

The Parish Church of St James,
Swimbridge

ANNUAL REPORT



ANNUAL PARISH CHURCH MEETING

Sunday 7th April 2019

7.00pm St JAMES CHURCH

Introduction

St James, Swimbridge forms part of the Four Ways Mission Community with the Church of the Holy Name, Gunn, St Peter, West Buckland and St. Pauls, Landkey and St Michael East Buckland It is organised within Shirwell Deanery in the Diocese of Exeter.

The Parochial Church Council of St James, Swimbridge is a Charity, excepted from registration with the Charity Commissioners. It is required by the Parochial Church Council (Powers) Measure 1966 to co-operate with the incumbent, Revd. Shaun O'Rourke, in the promotion in the Parish of the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.

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NOTICE OF THE ANNUAL VESTRY MEETING OF ST JAMES' PCC SWIMBRIDGE

**Sunday 7th April 2019 at 7.00pm in Church
AGENDA**

Election of Churchwardens
Election of Deputy Churchwardens

**NOTICE OF THE ANNUAL MEETING, ST. JAMES' PCC, SWIMBRIDGE
7th April 2019
to follow vestry meeting in church**

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the Annual Meeting 4th April 2018
3. Matters Arising
4. Annual Report and Financial Statement
5. Election of PCC Members
6. Election of Sides Persons (Any additional volunteers, then propose and elect en-bloc)
7. Election of Examiner
8. Election of Members for the Deanery Synod
9. Service times
10. Any Other Business
11. Meeting closes with a Prayer

**NOTICE OF A MEETING OF ST JAMES' PCC, SWIMBRIDGE
FOLLOWING THE ANNUAL MEETING**

1. Minutes of the Previous Annual Meeting for the Election of Officers
2. Election of PCC Officers:
Election of Treasurer
Election of Secretary
Appointment of Standing Committee
3. Arrangement of dates for meetings for the following year
4. Any other Business

ST JAMES' CHURCH SWIMBRIDGE.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

Vestry Meeting Monday 9th April 2018 at 7.00pm

Attended by 15 members of the electoral role and parishioners.

The meeting opened with a prayer.

It was agreed that David Netherway would prepare the minutes of the meeting.

Election of Church Wardens

Matt Bluge was proposed by J Patton and seconded by H Dallyn and unanimously re-elected with thanks from the those present. There were no other nominations. Matt thanks all those who had helped him during the year but said it really was a two-person task.

Election of deputy Church Wardens

Arnold Bradbury was nominated by W Crosbie-Dawson and seconded by J Crosbie-Dawson . With thanks for his work in the past year Arnold Bradbury was re-elected. In his absence it was assumed that B Hawkins wished to remain as a deputy warden at Gunn subject to his agreement.

The meeting closed at 7.15pm

ST JAMES' CHURCH SWIMBRIDGE.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

Annual Parish Church Meeting Monday 9th April 2018 at 7.15pm

- 1 Attended by 15 members of the electoral roll and parishioners with apologies from Mike Clift, Tess Bateman, Ruth Ellis, Mo Hayward, Richard Fardon and Bryan Hawkins.
- 2 Minutes of the Annual Meeting held on 4th April 2017 were approved and signed by Rev Shaun O'Rourke.
- 3 Matters arising: none.
- 4 Annual Report and Financial Statement and safeguarding policy

The report had been circulated prior to the meeting by e-mail with printed copies available to those without e-mail and with copies in church. It had been prepared by David Netherway and printed at the vicarage.

The report was welcomed by Rev Shaun O'Rourke and agreed by the meeting, it being noted that there were 45 on the electoral roll: this was reduced from the previous year. To be further circulated and included on the website. The contributors were thanked for their reports. He thanked all those who had contributed to our successes last year. Readers, wardens, PCC Members, helpers and fundraisers and all who helped in the background to keep our church alive. Special thanks were due to J Patton for her exceptional work in getting our accounts into a good form and managing them well.

A letter of thanks had been received from Bishop Robert for paying all of our Common Fund last year. Nearly £17,000.

It was proposed by M Fardon and seconded by A Bradbury and agreed unanimously that the accounts be accepted.

Other matters from the report discussed:

Gunn. A Bradbury mentioned the photo of the chapel with a bell tower provided by Dr Attock who had now vacated the rented garage.

Magazine. Endorsed as a good example of a parish magazine with a wide range of views expressed.

