

WHAT CUDHAM CHURCH HAS BEEN DOING DURING 2022

Including organisation reports 2022

Churchwardens' Report

As Churchwardens we are responsible for the fabric and contents of the church, the maintenance of the churchyard and ensuring that services are offered and are conducted in accordance with Canon law. We take an overview of all that goes on in the life of this Church, whilst delegation plays a large part in it.

During 2022 we continued to benefit from having two clergy lead us, each with their own strengths and style, but sadly had to let Rev Rach go when the time came and she was able to seek and secure an incumbency. We wish her every success and happiness in her ministry in Liverpool.

We met regularly with the Vicar to address a multitude of day-to-day issues, many of which would never come to the notice of Church members. We acknowledge the hard work of our Parish Administrator and the PCC Treasurer and Secretary and thank all members of the PCC for serving on it. Some aspects of church life have thrived over the year but there has also been a decline in the regular numbers attending church on Sunday, sometimes in single figures.

In October the next scheduled Quinquennial Inspection was undertaken and gratifyingly our architect, Karen Butty, commenced the conclusion of her report by saying, "The parish cares for the church well and routine maintenance is carried out." (Clause 16.1). There is a short list of items it is recommended be attended to, but keeping them in mind, most can be addressed over the next 5 years. A major item from previous inspections was cleared with the completion of the repairs to the windows and glazing around the church, funded by the Friends of Cudham Church.

The annual check of the fire extinguishers, the servicing of the heating system and the clock, and the tuning of the organ, have been carried out, and the monthly checks of the emergency lighting in the South Chapel and Tower effected. The rainwater goods (gutters, valley gutters and downpipes) are now checked and cleared out 6 monthly, a necessary expense given the moss from the roof slopes and the leaves and needles from the surrounding trees which collect therein. The church inside is kept clean and tidy by volunteers, to whom many thanks.

Maintenance of the churchyard is still being carried out by a band of volunteers with various numbers turning out for the monthly Working Parties and between times as necessary; our thanks to these people, as they save us, as a Church, a huge expense. The contractors have continued to clear the overgrowth in the fenced area and part has been reclaimed, the fence moved back. Their work has been funded out of the Churchyard Fund. Over the autumn and winter months volunteers have cleared by the southern boundary wall. The overall effect of these clearances is to open up the view through the church grounds.

As Churchwardens we are trustees of three charities – the Ecclesiastical Sarah Wood and Cudham School Trusts, along with the incumbent, and the Parochial Thomas Stringer Trust, with two representatives appointed by the London Borough of Bromley. The 2 historic trusts are basically dormant, whilst the Cudham School Trust funds the maintenance of the old headmaster's house attached to Cudham School and provides supporting resources for Cudham CofE Primary School. Diane Kemp and Mike Manthorpe

The Church Log Book and the Terrier and Inventory are available for inspection.

Diane Kemp and Mike Manthorpe

Electoral Roll

April 2023 saw the yearly revision of the church electoral roll at Cudham. Those listed on the roll as members can participate in the governance of the church and can vote at Annual General Meetings. The roll still stands at 52 members of which 30 are residents and 22 are non-residents.

A copy of the privacy notice, which details how member's data is held by the church in keeping with General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), is available on notice boards and the benefice website www.pcd.org.uk

Barbara Sheret
Electoral Roll Officer

Messy Church

Messy Church is a form of church for all ages that involves creativity, celebration and hospitality.

Messy Church met on 5 occasions during 2022:

- 15th April, on the theme of Easter at Cudham.
- 2nd June, a Jubilee party at Downe,
- 30th August, on the theme of Pilgrimage at Cudham,
- 28th October, a Halloween Light Party at Downe,
- 29th December, on the theme of Christmas and Epiphany at Cudham.
- In addition, at the last moment, we had to cancel the event on 18th February 2022, on the theme of Love, at Downe, due to a dangerous storm which was accompanied by a Met Office red warning of not to travel!

Attendance varied during the year, with an average of around 14 children accompanied by their parents or carers, of which the majority do not attend church on a regular basis. The most popular was the Halloween Light Party with 22 children in attendance. We continue to have a core of regular attendees although there are usually one or two new families at each session. It is a delight to potentially be introducing them to a life with Jesus Christ.

