

**Annual Report
of the
Parochial Church Council**

for 2021

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Reverend Kate Mier

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RECTOR'S REPORT

I enjoy Annual Reports because they capture something of all that has happened in the life and outreach of Studley and Mappleborough congregations within the Arden Marches Churches over the past year or so. I always feel more appreciative of the significance of what the Holy Spirit is working among and through us as I read the reports. Thank you to everyone who has contributed reports this year. And thank you to everyone who has given of themselves in so many ways to enable the life and outreach of our church. Above all, of course, thank you to God for the privilege of being caught up in God's mission in our area.

Through the year I have found inspiration and focus in four characteristics that are central to my understanding of christian community as we seek to be open to God, to each other, and to our communities:

- Living out of a still centre rooted and grounded in the love of Christ
- Cultivating homespun family-feel communities that foster deep relationships
- Offering relaxed, bespoke hospitality
- Being visible and active in the wider community

I find it hard to remember the sequence of events through the pandemic and the various lockdowns – it is all a bit of a blur. But I do remember how good it was to gather from all our congregations to **worship together** on Zoom. Thank you especially to Dan and to Ethan P for excellent technical support to make that possible. We have also held Facebook Morning and Night Prayer on weekdays for a long time now, and gathered a loyal group of pray-ers plus a wider group of people from beyond our church who join us sometimes. These times of prayer have been a great encouragement. Thank you to Judy, Alan T, Alan G, Pat W and Dan for faithfully continuing with this ministry. And thank you to all the telephoners! – there has been a wonderful ministry of phone calls to keep people connected through the pandemic.

I also remember the delight of being able to gather to worship in church again, despite various restrictions, and also the delight of eventually singing without masks!

We have not been able to hold our regular Sunday evening and other services in **Care Homes**, but Joan Lock has visited people with Holy Communion when asked, and we have held monthly 6pm Communion services in the Parish Centre to continue our pattern of regular worship in the centre of the village.

Through 2021 we offered opportunities to gather during the week for **learning and exploring together**. We zoomed the Lent Course 'Living his Story', held The Difference Course in person, and some took part in Living in Love and Faith diocesan zoom courses. We held 4 Arden Marches Forum evenings in 2021 focussing on discerning priorities for 2021, appointing a Family Link Worker, and on prayer – an evening of praying in different ways, and another of praying into our outreach to families. In early 2022 we held a Forum to set dates for events through the year.

I continue to be **Chaplain** to both our church schools, and we have offered regular Collective Worship (mainly as video recordings – but with one wonderful Zoom session where Amasango School and all four classes at Mappleborough shared worship together). It is wonderful to be able to now go into school in person.

We continued our connection with **Amasango School** by joining in with an online quiz, Dr Girlie Shadaya the new Principal joined us one Sunday for worship on Zoom, and by a donation from the Harvest Supper. I value this real connection with Christian mission around the world, and the way it focusses our membership of the **International Community of the Cross of Nails**.

We are at a time of significant transition as curate Dan Corlett moves on to be Associate Minister for the Alcester Rural Mission Hub, and as Phil Pattison stands down after 6 years as churchwarden. Dan and Phil have been outstanding in their service to us in so many ways – we have been very blessed, and are deeply thankful to God for their ministries among us.

While Dan has been here I have enjoyed spending more time with our Mappleborough congregation. Many thanks to Erica Hayton for her care-full leadership and service as churchwarden, and to everyone who contributes to our church life and care of the buildings and fantastic grounds.

It has been a great joy to have Angela Corlett start work as our first **Family Link Worker** on 1st May 2022. I am sure we will see significant growth in our ministry among families and children in the months ahead.

In July the Ayton family left us as Jacque was ordained and began her curacy in Coventry. Very sadly Tony Drake died during the year. We miss his loving enthusiasm for drawing people to Christ, and we thank God that he was part of our church family for so many years.

In October a number of us attended the Return, Rebuild, Renew diocesan conference which has given us resources and inspiration as we emerge from the pandemic. Bishop Christopher Cocksworth spoke of his vision of LIFE for our diocese: of restored health – for individuals and for healthy church communities, of new growth – of new worshipping communities, of renewed relationships - as we learn to live well with diversity and difference. He spoke of us being life- bearers as we share the life of Christ with our communities, and as we serve the common good in our communities. As we continue to follow Jesus through 2022 may we be bearers of his 'life in all its fullness' (John 10)

Kate Mier

Life Events

Despite lockdown restrictions we still had the privilege of being there for people at critical moments in life, and of helping them experience the loving presence of Christ with them. In 2021 we conducted 16 baptisms, 5 weddings and one blessing, and 25 funerals. (The first part of 2022 is bringing increased numbers of baptisms). In May 2021 the Government changed the way weddings are registered, which took a bit of getting our heads around, but seems to be working smoothly now with slightly less administrative responsibilities falling to us.

