaning team
- the flower arranging team
- all the stewards, readers and intercessors
- the volunteers who help to maintain our Churchyard
- all those who freely give of their talents and time to make Holy Trinity the place it is today.

We would like to thank Lucy Green who looks after the bookings in the Church Room which are now back to pre-Covid levels and also Sharon Miller, who keeps its spic and span.

The Newsletter continues to support the community and likewise the community supports the Newsletter, with donations (for which we are most grateful) which helps towards the rising production costs. However, we really could do with more advertisers, as since Covid, quite a few of our long-term advertisers have either retired or closed their businesses.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you all as without your tremendous support, donations, practical help and good humour during this last year, we would have struggled. As we gradually move towards the ‘new normal’, we continue to count our blessings and to rejoice that Joe and his family have been sent to minister to us.

*Julie Griffiths and Andy Smith*

### **Safeguarding Report**

Our aim as a PCC is to keep the children and vulnerable adults in our community safe from harm. I hope that people in our village and the community of Holy Trinity, Potten End, feel safe and supported by our church, and know that they could turn to Rev Joe or the PCC members for advice and support. Over the past year, as we have slowly come out of lockdown, we have seen a return to many of the face-to-face activities that we value as a church; such as singing in services, Trinity Kids, Wild Church etc. Whilst we greatly value these signs that we return to ‘normal’, and we welcome people back to church, we are also mindful that, for many, they continue to live in isolation or fear due to COVID-19 and their vulnerability, illness or lasting effects of the pandemic.

Both scenarios of mixing with others and being isolated brings its own safeguarding challenges. We continue to keep these vulnerable individuals in our thoughts and prayers.

As required to report, Holy Trinity Potten End PCC have complied with their duty under Section 5 of the Safeguarding & Clergy Discipline Measure 2016. This refers to our duty to have due regard for the House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults, and that all persons named are familiar with key documents, "Protecting all God's Children" and "Promoting a Safer Church".

Over the past year there have been no serious incidents to report to the Charity Commission (all PCCs are answerable to the Charity Commission).

We continue to receive regular updates from ThirtyOne:Eight (The Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service) in the form of an electronic newsletter sent to Bev. This keeps us informed of National developments and gives help and advice to us as a church community. We also have regular Safeguarding Bulletins from the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser, Jez Hurst, to ensure that we are complying with guidance etc. Jez, and his team, are extremely helpful should we have any queries. Rev Joe and Bev also look regularly at the Parish Dashboard, which is the online check to ensure that we are compliant with all recommended safeguarding. Due to the extensive changes in PCC training requirements, as of March 2022, it is not currently up to date, but is something that we are mindful of as a priority in the new financial year.

All PCC members and those with roles that have direct contact with children have to be DBS checked (to an 'Enhanced' level) and from March 2021 – March 2022 no new DBS checks have been carried out. As these checks are valid for five years there will be three previous checks, originally carried out in 2017, due for renewal over the next year for existing members.

The biggest challenge over the past year has been the requirement for all PCC members to have a greater depth of Safeguarding training. The changes came into effect in January 2022 and the Bishop of St Albans, by accepting the House of Bishops practice Guidance, has set minimum standards for all church officials and those in contact with vulnerable members of the church community, whether paid or volunteers.

All PCC members have now completed Basic Awareness training and in addition all have had to carry out Foundations training as a new update, the latter being valid for three years. I am pleased to report that almost all members of the PCC



have now done both pieces of training. There is one further session to complete for all on Domestic Violence, which we hope to complete at a PCC meeting. Three members of the PCC have already completed this training.

In addition, Bev as Safeguarding Officer, has also had to complete Safer Recruitment and People Management Module and the Domestic Violence Module and is registered to complete the Leadership Pathway (which is the equivalent to the old C2 & C3 training) which will happen over two sessions in May 2022, with written tasks to complete also. This will be valid for three years. Rev Joe also has additional (similar) safeguarding course requirements for his role.

As Safeguarding Officer, I am very happy to discuss matters individually with people whether personal or to share concerns about the welfare of others. My details can be found in the church porch, and I am happy to meet with individuals to offer support.

*Beverley Hamilton*

### **Worship and Prayer**

Worship and prayer are at the beating heart of Holy Trinity, and even during the pandemic we have been able to not just sustain our services but also grow and adapt them. Except for Messy Church (currently replaced by Wild Church) our varied pattern of worship has been retained. Although this of course looked somewhat different for a time, we are now fully back in church and live streaming from an HDMI broadcast camera for those who are unable make it in person. Many thanks to a generous donation from the Churchwomen's Fellowship Lunches who have made this possible.