Rev John Musson, Rev Rach Archer or Kim and John Curle led all age worship on each occasion, and it was marvellous to be able to offer an amazing buffet and refreshments at all these events once again, with the exception of Good Friday when hot cross buns were provided!

A donation box was made available, however, cash donations were small and did not cover the costs of the hall hire (at Downe), food or craft materials. However, some groups brought a contribution of food as a donation instead which is always welcomed.

The arts and crafts are prepared by myself and we have several regular helpers that help facilitate, talk with attendees or help with food and refreshments. An enormous thank you to Bridget Law and George, Karen Lockley, Kim and John Curle, Sue Everest and Barbara Sheret, who all help on a regular basis as well as Mike Manthorpe, Kate Brignall, Marita Gibbs, Chris Isbell, Alison, Luca and Gabes Tomeo who have given a hand too.

Denise Angell
Children's Parish Representative.

Sunday Club

Sunday Club was held throughout the year, meeting most 2nd to 4th weeks of each month, except during the summer holidays, with All Age Worship being held the first Sunday of each month. The average number of children that attended is about four, although sometimes we have had double this! The leaders have the experience to adapt the ideas for the children they have with them, whether it be one child or many.

Karen Lockley, Kim Curle and myself, have led the sessions. Kate Brignall and Bridget Law have continued to help. We said goodbye to Sarah Santry who took on additional duties at her work so sadly felt unable to continue with her support. My thanks to all these people who plan, teach and deliver such fun and engaging material for the children. We are a helper short, so if you would like to find out more about this valuable and rewarding role then please do get in touch!

We have continued to use 'Roots' resource material, which enables the learning to be in line with that used by the Vicar for the adult service.

At Christmas, several children performed the Bible Society's Instant Nativity: Amazing Days which entailed some audience participation and once again proved to be great fun.

Denise Angell
Children's Parish Representative.

Homegroups

During the year homegroup resumed in person (as well as on zoom), and a small but prayerful group meet each Wednesday evening at Sue's - we've looked at prayer, held special courses during Lent and Advent, and most other weeks focused on the bible reading from the previous Sunday. Homegroups are a great place to ask questions you might have following our Sunday Service, and I encourage you to join us.

Rev John Musson

Prayer Chain

Is a group of people who pray for special needs when asked. Any prayer request is phoned through to myself and I will then send the request around our group who will pray. All prayers needs are kept confidential. I would like to thank all those in the prayer chain for praying for the needs of people.

Pat Morbin

Deanery Synod

The Deanery Synod has met only twice since our APCM last year, in May at St Barnabas, Cray and in November at St Augustine's in Bromley. I attended each of the meetings and reported from them to PCC members.

The guest speaker at the May meeting was Lord Deben, John Selwyn Gummer, the Conservative MP for Suffolk Coastal, now elevated to the House of Lords. He came to our Synod as Chairman of the UK's Independent Climate Change Committee and is clearly passionate about the environment and climate change. His presentation was fast moving, thorough and expansive.

The November meeting was a joint one with members of the Bromley and Beckenham Synods and a chance to meet the new Bishop of Rochester, The Rt Rev Dr Jonathan Gibbs, and learn about him, his life and leanings. From the report of the meeting a sentence stands out; he said, "... we now live in a very different world (to that of the time of the Reformation) because of social media – an angry and critical society which is not very Christian."

Diane Kemp

Friends of Cudham Church

The Friends of Cudham Church seems to have reached a crossroads. We still have a hangover from the Covid shutdown, and we held no events in 2022.

We are still looking for new members for our committee as we said last year and in fact the situation has got worst as 2 of our founding members have poor health and will not be able to continue as committee members.

As I said we are at a crossroads if no new people come forward, I can see the Friends closing down which would be a shame as over the time we been up and running we have held some very good and enjoyable events and raised a good amount of money for the Church building. If the Church and Village want a Friends of Cudham Church we do need new volunteers.

Gary Packman.

Pastoral Visitors Team for Cudham and Downe

The team was set up in November 2021 and continues to support members in the local community.