Many thanks to Judy Stote and Alan Greathead for their ministres in all this alongside Dan and me, and to the vergers teams.

We are looking for new vergers and for a weddings co-ordinator for Studley. If you are interested in this ministry of practical hospitality do let me know.

<u>2021</u>	<u>Mappleborough</u>	<u>Studley</u>
Baptisms	3	13
Weddings	1	4
Wedding blessings	1	
Funerals	4	6

Plus 13 crematorium funerals and 2 graveside funerals in Studley Cemetery

Kate Mier

CURATE'S REPORT

Studley Church

The return to a full pattern of in-person worship at Studley has been very welcome, and it is wonderful that once again many people are exercising their gifts in ministry, hospitality, organisation, and other areas. It has been particularly heartening to see a number of families with children attending on a regular basis. We are now very committed to working out how to best support the children and their parents in the services.

At our Vision Morning on 8th January, we took stock of our Sunday 10am worship services and decided to try a new monthly pattern of services, each one led by a specific team and with a distinct flavour. Now a few months in, it seems that this is working well, though more people are needed in these teams to make them sustainable and to allow people to discover and grow in their gifts. We have started to theme a set of services (normally across a month), which is allowing us to go a bit deeper into aspects of Christian life and discipleship, and offering continuity, especially where attendance remains less consistent than pre-covid.

At the Vision Morning we also felt a great need to be more integrated into village life. Encouragingly, at the Parish Council annual meeting this month, almost every group that gave a report had some linkage with the church, whether formal or through church members' volunteering and supporting them.

There have been a significant number of baptisms, not only as we catch up from Covid, but also because people continue to feel the need to have their children baptised. This is an area of real potential for developing relationship with families in Studley, and it would be good to have more people supporting this ministry, both helping on the day of the baptism and getting to know the families before and after the event. Reopening the building during the week has enabled us to welcome a large number of visitors again, mainly from the village and from Warners' Hotel. The visitor book is full of comments from people who find the building significant in their spiritual lives, and usage of the new Goodbox contactless payment system further demonstrates people's appreciation.

The group attending our 8am communion services remains consistent and as elsewhere, people are grateful for the lifting of restrictions on seating and masks.

Last autumn, we started three new Life Groups – mid-week groups for church members to encourage one another in their discipleship journey, each one formed around an area of shared interest. I am really grateful to the leaders of these groups for being willing to take on this new venture and have heard very good things from members of the groups.

Centrepont worship was not held in 2021. It relaunched in 2022 and at the time of writing it has been paused to review how best to proceed.

Youth

In January 2022, a group of 11-18s met for a New Year party, which started a monthly gathering of young people for chat, games, bible exploration and prayer. Mainly meeting at the home of Kay Middleton, it is open to young people connected with any of our churches and we are still finding what pattern of activities is best suited to those who want to attend. Several of these young people attend Sunday services (10am, Messy Church, Centrepont) and we're also really grateful for the way they are blessing and serving these congregations.

Dan Corlett

CHURCHWARDENS' REPORT

Holy Ascension - Mappleborough Green

The activities of the church were necessarily curtailed by the continuing pandemic – throughout the spring and summer 2021, while Sunday services continued to be held via Zoom, the church was open for private prayer one morning a week, with a small number of people coming on each occasion. As the country has moved into (we hope) the pandemic's latter stages, we have gradually returned to a more recognisable pattern of services in the church and stopped holding services on Zoom. We hold two Holy Communion services each month, a morning worship and an all-age worship. On 5th Sundays, churchgoers are encouraged to go out into the community to bear witness.

The rector developed Covid-safe procedures for all services, and especially for the administration of communion which we continue to practise. Many thanks are due to Alan Greathead, Jennie Jarmy and Aileen Lockety for taking up the major part of the responsibility for the two non-communion services each month. Our congregations are noticeably smaller than pre-pandemic, and we hope that we shall see more people returning in 2022. The system of weekly coordinators and the rota for other tasks have been re-established, although some people have not wanted to take up roles just yet. Thanks to the four coordinators, to Jennie Jarmy for once again taking on the drawing up of the rotas, and to all who volunteer. A new system for serving refreshments was introduced and, as a result, we intend to continue to serve coffee at a table in the main room at Ankcorn House, instead of everyone trying to get through to the kitchen. We are grateful to Fred Young who continues to clean each week, with working parties arranged twice in the year to do deeper cleans and churchyard tasks. The Pump House was cleared and thoroughly cleaned in July.

Linda Salisbury has taken on responsibility for Ankcorn House and is moving forward in trying to establish its legal ownership and other issues around our use of the building, and she is also working hard to drum up more rental use. Our thanks to her also for organising very enjoyable Zoom fundraising events, which helped both with funds and our social well being during lockdown. Thanks to Maxine Mould who has stepped down after being responsible for Ankcorn House for a number of years.