We felt it important that we maintained a familiar pattern to our services without deviating too much. Therefore, our main Sunday morning worship follows a regular monthly pattern, alongside BCP Evensong and Celtic Worship in the evenings, and the Daily Offices and Compline during the week. Our services took place with almost as much regularity as it did pre-Covid – this is a fantastic achievement.

All the key Festival days of the Church calendar were celebrated, including Easter, Harvest and the Traditional Nine Lessons and Carols at Christmas. It was a joy to have people back in church! This was alongside 'new' creative additions responding to the restrictions in place, including our Remembrance Day service outside and Community Carols on the Green, which we hope to continue again.

As we move forward it is clear that the way we have delivered our worship and prayer has changed. There is simply no going back to the way things were. Our mixed mode approach (in person and online) is here to stay and we will continue to embrace that. We have in fact widened our 'reach' with our live streaming, engaged those who might not come to Church in person and for those who have been unable to attend Church, they have been able to 'come back' and be a part of our congregation. We even have a viewer who regularly watches the Sunday Morning Service from Greece!

We are blessed with so many great musicians and singers, and the pandemic really allowed us to expand, experiment and enhance our offering. Daniel King Smith during this time, has written over fifty Meditations which start our Sunday Morning Services, and both Daniel and Andy Smith composed original music to accompany our Stations of the Cross Services during Lent. On the second and fourth Sunday the introduction of worship songs are proving popular. These have been recorded by our musicians both locally and remotely, as far afield as Liverpool.

How we harness all that we've accomplished and move forward is central to our Mission Action Plan and we will continue to refine and adapt accordingly. However, be assured that our varied acts of worship will remain at the heart of our Church. For it's in our worship that we are energised, refreshed, fed and commissioned to be able to serve as the body of Christ in the world.

*Andy Smith*

## **Life Events**

Holy Trinity strives to be present, offering comfort, care and love throughout the various rhythms of life, from birth to death to letting go, so to be able to welcome back people to church at these important moments was a real privilege.

With the exceptions of funerals, as you might expect, the pandemic impacted how many life events we held. Families decided to hold back on baptisms when we couldn't have the service as interactive as we would normally do so. And couples postponed their weddings when we had to limit the number of people in church. However, with a gradual easing of restrictions throughout 2021, this changed to the point that we had a bumper year of Life Event services. During 2021 there were 6 baptisms, 6 weddings, 8 funerals and 4 burial of ashes.

Through Life Events we are able to make links and grow relationships with individuals, couples and families who may have little or no connection to church. They are an important aspect of our ministry in serving the community and

journeying with people. Through them we are seeing a growing engagement with people to our worship and fellowship, and I hope and pray that this can continue.

*Revd. Joe Roberts*

### **Mission and Discipleship**

At Holy Trinity there are different ways in which people can deepen their own faith and also participate in the mission of God's church.

Last year Richard Hackworth kindly led our Lent group online (on God's care for creation) and it was great that Jaime Roberts and Daniel King Smith were able to lead in person The Bible Course in the autumn. This was both a 'deepening discipleship' endeavour, which came from feedback from the congregation, and also an opportunity for those not connected to the church, to learn and reflect on the majesty of scripture. Both undertakings were well attended – although there's always room for more to join!

Our social media presence through Facebook has continued to not just be a good tool to advertise what we do but also has allowed us to draw attention to prayers, resources and reflections that people can undertake in their daily lives – many of whom have little or no engagement with Holy Trinity. It's a great means to subtly grow seeds of faith and allowing people to respond missionally. We cannot underestimate the impact of it, and the same could be said for our church newsletter. The newsletter keeps parishioners informed of the important matters affecting our Church and our community and includes articles that help develop people's knowledge and to grow in their faith. A huge thanks to Andy Smith (and all who contribute and distribute it) in keeping this important publication going throughout this time.

Helping those in need is a demonstration of our faith and it should be noted that while Holy Trinity has been challenged financially, we still have been generous and supportive financially towards various mission and charitable works such as St. Francis Hospice, DENS, Christians Against Poverty and the Royal British Legion to name but a few. Regarding our community outreach, Tuesday Gathering continues to be an inter-generational stay and play and social. It demonstrates our mission to serve and shows compassion to all in providing a safe space for anyone to come along, socialise and have a good time. Although in order to keep this going, we do need others to come along and to spread the word.

Once again, as is a common theme throughout this report, the pandemic has not held us back and we've been able to live God's love through our generosity, prayer, service and deepening faith.