Organ, choir and bells. Many thanks due again to J Patton. It was nice to hear the bells rung again. Thanks to C.Ley.

Streamside Garden. Rev S O'Rourke paid tribute to the wonderful community asset and those who looked after it. D Netherway reported that St James had been entered in the Devon's Best Churchyard competition.

Foodbank: Thanks to our contributors many needy families have been helped.

Green Team. Have kept the village and church environment looking tidy.

School: Doing remarkably well. Just achieved Outstanding Church Ofsted status. New partnership with Grosvenor Church and improved links with school /church underway.

Preschool: As well as a longstanding mission by St James their rent had contributed £1200 to our church.

Friends of St James.: Thanks, due to M Haworth -Booth and the committee. Now 59 members. £4000 given to St James in the past year as well as meeting the costs of the clock maintenance contract and website and some other expenses. Their work in leading the Old School Room project and fundraising was appreciated.

5 Election of PCC members. M Sumner and M Meade retired with thanks from all for their contribution over their years of service. V Knight was reelected to the PCC.

6 Election of sides persons. Those currently carrying out these duties were re-elected en-bloc.

7 Election of Examiner It was agreed that we reappoint Sally-Ann Balment as examiner for the accounts.

8 Deanery Synod representatives were confirmed as Mike and Mo Clift.

Any Other Business

It was agreed future PCC meetings would start at 7.00pm. It was stated by Rev S O'Rourke that all opinions were to be valued at PCC meeting and this was part of our working together for St James.

Post Office. It was agreed that the Post Office should be hosted by St James now that the village post office has closed. This was a community contribution by the church who would make no charge for this and would aim to incorporate a refreshment and social meeting element into the PO visits.

It was agreed that the next Annual Report should be printed or available with larger type.

The meeting closed at 8.10pm

ST JAMES' CHURCH SWIMBRIDGE.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

PCC Meeting Monday 9th April 2018 at 8.15pm

Members present: Rev Shaun O'Rourke, David Netherway, Matt Bluge, Janet Patton, Arnold Bradbury, Mary Fardon. C James, M Sumner ,M Clift. The others at the previous meetings remained in attendance.

Appointment of PCC Officers:

Rev Shaun O'Rourke appealed for volunteers to fill the key positions.

Treasurer: J Patton. Proposed M Meade seconded by V Knight and elected.

Secretary: D Netherway had indicated he wished to relinquish the post he had held temporarily for the previous couple of years. No volunteer was found to take up this work. It was suggested a paid position may need to be considered

Electoral Roll Officer; Mary Fardon agreed to continue in this role.

Standing committee: Rev Shaun O'Rourke, Treasurer, Secretary and Wardens.

Date for next meeting Monday 30th April at 7.00 pm Old School Room

Meeting closed with a prayer at 8.15 pm

Four Ways Mission Community Report

Our mission community has gone through another year and I am pleased to bring to you the annual report. We have had a wonderful year and as a mission community we have grown and developed. We have two people training for ministry with the dioceses which is a wonderful showing of the Holy Spirit in our midst and I hope that this continues to grow in all our churches. Churches throughout the Anglican tradition all face the problem of how to grow in numbers but also in mission and service to our communities. There are no easy answers to this question. However, we must always look to the future and understand that God is with us and we will not fail. We have to have faith that we can accomplish God's will wherever we are.

I would like to start with thanking all those who work tirelessly to make our churches work, and my first thanks goes out to our wardens: without their dedication, counsel and hard work our churches would not be the places they are today.

Our PCCs work to meet all the needs and changes to legislation that come our way and provide a safe and nurturing environment in which to worship. However, their work goes way beyond that and I thank each and every one of them. Without them and all they do we would not have the worship spaces we enjoy today.

I must also mention our treasurers who keep us in financial stability, I believe they have one of the most demanding jobs finding and resourcing all our projects alongside those who raise grants and giving, it seems that we always need more money to do ever more work in our parish churches.

A huge thank you to those who make our services come to life, our organists, choirs and worship groups: without you our worship would be less. A hymn can lift the soul and spirit.

To our meters-and-greeters to our sides-persons, to our servers, to our lesson readers and those who prepare our fellowship – thank you. You are the ones who bolster our worship and create a wonderful ministry.

To our Readers and those who are training for ministry, to see God working through you and seeing your ministries grow with ever greater grace, I thank you for making my ministry worthwhile. For it is in our ministry growth we know that the spirit is with us and that brings me joy.