The EcoChurch group met several times, and we are close to a bronze award on the EcoChurch dashboard. A hay meadow in the churchyard had its first full year, which should help to support a variety of wildlife, eco toilet rolls were offered for sale at cost price, and discussions were held about installing rainwater diverters to collect rainwater off the church roof.

A Minifest was held on August Bank Holiday Sunday, attracting both members of the church family and people new to us – the intention was to be a low key family day out with barbecue, drinks, music and a bouncy castle. Many thanks to Charlotte Fitchett, her family and her team of ladies who organised and ran this most successful event. The Harvest ‘Supper’ had to be without food, but was nevertheless an enjoyable occasion with 60 people gathering from across the benefice to listen to the inspirational songs of Rob Halligan. An Advent Giving Day with prayer led by the rector led to some generous donations. A Christingle service was held but was not attended by as many as in the past. The wider life of the church has been adversely affected with many groups unable to meet – monthly coffee mornings continued while cafes were open, with 12-18 people coming from across the churches.

The last snagging of the vestry project were completed, and then we were told that the boiler was unfit for use and needed replacing – an expense we were hoping not to have quite so soon. This work was completed in early December, after a number of services were held in a very cold church! The diocesan heating adviser visited as the fan heaters were not operating properly – this is an ongoing issue.

I offer my personal thanks to all those who have supported me as Churchwarden – especially the Deputy Churchwarden John Styler, Alan Greathead who is always a very willing volunteer and to him, Alan Jarmy and Glynn Jones for their support and willingness to share their many years of experience; and also those on the DCC and all those church members who contribute so much to the life of our church.

Erica Hayton Churchwarden

The Church of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Studley

- The District Church Council

We continued to meet throughout 2021, initially via zoom and towards the later part of the year in person. The agendas usually include Mission both in terms of Outreach and the Spiritual Growth of the Church, Safeguarding, Finance, Buildings, Health and Safety, Church Schools, Foodbank and much more.

- Health and Safety

Kim Harwood stepped down as our Health and Safety Officer and Mike Moffat has taken up the role. The Health & Safety Policy and the supporting documents have been updated and signed off by the PCC.

- Church Building

After several setbacks, we were granted a faculty, to re-point the parapet and carry out repairs to the merlons on the East and West elevations of the tower which had become unsafe. You will see in the financial report that we received a donation of £5,000.00 from the Diocese in addition to donations received from members of the community towards the cost of the repairs. The replacement of missing and broken tiles on the roof, and the repointing of the flaunching's remain outstanding.

We were also granted permission to remove two trees from the churchyard, a Sycamore (that was near to the boundary wall on the north side of the church and a Corsican Pine (near to the Garden of Remembrance) both were unsafe. A Lime tree near to the road was also pollarded.

Maintenance checks have been completed during the year by appropriately qualified contractors (see the list below) and any faults that were identified have been repaired. Fire Extinguisher Maintenance, Portable Appliance Testing, Fire Alarm System, Portable Appliance Testing, Emergency Lighting Test, Organ Tuning, Central Heating Boiler, Security Alarm System and the Lightning Protection System.

A Full (5 year) Electrical Test was also carried out satisfactorily. Monthly safety checks have also been carried out.

The church is open Tuesday to Thursday and at weekends from 10.00am until 4.00pm thanks to a small group of volunteers who open and lock up. If you take time to read the visitors book you will see that many people find both the church to be a very peaceful place to visit and often make complimentary comments about how well the church is kept.

Phil Pattison

STUDLEY + MAPPLEBOROUGH GREEN PCC

The PCC has met four times since the last Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM), including one additional meeting called with short notice under the Church of England's Model Rule M25 (8).

The following decisions were made:

23 June 2021

The PCC accepted the payment of £66,225 as Parish Share for 2022.

The PCC agreed the Safeguarding Policy, the Policy statement on the recruitment of ex-offenders and the Procedure for Responding to a Safeguarding Concern or Allegation.

6 October 2021

The PCC nominated Linda Salsbury to be a Foundation Governor at Mappleborough Green Church of England Primary School.

16 February 2022

The PCC approved the appointment of a Family Link Worker.

The PCC accepted the accounts for the year ended 31 December 2021, subject to the final response from the Independent Examiner.

The PCC supported the creation of a Finance Task Group.

The PCC agreed that a Governance Task Team be set up to review current committee structures.

The PCC approved the appointment of Sue Johnson as Parish Safeguarding Officer.

29 March 2022 - Additional meeting

The PCC adopted the Hubb.Church website and church management plan, to start on 1 May 2022.

The PCC agreed the Terms and Conditions of Employment of the Family Link Worker, subject to a satisfactory conclusion regarding the provision of a pension scheme.

The average attendance over the four meetings was 70% of members.