*Revd. Joe Roberts*

## **Families and Young People at Holy Trinity**

The beginning of 2021 was quiet for families and young people at Holy Trinity. Lockdown and restrictions made it difficult to meet indoors and run our usual activities and services. Not wishing to stop though, as continued engagement is vital in growing relationships, in January we held a family Christingle service on Zoom, handing out Christingle kits to allow families to make their own Christingles at home during the service. This was well attended and a nice way to connect with families that hadn't been in church due to the restrictions.

After Easter as restrictions eased, Trinity Kids started back up meeting in the church room during the service on the first Sunday of the month. This group grew from 3 children to an average of 6 over the course of the year. In order to keep this sustainable we decided to only have our children's church once a month, and with the new pattern of worship we were able to ensure that on Sundays there would always be something available for families and children to join in with – Trinity Kids, Second Sunday Praise (all-age worship), Wild Church and Fourth Sunday Family Communion.

Responding to our priorities in our Mission Action Plan, Joe and I started Rooted, a group for young people in school years 6-8 which began meeting monthly in the vicarage in June of 2021. This group has grown from 3 members to 9, meeting each month to share food, talk about issues around faith and have fun. It's a joy to both re-engage with those who have grown up through the church but became 'too old' for our previous provision, while also welcoming others with no prior connection but through the school and word of mouth of our young people. We must thank the diocese for support in this endeavor and, through their Reaching New People initiative, for the generous £250 grant for resources, bean bags and a pizza evening.

During the summer Wild Church was able to begin meeting again, on the third Sunday of the month, in the afternoon and outside in the churchyard. This has a core group of families that join us each month and has begun to attract some new families too. In December, instead of meeting outside, the session became a family carol service inside church with carols and a lovely retelling of the Christmas story led by Sara and Daniel.

Over the summer the children's pew bags were reviewed, renewed and updated to include liturgical play items to allow children to join in and participate in worship more fully. This was through a generous legacy from the late and much-missed Vera Hill. It's great seeing the children use the different items in the bag and it's clearly allowing them to connect with what's going on.

Even through the restrictions and limitations, it's been a positive year for engagement and building relationships with families and young people that is excitedly continuing into 2022. Sustainability is the name of the game in moving forward. And if we want to keep this momentum then we really do need others to help us – especially with Trinity Kids and Wild Church. Please speak to me or Joe if you can support in any way.

If we wish to be a truly welcoming, inclusive and inter-generational church, then our young people and families need to feel that they belong to Holy Trinity, that they can come as they are and, whether you're young or old, you too can help, support and love them in becoming a valued and appreciated member of Holy Trinity.

*Jaime Roberts*

### **Potten End Church of England Primary School**

Another busy year here at Potten End Primary – April 21 saw us finally come out of lockdowns/school closures and welcome the children back into school in person. Of course, Covid had not gone away and whilst our amazing staff managed admirably, working tirelessly both in classroom as well as managing remote learning for those still needing to be isolated, the additional pressures and concerns were ever present. We are so very lucky to have such a fantastic staff who maintained their commitment to the learning and wellbeing of our children as well as their sense of humour – no small feat!

The children continued to amaze us with their resilience, adapting happily to being back in the classroom environment and also needing to remain within bubbles. I think they were just as happy to be back in a school environment with their friends and not being taught by the school of Mum and Dad as all of us parents were to see them back to a regular routine!

Of course the lockdown represented challenges for many children and the Government was able to provide us with a (very modest) catch up grant which enabled us to employ an additional member of staff that was able to provide small group interventions to help “plug the gap” of lost learning – that said we are all aware that the school closures will have ramifications for many years to come and we pray this is the last time we have to manage this.

Enormous thanks and gratitude go to our amazing Headteacher, Denise Kennedy, who along with her Senior Leadership team managed to provide an unflappable leadership, maintaining contact and support for all and indeed instigating the

development of Google for Education which continues to be used well by all years.

As we enjoyed the last months of the academic school year with cautious optimism, we were able to at least provide the Year 6's with much of the memory-making that previous year groups had had (bar the previous year) and they were able to take part in their PGL trip, Leavers Assembly and of course a very memorable Leavers Disco! Year 5 were also able to take part in their Hudnall trip (another residential trip that builds fabulous memories).

As a Governing Board we saw a number of changes to our team but were grateful to find new Co-opted/Community Governors willing to come on board at such an unusual time – our meetings remained virtual, and this admittedly somewhat hampered our usual onboarding program.

One of the hardest challenges we faced as a Governing Board was the review of the long-term future of our Nursery provision. With dwindling numbers and a drain on resources as well the prospect of decreasing birth rates across the county, we drew together a working party and worked through our options. Reluctantly, we almost unanimously agreed that closure was in the best interests of the whole school and sadly this means we will no longer have a Nursery provision from next September – the positive of this is we now have the space to create a dedicated library and intervention space which is much needed. Fundraising efforts will commence from September, so we do hope the whole community will come together to support.