And most of all for all who come and worship in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, who come as brother and sister to worship God, you are the life blood that runs through our church, your generosity of giving in all that you do financially, and supportively is the greatest joy of all. For we are all ministers together caring and sharing in our love of God and one another.

And so, I warmly offer before you the work and dedication of all who work for the kingdom of God and ask that you receive our annual report with joy.

With God's blessing and joy in our future together.

Revd Shaun O'Rourke.

Accounts and Treasurer's Report

The accounts as approved at the PCC Meeting on 4th March are set out below and it is hoped give a clear picture of our present financial position. Last year we were able to meet our Parish Share common fund obligation to the Diocese in full. Gift Aid repayment from HMRC is a significant help towards funds and demonstrates the need to make full use of donations and collections received by the church.

Thanks are due to everyone for their help in organising and supporting fund-raising events throughout the year.

St James Church, Swimbridge with the Holy Name, Gunn
Financial Statement for the year ended 31 December 2018

RECEIPTS	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	PAYMENTS	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
Voluntary receipts							
Envelopes	1908-40		1908-40	Common Fund	16295-00		16295-00
SO,FPI	1464-00		1464-00	Insurance Gunn	583-20		
				" St. James	3168-05		3751-25
Donations	3206-00		3206-00	Clergy expenses	1691-52		1691-52
Parish Giving Scheme	914-58		914-58	Altar requisites	186-53		186-53
Loose plate				Office expenses	285-92		285-92
St. James	2036-93	277-80	2314-73	Organ Tuner	130-00		130-00
Gunn	1181-49		1181-49	Examiner	150-00		150-00
Wall Safes	330-02		330-02	Honoraria	332-50		332-50
Smile(teapot)		122-06	122-06	Annual Inspections:			
Fund Raising:				Fire Protection	82-20		82.20
Coffee mornings	1492-27		1492-27	Gas boiler repair	84-00		84-00
Craft fair/teas	352-00		352-00	Lightening conductor	54-00		54-00
Concert(anchors)	127-92		127-92	Annual subscriptions			
Bell Ringing competition	445-60		445-60	RSCMusic	110-00		110-00
Plant sale	157-19		157-19	Deanery fee	50-89		50-89
Historic churches cycle ride	27-50		27-50	Green bin (churchyard)	36-00		36-00
Church Activities:				Repairs (electrics see fabric&lightingfund)			
Weddings & funerals/stones	3443-43		3443-43	Charity donations:			
certificate/banns	77-50		77-50	ND.&Children Hospice (2017)	325-00		325-00
Grants:				Farmers C.Network		76-50	76-50
Parish Council				Smile (teapot)		112-65	112-65
Churchyard a/c (400-00)				British Legion 223-30			
Gold Star				CLIC Sargent 182-35			
Churchyard a/c (460)				Macmillan 182-35			
Property:				Utilities:			
Old schoolroom	1218-00		1218-00	BGas Church heating	886-90		886-90
donations/crockery	90-00		90-00	EDF " electrics+Gunn	437-56		437-56
Gunn garage	600-00		600-00	Old Schoolroom:			
Investments:				Electrics	425-72		425-72
CBF dividends	1475-99		1475-99	Water/sewerage	135-76		135-76
CBF(parish trust)	224-47		224-47				
Gift Aid repayment	1873-48		1873-48				
Miscellaneous from 2017 banked in 2018							
Gunn preschool	500-00						
	436-00		936-00				
Sub-totals	23582-77	399-86	23982-63	Subtotals	25450-75	189-15	25639-90
1/1/2018 balance at bank	7419-12	1423-83	8842-95	31/12/2018 balance at bank	5761-85	1423-83	7185-68
TOTALS	31001-89	1823-69	32825-58	TOTALS	31212-60	1612-98	32825-58

Statement of Assets and Liabilities as at 31st December 2018

Account	Balance 1/1/2018	Receipts including restricted	Payments including restricted	Balance 31/12/2018
Lloyds PCC a/c	8842-95	23982-63	25639-90	7185-68
Organ Fund	1000-00			1000-00
Fabric/lighting	8203-60		4739-49	3464-11
Bell Fund	1263-10	499-36		1762-46
Churchyard fund	1547-65	860-00	125-00	2282-65
Sub-totals	20857-30	25341-99	30504.39	15694-90
		Investments		
Account	at 1/1/2018	Dividends received	as at 31/12/2018	Total 15694-90
CBF investment	34226-75	1134-67	33632-17	
CBF interest	8679-25	341-32	8272-23	
CBFParishtrust	6770-89	224-47	6653-27	
Totals	49676-89	1700-46	48557-67	64252-57

Notes to accounts

Income: some totals include 2017 items which were received late. The larger items are shown under miscellaneous. The Gold Star (Christmas 2018) £460-00 and the parish council grant i.e. monies for specific purpose have been deposited in the appropriate a/c. Although mentioned in the financial statement are not part of those totals.