David Lee PCC Secretary

SAFEGUARDING REPORT FOR 2021

Kim Harwood was appointed Parish Safeguarding Officer from June 2021 after Kay Middleton stepped down due to pressure of work. Kim stepped down in January 2022 due to pressure of work. Sue Johnson was appointed as PSO on 16th February 2022.

Safeguarding was an agenda item at each DCC and PCC meeting through the year, and our safeguarding policies and procedures has their annual PCC review. We followed Safer Recruitment practices for appointing the PSO, Bell Tower Captain, and Family Link Worker. This needs to be rolled out to all appointments. DBS checks were carried out as needed, and safeguarding training undertaken by those for whom it is required.

I believe that the PCC has complied with the duty under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 (duty to have regard to House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults).

Kate Mier

CHURCH ELECTORAL ROLL REPORT 2021-22

The number of names entered upon the Church Electoral Roll was slightly reduced from the previous years, but only by three which is good news for the Parish of Studley with Mappleborough Green churches. There were 8 added members for St Mary's Church, with 6 deletions and 5 deletions for Holy Ascension Church. As of 14th May 2022 the total number on the Electoral Roll is 144.

	Mappleborough Green	Studley	Total
Opening	57	90	147
Additions	0	8	8
Deletions	5	6	11
Total	52	92	144

Linda Salisbury

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

I think for me this last year has been approximately what one might call normal, whatever that is. Working my usual hours back at the vicarage.

There was all the usual publicity via Facebook, website, and email. Producing weekly newssheets, notices, and posters for, amongst others, Christmas, Messy church and Easter, with input from Kate and others.

There have also been service booklets to produce and PowerPoints to create. Databases and spreadsheets to manage and the website and calendar to maintain. Also there have been the usual funeral, wedding and baptism enquiries to process.

As I said "~~normal~~"

Judith McLelland

THE PARISH CENTRE

I was appointed Parish Centre Coordinator with effect from 1st September 2021 following the retirement of Tony Drake. Tony's service not only at the Parish Centre but also within the wider community over many years was immense and it was with great sadness that he passed away shortly after stepping down. I missed the opportunity of calling on his wise counsel and experience as I started my first months in the role.

The effects of Covid regulations over the past two years has had a serious impact on Parish Centre use, but fortunately by late summer 2021 and into the Autumn, many of our regular user groups including Brownies, Sunbeams and Rainbows had resumed their activities at the Centre with several interesting new groups beginning a relationship with us, particularly the Harlequins Theatre Group and Studley Quilters. We are indebted to Studley Quilters for the generous donation of 6 tables in return for their storage between their meeting sessions.

We have resurfaced and re-laid the outside patio slabs and acquired a new metal external storage unit to replace our aging wooden shed. This additional storage capability has been made possible due to the exciting development and redecoration of the Jaffray Room. The plans for using the Jaffray Room as a wellbeing, multipurpose counseling suite have enhanced the usability of the Parish Centre as a valuable

community facility. Our thanks must be placed on record to our Curate, Dan Corlett, who had the foresight to source a grant of £8435 from Warwickshire County Council Covid-19 Mental Wellbeing and Resilience Fund to enable this initiative to be achieved. Our new facilities will enable us to attract a wider range of users in the future, generate much needed income and benefit our community.

Since the last report we have successfully replaced all perimeter car park fencing following the fire incident in 2021. We have also successfully negotiated a working agreement with our neighbours in Old Vicarage Gardens, for them to use 5 spaces in our car park. The end of lockdown has encouraged a steady return and increase in childrens party bookings. (Practically every weekend for the past 8 months) We even hosted our first wedding reception event in December 2021 and in April 2022 held the first Maundy Supper since lockdown restrictions were lifted. Happily, Messy Church, Parish Communion and Compassion Groups have now returned to the hall and continue to thrive.

My thanks go to Phil Pattison for his support and encouragement as I get to grips with church administration procedures and ways. Thanks also to Mike Bond for his regular watch on lighting and heating systems, always a challenge in aging buildings, to Rob and Catherine our cleaners and caretakers and to Ian Nichol, our gardener, who still travels to Studley each month from his home in Bromyard to look after our gardens, including the car park. Finally, can I encourage anyone reading this report who would like to join a small team at the Parish Centre to help from time to time with opening and locking up the hall, to contact me? This would certainly help operations particularly during busy holiday times.

Mike Moffat

ANKCORN HOUSE REPORT 2021-22

Bookings for 2021-22 following the pandemic have increased slightly in the last few months, however costs remain higher than income. On-going promotion of the meeting room availability is hoped through social media and venue booking websites.