We have regular monthly team meetings and at the present time are in contact with approximately 30 people of all ages.

The principals set up in our training document guide us in our work.

- To visit the sick, those in hospital and the housebound

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- To support the dying and bereaved
- To offer prayer and Holy Communion if requested
- To visit newcomers to the church and those who no longer live in the area
- To offer a listening ear

Team members also take the opportunity to make face to face contact when delivering Christmas and Easter gift bags.

Although we advertise our service and have posters displayed around the local area our main contacts have been through word of mouth.

For more information telephone: 07942 354533, email: pastoral.team@pcd.org.uk

Housekeeping

CLEANING :

Very many thanks are due the two ladies who spend a considerable amount of their time cleaning in the church. Ann Johnson sees to the porch, the Nave and St Katherine's, from dusting the pews and wood-work, to washing the glass screen in the porch and washing the entire floor area and Sue Nettlefold sees to the Chancel and the office. Either one of them will vacuum the passage by the stairs and clean around the kitchen and the WC if they have the time, and energy, but a third person to join them would be desirable, in order that these areas, plus the Upper Room and the West Vestry, be cleaned on a regular basis.

It is some time since our church saw a proper Spring Clean and certain corners, nooks and crannies, plus cobwebs are evidence of this. Might we organise one, please?

FLOWERS :

This past year it has mostly been just two of us tending to the flowers week in, week out, and special thanks for her help are due to Brenda Holbrook. This is not to criticise Kate Webb and Sharon Peake who help when their demanding jobs and family commitments allow. Thank you, all of you.

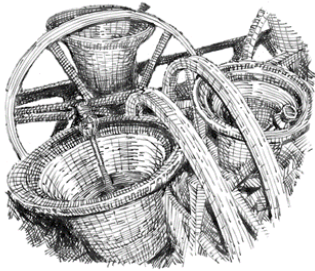
The cost of flowers is rising and one might ask if they are really necessary, but the church does look so much more welcoming with the few arrangements and we are all very good at snipping and trimming, making the flowers last as many weeks as possible. As ever, if anyone could help on the odd occasion it would be appreciated.

OTHER CHORES :

I see to a myriad other tasks week in week out, the day to day things such as one would do at home like putting out the rubbish, purchasing supplies, from coffee to bin bags, floor cleaner to port, ensuring there are loo rolls and hand towels in the WC. My thanks go to the others who help – Mark for testing the emergency lights monthly, Phil for minor repairs, Barbara for keeping the notice boards up to date, Norman for supplying the biscuits for our refreshments after services. All are unseen jobs until they are not done. Thank you everyone.

Diane Kemp

Bellringers



We have managed to ring at both Cudham and Downe Sunday services on the first Sunday of each month, with the exception of March 2023. We have rung for all other 'special' services.

The Tenor bell was tolled fully muffled for one hour to announce the passing of the Monarch and again prior to the funeral of HM Queen Elizabeth II

The new start time of 7:00 for practices seems to be working well, and has continued.

There was one wedding in Downe.

We continue to share our practices with the Downe ringers and currently have 6 learners, which is very assuring for the future of bellringing for both churches. We currently rely on help from Sundridge, Brasted, Hever, Bickley, West Wickham and Bromley Common.

The Ringing room and Bell Chamber continue to be plagued by insect infestation. The bell chamber floor shows signs of fresh nesting material and wood shavings, so the tower is still a habitat for many creatures. There is currently no rope attached to bell number 3 as it snapped. Another rope will be sourced. We are looking to replace all the ropes with nylon topped ropes at some point to prevent further breakages. It is hoped that nylon ropes will be able to withstand the damp conditions without rotting. The stay on bell number 7 recently broke and was replaced. We currently have two more blank stays in stock should they be needed.

In Memorium – Serafina Wilson ringer at both Cudham and Downe

Alison Wilson
Tower Captain

The PCC extends sincere and grateful thanks to all the church membership who work so very hard to make our church the worshipping, witnessing and welcoming community it is, and their help and support in so many ways throughout the year is greatly appreciated and valued.
Thank you everyone.