In the new school year in September, we welcomed the staff and some of the Governors to an INSET day to work on our vision and motto for the school. As a Governing Board we were guided by Joe to agree on a bible passage which would help define our identity. We agreed on the Parable of the Mustard Seed and we enjoyed an interesting few hours coming up with the motto “Rooted in Faith, we nurture, grow and flourish” which has become well entrenched across our school community.

September also saw the start of our Spiritual Leaders group – a number of children from across the school who are taking an active role in supporting and deepening the spiritual life of the school; leading on Collective Worship and strengthening the links between School and Holy Trinity. A wonderful development for us all and we are so proud of them all for their passion and commitment.

We were delighted to be able to welcome the community to the school grounds for our Remembrance Day service and Community Carols.

In March of 2022 we received the call we were expecting & preparing for – our Ofsted Inspection! Our inspector visited us on March 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> and whilst the inspection was fair and proportionate, the new framework meant we all had a slight fear of the “unknown”.

I am delighted to report our lovely school was considered to still be rated as “Good” which within the new much stricter framework of inspection is great we were delighted with the outcome.

A lovely quote from the inspection report that that our lovely school “...is a place where pupils are valued and well cared for. Pupils enjoy coming to school and being part of this happy community....” – we couldn’t agree more!

*Emma Harris*

### **Pastoral Care**

The Pastoral Care Team is a small group of volunteers who visit those from the church and wider community who are struggling with being housebound, sick, bereaved or just need a friendly chat over a cup of tea.

The team has continued its work during a year when many people were still nervous to have visitors in their homes, so we had to find ways of keeping in touch with those who were more isolated than ever. Sending cards and telephone calls have been the most used forms of contact.

We send birthday cards to all the people we know about in the community who reach 90 and above. We would be grateful if anyone reading this report knows of someone in this age group who we might have missed could let us know. Cards are also sent to people who are new to the village as well as those who are unwell or recently bereaved. Again, please let us know if you know of anyone in these categories who should be sent a card.

Rev Joe has taken Holy Communion to some of those on our pastoral care list who are housebound as well visiting residents in Annett House and Castle Village.

All those on the pastoral care list were taken a posy on Mothering Sunday. At Christmas time gift boxes from a Hertfordshire charity were distributed to some and small gifts and cards to others.

All those who had been recently bereaved and had had services at Holy Trinity were sent personal letters of invitation by Rev Joe to a service of remembrance. The service was well attended, and refreshments were provided after the service.

I would like to thank the six members of the pastoral care team for their valuable contribution to our work in the community. If anyone would like to join the pastoral care team or is aware of someone who might appreciate a visit from a member of the team, please let me or Rev Joe know.

*Ann Charlton*

### **Social Committee**

It was great to be able to organise more events last year and I would say that the social aspect of the events were more crucial than ever, as people gradually began to come out again as COVID vaccinations took hold.

Since the last APCM we had the live and online Valentines Lovatt Concert (21st May) with ticket money coming to Church and supporting our fabulous musicians through sponsored pieces.

We want to thank Edward and Victoria Pickard for hosting the Church Picnic on 27th June and also Wild Church, a fellowship event and an outdoor evening service on 18th September as part of the Open Weekend. Both were such fun as you would expect from the “Pickards”.

We arranged a Line Dance with the Village Hall (17th September) and more recently a Film Night (22nd April) featuring The Greatest Showman. Both events were great community activities and raised funds for both the Hall and the Church.

Over the last few years, we have tried to hold Church Open Days (not easy during a pandemic) to encourage community participation, which worked really well for the ones we held in September and December. Thanks to all those who answered my plea for corks, Yakult bottles etc, for the children’s crafts.

We also raised funds through the Debbie Shrimpton Christmas and All Occasion Cards and of course...the famous Holy Trinity Mugs. Thanks to the Churchwoman’s Fellowship Tuesday Lunches for sponsoring the latter.

Through all of this we kept our long-standing events going - Cake and Bubbles for our Patronal Festival (6th June), Mulled Wine and Minced Pies for our Nine Lessons and Carols Service and continued fellowship after Church with the addition of a fab new coffee machine. Thanks to all who volunteer to do this, but we do need more to step up and help please.



All of this takes a lot of work from a very small, but dedicated team who I would like to thank - Emma, Mike, Jean, Julie, Jaime and Joe. All I'm asking of our Holy Trinity community is that you support us by attending, and if an event is not your thing, can you at least spread the word.