Linda Salisbury

STUDLEY CHURCHYARD

The monthly churchyard maintenance working parties have continued during the year on the first Saturday morning of each month and we were gradually able to return to more sociable working including a coffee break and chat. We have tried to adhere to the churchyard plan agreed by the DCC which designates areas left for wildflowers, areas mown closely and regularly and areas which contain a lot of overgrown graves that could only be cleared with a much, much bigger team. Paths have been maintained through the longer growth areas so that people can walk through the various areas of the churchyard. Wendy, with help, continues to maintain the garden of remembrance area. At the end of 2021 certain areas were strimmed very closely and yellow rattle seed set. We are still waiting to see if any has germinated this year.

Sadly Tony Drake who did lead these working parties wasn't able to attend many sessions in 2021 due to his health and he is greatly missed.

We live in hope that the number and variety of wildflowers, birds and other wild life will increase in our churchyard and that it will continue to be a place where people find peace, beauty, spiritual awareness and rest.

Hilary Volrath

BELLRINGERS ANNUAL REPORT 2022

September 2021 saw the return of bellringing in Studley after 18 months of the bells being silent due to the Covid 19 pandemic, the longest time since the second world war. The bellringers introduced safety precautions with the wearing of masks, hand sanitising between rope changes and keeping all windows and doors open while ringing. The ringing room and stairs were cleaned, swept and white safety lines repainted on the stairs. The bells have been rung every Sunday morning, Thursday evening practice and weddings when requested since our return.

During the 18 months of Covid lockdown restrictions, following all health and safety and Covid risk assessments, the bells were inspected by Simon Adams from Taylors Bell foundry in Loughborough. The

clappers were removed and taken to Taylors to be rebushed. The bells are now in good working order. Our thanks go Richard Spray for all the work that went into obtaining grants and overseeing the work carried out. Sadly, at the end of the lockdown period, three of our experienced ringers moved out of the area, one being our tower captain Rachel P. At our AGM, the bellringers thanked Rachel for her many years of commitment and contribution to the life of this church and community, not only as tower captain but playing the organ at many of our services, served on DCC and PCC and as a governor at Studley Church of England Junior School. The bellringers presented her with a leaving gift.

I was nominated as tower captain and went through the safer recruitment process required by the house of bishops before being voted in by the PCC.

All tower Safeguarding and Health and Safety documents have received their annual up date and a draft has been submitted to the appropriate officers for approval.

Since our return we have welcomed William Blizzard, new recruits Helen T and Maddy, the return of Natasha V and Stuart S who has recently moved to the area.

On the third Saturday of the month we have introduced a special practice to enhance our ringers method ringing. With the help of experienced ringers from other towers it has enabled William to ring his first quarter peal.

On remembrance Sunday we rang all eight bells half muffled, we were joined by Helen W one of our ringers who moved away to university.

In the run up to Christmas, the bellringers once again took to practicing the handbells. This was made extra special with Sheila V being able to join us, rekindling her childhood and a joy to see her taking part after her accident. We played at the church Carol service and outside at Field view care home and Four acres care home where we were met by overjoyed residents.

In January we opened the tower and welcomed the 2022 wedding couples to a morning's demonstration, trial by those who wished, followed by tea and cake and a chat with Kate. The bellringers and wedding couples thoroughly enjoyed themselves and I pray God will bless the couples throughout their married lives together.

Richard Spray and I went on a teach the teachers course run by the ART. The day was just the start of a 2 year course where you are assessed at different points of teaching a new recruit.

On Sunday 6th February, the bells were rung after the morning service to mark the occasion of the 70th Anniversary of our Queen, Elizabeth 2nd accession. We rung 70 rows of 'Queens'. This was documented on a special page set up on bellboard for all ringing events across the country to mark the occasion.

On the 12th March we entered a team to ring in the Coventry Guild striking competition at Radway.

This year Studley was one of the towers to host the Coventry Spires and the Worcester Young Ringers mini outings. Both groups are set up for ringers who are under the age of 18 years. We have two members of our band at Studley who attend these groups.

At the end of April, we had the pleasure of ringing the bells for the wedding of one of our bellringers Natasha to Glen. As a special request the bells were fired.

At the end of a year that has been a fruitful return to ringing, this has only been made possible because of the support and encouragement the band give each other, they are a true witness to Gods people.

Louise Grubb

Tower Captain

CHURCHES TOGETHER

This has been another year of 'what can we do together' given the limitations on meeting and eating together. As we all began to emerge from lockdowns the village celebrated with the Studley Festival at the beginning of July and Churches Together were there with a stall, activities for children, people to talk to and information about Christian Aid and Foodbank. The annual service of remembrance in November also went ahead, the service being led by members of the churches and was very well attended by the village. A change in arrangements for the Studley Christmas Lights switch on brought crowds to where the churches were leading the carol singing, preventing some singers even getting there! This year the cards delivered to every house in Studley about the Christmas services gave details of the services of all the churches - and

spread the delivery load. The last joint Christmas activity was carol singing outside Bumbles on the Saturday morning before Christmas which was enjoyed by singers and coffee drinkers alike. The new year sees the Week of Prayer for Christian unity when we held our first united service for some time. We didn't organize joint Lent groups this year but we started Lent with a united service in the Methodist church on Ash Wednesday and finished with a prayer walk of witness around Studley on Good Friday.

