

## 2020 Annual Report for 2021 APCM – 18<sup>th</sup> May 7.30 in church.

**All Saints Church Holbeach – *aiming to be an (inclusive and) intergenerational church at the heart of our community, helping to promote a town in which everyone can flourish, and where people can discover the extravagant love of God.***

### 2020 PCC (APCM held 15<sup>th</sup> September 2020 with special dispensation)

Vicar Canon Rosamund Seal

Churchwardens Carol Hellen

Treasurer(s) Carol Hellen

Secretary vacant

PCC Sara Williams, Mike Goodman, Lynne Barks, Michael Barton, Kevin Dodd, Martin Butler, Kim Biggs, Hannah Buck, Tracy Ford, Michael Slater

### 2020 Mission statistics (2019 in brackets)

Elect roll 151 (148)

ASA 25-40 (once in-person church resumed) (64 + 5 child)

Baptisms 5 (37)

Weddings 2 (5)

Funerals 15 + 15 (crem or graveside) (14 + 14 crem)

We began 2020 by ringing out the old year and ringing in the new with another lovely Watchnight service, and are very grateful to Mike Slater for recruiting the bellringers and enabling this..... but little did we know what 2020 would hold for us all.

- Following a very short, quiet said service for Mothering Sunday with just one or two in attendance and a quiet, (family only) baptism we had to **close the church doors** to all comers from March 23<sup>rd</sup> through until June 15<sup>th</sup> as per government guidance. A wonderful team, including Dawn who has since become our new cleaner joined us for a huge clean-up operation on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> June. We removed all the soft furnishings, tidied away the children corner and put a risk assessment in place to ensure that we were Covid Safe to reopen the doors on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> June.
- On Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> July we put a further risk assessment in place and **reopened for worship** with over 30 people turning up for the first Sunday. We made the decision to use a Nave altar and for the congregation to receive communion in one kind only, standing at the foot of the platform and using sugar tongs to handle the wafers. Though we weren't allowed to sing, Barry played both before and after the services and during communion and it wasn't long before people took the opportunity to sit and listen to the whole of the voluntary at the end of the service and give Barry a round of applause.
- **During the first lockdown** we signposted the congregation to the broadcast services provided by the national church and within a few weeks had established a fairly comprehensive email list that eventually built up to over 70 addresses to whom we now email the pew sheet, the readings and a short Reflection each week. Shane Blanchflower also began to record each Sunday service and by dint of spending the afternoon editing it managed to provide an online version for the congregation to view via our website.

- We also set up an informal Pastoral Care phone contact system so that everyone who was part of our regular congregation was rung on a regular basis. Eventually this morphed into a revamp of our **Pastoral Care Network** which we hope is now up and running smoothly following the delivery of a PCN leaflet to everyone on our Electoral Roll.
- For a number of reasons the PCC decided against the idea of trying to live stream services and during the **second lockdown in November**, we made the decision to try and record services in advance so that we could edit in the readings, reflection and intercessions afterwards and also add in some of the hymns provided by St Martins Voices and made available on the A Church Near You website. This was a massive piece of work that Shane undertook very willingly until he started a new full time job. Between Christmas and Easter 2021, while Shane continued to provide the recordings, Kevin and Martin undertook the editing role.
- With outdoor singing and gathering allowed in the church grounds we came up with the idea of holding a short **outdoor carol service at 4.00pm on Christmas Eve** in the churchyard in lieu of our usual crib service. Astonishingly, or perhaps unsurprisingly, this captured the hearts of a community desperate to be able to sing carols together and, having decorated the churchyard trees with stars and angels earlier in the week, around 170 people joined us in the freezing cold to sing half a dozen carols and hear the Christmas readings and to pray. It was lovely to have Barry and Kim on the keyboard and accordion and Shane providing the sound system. He and I took a similar service up to Holbeach St Marks at 6.00pm and 25 joined us in church for a socially distanced Midnight Mass without any carols.
- **The Ministry Team** met 3 times before lockdown and only twice since, in October and December, and the PCC only met in January, for the APCM in September and their first meeting as a new PCC in November, with a further meeting held via zoom in March 2021. However the Mick and Carol and I undertook to have a three way telephone conversation via Whatsapp each week and met up in the garden when it was allowed during the summer.
- Fund-raising for the **tower project** went on hold until we heard about the **Cultural Recovery Fund**. In October, very late in the day and with very short notice, Mick picked up and ran with this and put in an application and I wrote up a Statement of Need of need for us and after a very long delay we were overjoyed to be awarded an 80% grant towards the work (£55,329.00 of the £71,628.09 excluding vat needed) if we could get it completed by the end of March 2021. Without Mick's action this would never have happened, and the church community and the town owe him a huge debt of gratitude for everything he has committed to the project.
- Caz began her second year as our **Deanery Administrator** and as my PA, and managed, though it was very difficult at times, to work from home and keep the show on the road from March through to September whilst also home educating her two primary aged children. Though she was back in the office from September until Christmas she had to work from home again from January 2021 through until 8<sup>th</sup> March when the schools went back.
- We were able to hold only two sessions of The Gathering in January and March before we had to cancel all further meetings.
- Our plan to hold an open meeting to explore what it would mean to be an **'Inclusive Church'** in March also had to be put on hold but the newly formed PCC voted unanimously in favour at our meeting in November and we were pleased to receive notification that we were successful in our application in January 2021.
- We have not produced an edition of the **magazine** since the February/March issue

- One or two further people have joined the **Parish Giving Scheme** but we still need to up this figure.
- The revamped **Care Home services** had to go on hold after February and plans for a dementia friendly service in April, which was to be the first of three we planned to hold each year, also went on hold.
- **Sally Clifton** attended both her diocesan and her national Bishop's Advisory Panel and was selected for ordination and promptly had to go and do a number of placements elsewhere so we have not seen as much of her this year, even when we have been open for worship. She will be ordained at the cathedral in early July this year and take up her curacy in the team parish of Boston. We wish her well
- **Choir practices and Junior Choir** all ceased in March and have not yet resumed.
- The absence of a **Flower Festival and the St Nicholas Fayre** have deprived us of a significant amount of funds as we would usually make up to £5000 from these two events each year.
- Though we did manage to run the **Ride and Stride** event and raise funds for our church and LCT but we have not been able to do any other charitable fund-raising during the course of the year.
- Despite a huge drop in **attendance** during the pandemic we have still gained one or two new people who have moved into the area during the course of the year. We hope we can make them welcome and that they will remain with us.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Carol our warden & Mick who has continued to care for the Fabric of the church and deal with our contractors, to Michaela, Sally and the Ministry Team for their support, to Shane, Kevin and Martin who have ensured our online presence and also to Barry who has very generously continued to play for us, unpaid, once services resumed. It has been a difficult and demanding year for us all.

This will be my last APCM and so I will take this opportunity to thank you all for everything this last 8 ½ years has held. We have done a lot together, a lot has been put in place, a lot of people are no longer with us and a lot of new people have joined us. My time with you will come to an end in July and you will be ready to welcome a new vicar who will hopefully build on what we have achieved together, retain all that is good and fruitful and take you on a new journey – a post-Covid journey which might look quite different from what you might have imagined for yourselves and as you grow into being the Key Mission Church that you should aspire to become as part of the Resourcing Sustainable Church vision – a resource church for Holbeach and the surrounding villages.

Our vision is a wide ranging one and there is still lots to do to get there, as you build up the church community, contribute to the flourishing of the town and enable people to find the God of Love who is at the heart of all that we do.

**Rosamund Seal – April 2021**