Going forward, we will continue to arrange social events and we want to try and share our fundraising with others. Therefore, we are organising some events for Church only, some with the Village Hall and with Potten End Primary School. There will also be raffles etc. in support of our nominated Outreach organisations.

At the time of writing this report, the events coming up are:

3-5th June Jubilee Event, Church Social Committee Activity Saturday

12th June, Patronal Picnic at Potten End Primary School

9th July, Summer Evening event at the Pickards

16th Sept, 'Would I Lie About Wine' event at Potten End Primary School to raise funds for the new School Library.

1st October, 70s/80s Disco with the Village Hall (almost sold out)

October and November - concerts to be confirmed

December (date tbc) a Christmas Open Weekend

December (date tbc) 'Chill before Christmas' with the Village Hall. A family afternoon including games, crafts and a Festive film.

That's enough to be getting on with, but if you would like to suggest any other activity, please let us know. Even better, why not join our happy little Social Committee.... There's always room!

*Sara Raybould*

### **Church Women's Fellowship**

By the time that this year began the Government had begun to relax some of the restrictions imposed during the first year of the Covid lockdown. Although this was most welcome, with appearance of new mutations of the virus, the situation was far from stable. It was decided to shelve the programme for this year and the few speakers that had been booked were cancelled. Disappointing though this was, it was here that the truly fellowship nature of the group came to the fore, as ad hoc groups of members at the slightest excuse (or at no excuse at all!), began to meet informally in Cedar's or in each other's houses. A few gatherings of the 'Cakes and a Chat' variety took place in the Church Room as restrictions were lessened. The first formal meeting of the year took place in April when Sara Raybould gave a most interesting talk on her work with students at the University of West London.

Inevitably perhaps, during the past year, membership has dropped to about 20 although this might well increase again as the general situation settles down. It is hoped that the decision taken by members last year, to increase the Annual Subscription from £5 to £10 has not seriously weakened either the national or global economic situation. It is good to be able to report that this year the CWF has donated some £200, shared between the following charities – The Hospice of Saint Francis, Mercy Ships and The Indian Institute for Mother and Child.

The Tuesday Lunches continue to play a significant outreach role in the ministry of the Church. They provide good food and a convenient, weekly meeting point for members of the CWF, villagers and others. After lockdown the lunches restarted in September 2021 and offered a new menu - Soup, home-made by Lucy Green; a Roll; Desserts, home-made by CWF members; Tea or a Coffee. The cost of a lunch is £3-50p. The attendance at present is about 20, but it is hoped that, like membership of the CWF, this will gradually increase as the general situation settles down. Special thanks are due to Lucy and all who help prepare and serve the lunches and tidying-up afterwards.

*Toni Butler*

### **Churchyard**

I am pleased to report that thanks to excellent care from our loyal band of volunteers, our churchyard continues to be a peaceful and treasured sanctuary for us all. Thanks also to Rob Ferneyhough, who (amongst other things!) has organised the mowing and strimming rota in recent years but has now relocated to Cambridgeshire together with his wife, Glenda, in order to be closer to their family.

This year's rota has now commenced and will continue through to October when, like last year it will culminate in a general leaf pick and tidy up in time for Remembrance Sunday. Our thanks also go to the wider community - including the Scouts - for help with this.

As always, any new volunteers would be welcomed. The graveyard is divided into four sections, and there is a choice of either mowing or strimming (or both!) one of these sections at regular intervals throughout the growing season.

In view of the Church of England commitment to be as 'green' as possible, we are thankful for a very generous legacy which has allowed us to purchase both a new mower and strimmer which operate with rechargeable batteries, rather than petrol!

We are also planning a ‘wildflower area’ in the churchyard - close to the church room. We might even be in a position to introduce a beehive...

During the year, the large Golden Cyprus tree between the nave and Church Road was removed. This was due to its roots having damaged the nave of the church, and costs relating to this were covered by our insurance company. Although it was sad to see the loss of a mature tree, the view of the Church from Church Road has improved, and the area will shortly be grassed over.

In the adjacent area, a new Garden of Remembrance is in the process of being created which will allow for further burial of ashes. A path to this area has already been laid, together with a small paved area for a bench to be placed.

Finally, we are thankful to the contractors who expertly repaired the churchyard wall following a road traffic accident at the crossroads; you can hardly see the join...!”

*Simon Barnard*

Living God, draw us deeper into your love;  
Jesus our Lord, send us to care and serve;  
Holy Spirit, make us heralds of good news.  
Stir us, strengthen us, teach and inspire us to live your love  
with generosity and joy, imagination and courage;  
for the sake of your world and in the name of Jesus,  
Amen.