Unfortunately due to the Baptist and Roman Catholic churches struggling with leadership and congregations, the churches together committee has been limited to Methodists and Anglicans. We have been boosted by the new Methodist group minister, Steve Levett, and their new Community and family worker, Anne Batchelor, who have brought fresh ideas to the group. Please pray that the other churches will grow and be represented at future united activities.

Hilary Volrath

MESSY CHURCH

Since last May we have had varied success with attendance. The most disappointing was our Christingle service which was very sadly only attended by 3 families. We put this down to several factors which should be considered this year - the brownies were all at the pantomime, we held it in church so families without transport may have been less inclined to make the walk home in the dark afterwards, and many children had made christingles at school. However, other sessions have been very well attended, and numbers are increasing. We decided to move the date from the first Sunday of the month to the second, thereby avoiding some of the school holidays. In February we introduced a corner for babies and toddlers, with mats and a few toys. We are now going to re-introduce the buffet tea, which hasn't been done since before the pandemic. We are a very good team of creative people who can be relied upon to come up with wonderful activities, ideas and enthusiasm, though we are always on the look out for more!

Ann Bond

ENVIRONMENT GROUP

During the year, Oldberrow Church achieved its Bronze Eco Church accreditation, with Studley and Mappleborough Green now very close to gaining theirs.

An idea that began within the Benefice Eco Group, to start an environmental festival, has gained support from many other groups in and around Studley. Bill Acres kindly agreed to chair a team with representation from Studley in Business, Studley in Bloom and our local County Councillor, Justin Kerridge. From this group, Environmentally Studley was born (www.enjoyablistudley.co.uk/environmentally-studley). The churches will be contributing around 11 events during the fortnight 18th June to 2nd July. Local residents and businesses are encouraged to make eco pledges, and many other organisations are hosting events and activities.

Dan Corlett

ARDEN FOODBANK

The foodbank continues to help people in the local community who are struggling to find money for food. Although not as busy as during the height of the pandemic we have been much busier than in 2019. Over the financial year 21/22 we fulfilled 317 vouchers, providing food for 449 adults and 259 children over the two centres of Studley and Alcester. During the year we were able to let clients back into the hall to collect their food, return to doing packing for a voucher not pre-packs and let volunteers over 70 years old help again at the sessions (not that some of us stopped working in the background). Some of our volunteers left as they returned to work from furlough which left us a bit short on numbers but one plea in church for volunteers and we had several new helpers. Many thanks to all our volunteers, long serving and new. Thanks to Erica who not only stepped in during the pandemic but was dropped into a session leader role. With churches opening up again Erica has stepped down again. We are really grateful for all the work she did at a very difficult time. The incredible donations of both food and money during 2020/21 has kept stock levels high for a long time but now we are having to top up on certain items. We still have pasta and baked bean mountains, as do all foodbanks in the area, and have been really helped by a local firm who is donating boxes of fruit juice every month.

We again made up bags of Christmas food for families in 10 local primary schools. Within 2 days we assembled food, packed 167 parcels and delivered them to the schools; a great team effort. With the cost of living crisis we are expecting to be really busy again this year, but the rush hasn't happened yet. If you know anyone who is struggling financially do see if we can help them.

Hilary Volrath

COMPASSION

Many thanks to Alan Greathead, for his contribution to the Group, he will no longer be attending the meetings on a regular basis. We are pleased that Helen Turney and Irene Freeman have volunteered to join the Team.

During the times when the group could not meet in person, we initiated a phone rota contacting people on a weekly basis by a Team member. These calls have been much appreciated by all.

We are aware that new friendships have been made by people who have met at the Monday meetings and these have helped during the difficult last year.

The Compassion group resumed briefly in October 2021, but due to the COVID restrictions we sadly had to postpone the group until the Spring.

We were very happy to welcome the group back during March 2022. The meetings are being very well attended and all feel blessed by the warmth and comfort the meetings give to the group and team members.

Helen Quigley

FRIENDSHIP GROUP

Since 16th March 2020 the corona virus 19 cancelled all socialising, so our first outing which was booked for 27th March 2020 to The Golden Goose had to be cancelled.

During this time, I have kept in touch with the group, with phone calls. At one time I thought that this group may not be able to meet up again, and prayed for the situation thinking what else could be done for the lonely and bereaved people, in and around our community. The Compassion group started up again in March 2022.

When I received the e-mail from Kate asking everyone for their reports for the A.G.M as usual. - against The Friendship Group it said would like to write a "Farewell report". I realised felt very upset that the group was ending, as during the last 18 months I had so missed organising and meeting up with everyone, as had all the members who enjoyed the monthly outings. Then on 25th April I received a phone call from a lady who had lost her husband during the pandemic, enquiring about The Friendship Group. She said that she had been to the Compassion Group the week before and they were telling her the different things of what goes on. She thought that a meal with everyone, once a month would be lovely.

I did tell her that unfortunately I wasn't sure if this group would start up again. She said it seems such a shame as everyone at compassion were saying how much they enjoyed the group. I did take her name and number and said I would be in touch. Then on the same day I also received 2 enquiries from drivers asking when the group would be starting up again. I felt this was the answer to my prayers – The Friendship Group will start up again. In June 2022 to give me time to organise an outing.

Unfortunately, during the pandemic 6 of our dear members died. But will remember happy times we had together with fondness and love.

I have been in touch with all my volunteer drivers, and they are looking forward to picking passengers up again. Which without them, this mission of outreach would not be possible.

God Bless

Margaret Lee

MOSAIC

Mosaic kept meeting successfully via zoom up until 2022. When we tried to meet at Ankcorn House there were so few that it was decided to stop meeting.

There has been some talk about meeting in someone's home as previously.

As a group of people we enjoyed meeting to discuss the subjects and also genuinely cared about each other. Perhaps the less homely setting and the dark nights put people off coming.

Zoom was very good for most people who could use the forum but it lacked the subtleties for social discourse.

The pictures selected as start points and the subsequent literature and poems were starting to be useful for content for church activities.

The group included some who would not ordinarily come to our church services.

We learned from each other and from the broad range of christ centred material discussed.

Guy Allen

2ND STUDLEY (ST. MARY'S) RAINBOWS AND BROWNIES

Both units are now fully back up and running weekly from the Parish centre with over the recommended number of girls because of demand. Both units are still immensely popular but lack adult leaders, which has always been an issue. There is a guide unit in Studley that meets at the Methodist church, but we no longer have a church aided guide unit (10-14yr olds) as there were no leaders to take over when it closed. It is a real shame as we lose a lot of girls because of this.

Both units continue to have action packed meetings , recently we had a joint ramble from Sambourne to the Throckmorton arms to commemorate Thinking Day with over 40 girls in attendance.

The Rainbows unit has taken to having their Promise Ceremony at the church, it gave us more space when covid restrictions were difficult but we found it made the evening so special for the whole family that we will continue to do this when we can, which is just once a term.

Brownies have been able to utilise the church too and held their Carol Service there, which was extremely well attended.

Brownies were also able to return to the theatre for their annual pantomime trip.

Both units have more events, days out, charity fundraising, community events and environmental ventures they are planning as units and as part of the wider Studley Community in the coming months.

We would like to take the opportunity to thank the church for being so accommodating to our needs at the Parish Centre and when we want to commandeer the church itself.

Pamela Winfield

leader in charge of Rainbows and District Commissioner for Studley

MAPPLEBOROUGH GREEN CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

The second half of the summer term saw some easing of Covid Lockdown measures. Classes remained separate and Collective Worship took place online or through video link within the separate classrooms. The church volunteers did not return to school and Governors meetings remained online through Zoom. On 20 July the Year 6 leavers attended the church for a Leavers' service. They were each given copies of Charlie Makesy's book, The Boy, the Mole, The Fox and the Horse from the church. Parents were invited and many attended. The children appreciated this opportunity to maintain one of the traditions of the school through this difficult time of Covid restrictions.

On September 16, parents of the new Reception children were invited to a welcome breakfast held in a marquee in the school grounds. A few parents attended and enjoyed chatting about the church. Letters of welcome with church information were sent to all parents. On 29 September, a Harvest service was held outside in the school grounds. This was led by the Lighting the Candle group and attended by Kate and Jennie and Alan Jarmy.

In November, Class 3 spent a morning at the church with Dan Corlett learning about Baptism including enacting the service at the font.

In December, we were very pleased to welcome Linda Salisbury as a Foundation Governor following Diocesan approval of her proposal by the PCC.

A Christmas Carol service had been planned to take place in the church but a further outbreak of a new strain of Covid caused a change of arrangements and a limited service was held in the school marquee.

Covid advice and regulations have interrupted our usual programmes of Collective Worship and volunteering within the school throughout much of this year. The school has remained open although the majority of staff and a large proportion of children have suffered from the condition and have needed to remain at home for periods of time. Our volunteers have attended within school as and when they have individually felt comfortable in doing so.

Until March 2022 school classes remained separated from one another and Collective Worship was led by staff within classrooms, sometimes via video-link. Kate, Dan and Keith Johnson continued to offer Collective Worship on Wednesdays via Zoom or video link. In early March, all assemblies returned to being held in the school hall and the church collective worship returned there.

Our church volunteers, Diane, Linda, Alan J and Jennie have returned to helping within the classroom and in various activities supporting teachers and the school.

Lighting the Candle has continued on Wednesday lunchtimes and the children attending have been guided through leading Collective Worship.

On 16th March the school was inspected by Ofsted, having been informed of the inspection just one day in advance. The 3 Foundation Governors, Dan, Linda and Jennie, attended a meeting with the inspectors and were pleased to learn that the school was well regarded and rated as a good school. "Pupils are happy at this small, friendly school. They love learning and try hard to do their best. They say teachers make learning fun" The Church/School Group has continued to meet once a term to plan church-school events and co-operation, including the promotion and facilitation of the Christian ethic within the school.

On 7 April, the whole school attended an Easter service at the church. This service had been prepared and was impressively well presented by Class 3 (Years 3 and 4) and all parents were invited. It was really pleasing to see the whole school back in church with a good number of parents.

The summer term is now underway and a number of church-school activities are being planned as we hope for a term uninterrupted by further illness.

Jennie Jarmy

STUDLEY ST MARY'S CE ACADEMY

This has been another tough year for the school. The after effects of lockdowns are still being felt and there are gaps in learning in some areas. A long-term absence for a teacher has hit the other staff hard. New guidance to all schools means that major revisions of the curriculum are necessary, especially with Ofsted expected before the end of 2022.

Nevertheless, hard work and determination from the Headteacher and her staff, as well as the pupils, mean that significant progress is being made. The recent SATs went smoothly and most classes are making progress. The school is a calm and purposeful place in which to learn.

Church members continue to lead assemblies and support the school in other ways. Please ask if you feel you would like to help in some way as we seek to strengthen the links between church and school. Our new Family Link Worker will play a vital role in this as we move forward. In particular, we are short of foundation governors, so if you could help here, please have a word with me or Kate.

Keith Johnson

DEANERY SYNOD

I was appointed Deanery Synod Representative for Mappleborough Green in October 2020, which was just as we were emerging from the pandemic and the opportunity to have discussions with other members of the Synod was almost impossible; as the meetings were held via Zoom online. Therefore my initial six months prior to last year's APCM was limited; and my knowledge of the workings of this group only historical through Alan Greathead, my predecessor.

The Coventry Diocese states the purpose of the Deanery Synod is :

to bring together the views of the parishes of the deanery on common problems

to consider matters concerning the Church of England and to make provision for such matters in relation to their deanery

to consider the business of the Diocesan Synod and particularly any matters referred to that synod by the General Synod

Which I am sure it does, however I have found these last twelve months, by attending the bi-monthly meetings also gives our Parish an opportunity to learn from other churches; positive as well as negative, on any issues and also gain an insight into the projects and leadership within the Diocese.

[May 2021] A Deanery Plan commenced development. This was a new process for us. Each deanery in the Diocese was involved in creating their own plan. The plan when completed would lay out our priorities for mission and pastoral care within our deanery. One part of this would be to look at how Benefices utilise their resources most effectively for mission e.g. youth mission, supporting rural parishes to deal with potential issues and Eco church.

The Speaker in attendance The Venerable Sue Field, Archdeacon Pastor spoke on clergy's well-being; a subject the General Synod were investigating. This Clergy Covenant of Well-being was adopted by the Diocese of Coventry, and the Synod members were requested to discuss this subject further with PCC members. The study was looking at how we could all help and support clergy better. It was felt that a duty of care by everyone should be extended to those who undertook this ministry for us and lead us in faith. It was noted that the PCC/Churchwardens ought to have a greater sense of responsibility for those who administer to us, offering a sensitive, caring and supportive role to those who the Lord had put in place to administer to us.

[July 2021] The issue churches face with banking of coins raised by Andrea Sowton from Arden Marches Group was discussed. Unfortunately, whilst a concern it was not clear what could be done about this banking issue. The introduction of the Living in Love and Faith Course to the Deanery commenced, and would look at the way the Church approached issues associated with gender, identity and sexuality. The plan was to enable dioceses, deaneries and local church communities to explore the resources together and from 2022 move forward in decision-making and if necessary, synodical processes.

[November 2021] The Speaker, Revd Craig Grocock, Diocesan Spiritual Advisor presented a discussion session on "What is Spirituality and how can we deepen our prayer life?" This highlighted the opportunities from the Diocese available to everyone wishing to explore spiritual direction alongside others.

[February 2022] The most recent meeting was hosted by Holy Ascension Church, Mappleborough Green offering hospitality from its new servery. The Deanery Plan was presented and had now been sent to the Bishops for implementation.

So having started this annual report with my induction to this role within the PCC as Deanery Synod Representative (others may join me if they wish, as we have a couple of vacancies) I conclude it by advising; I have just been appointed to the role of Secretary for Alcester Deanery Synod, and will be actively involved with the Area Dean (Revd. Kate Mier) coordinating speakers and venues for future Synod meetings. So the journey continues!

Linda Salisbury