Payments: again some totals include 2017 items i.e. cheques which had not been cashed by recipients. Donations to charity - some are detailed on the financial statement, for clarity, but not included in the column totals as they had not been debited from the bank a/c at 31st December 2018.

The Parish Share common fund for 2018 was paid in full.

**Independent examiner's report
to the PCC of St James Church, Swimbridge (with the Holy Chapel at Gunn)
For the year ended 31st December 2018**

The report on the financial statements of the PCC for the year ended 31st December 2018, which are set out on the attached pages, is in respect of an examination carried out in accordance with section 145 of the Charities Act 2011.

Respective responsibilities of PCC and examiner

As Members of the PCC you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. You consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- to follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act; and
- state whether any particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission. The examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the PCC and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you the PCC concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the accounts.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- (1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act have not been met; or
- (2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed *S.A. Balment*

28/2/2019

Mrs Sally-Ann Balment, ACCA

Stoodleigh Barton
Brayford
Barnstaple
Devon
EX32 7PN

The financial statements of the P.C.C. has been prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006, using the receipts and payments basis.

The following are recognised but not valued in the statement of assets and liabilities.

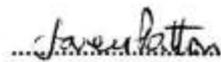
Fixed Assets:

Movable church furnishings held by the Churchwardens on special trust for the P.C.C. and which require a faculty for disposal.

The attached notes form part of the financial statement for St. James Church, Swimbridge with the Holy Name, Gunn, for the year ended 31st December 2018.

Approved by the P.C.C. ^{4th March 2019} 2019 and signed on their behalf by

.....Revd. S. O' Rourke (P.C.C. chairman)

.....Mrs. J. Patton (P.C.C. treasurer)

Electoral Roll

The Electoral Roll of St James the Apostle, Swimbridge together with The Holy Name, Gunn, was brought in on February 11th 2019.

Our Electoral Roll has been examined and the number reduced from 41 to 35. This will assist in the adjustment of the Common Share that is paid by our two churches.

We have been very sad to lose Bernie Langmead who died last autumn.

This is the year when all members must re-register on the Roll in the 6 year cycle of the Diocese. Would each member please ensure he/she has received the form, signed and returned to Mary Fardon.

The PCC appreciate all the support each member gives in such a variety of ways.

Mary Fardon Electoral Roll Officer

Church Warden's Report

Another eventful year that has had the usual ups and downs that one would expect with any community, but this year has seen some good reasons for optimism to balance out our diminishing congregation size.

Thanks to Janet Patton for taking on the extra job of treasurer on top of her other heavy commitments to St James Church. After several years of neglect and minimal management of our resources, Janet has unscrambled what seemed like a financial Rubik's Cube into a masterful and understandable set of accounts to those that comprehend such matters, and I have to admit I don't.

What I do understand is that to have accomplished this turnabout has taken an enormous amount of time, frustration and dedication to have reached this point and we owe her a great deal of gratitude on just that one aspect of her many sung and unsung contributions to our church. Thank you!

Our church has a long history of bellringing and this year our new Bell Captain Christine Ley has managed to dramatically revive and make popular its fortunes in the village and even encouraged new blood to take it up. This also puts us back on the map on what has been a national drive to revive the art. I understand that already at least one trophy has been achieved. Well done, right down to the coffee maker!

Incidentally with the help of our Archdeacon we have managed to reduce our annual contribution to Exeter's Common Fund, but on reflection we still have a mountain to climb, but then, we are a team.

Another success underlying the church's integration into village life was the weekly installation of a post office on Tuesday afternoons which is now running smoothly after a few teething problems. Additionally, it is becoming a good social venue to meet up for a chat over a hot drink and biscuits, once again full credit to that same dedicated coffee maker who goes several extra miles.

It is in the same sense of attempting to integrate church and village and to encourage non-churchgoers to value our contribution and also to be proud of their village heritage that the Streamside Garden plays its part. A church-created asset shared with the community and one where school children, the village Green Team and others have all helped keep it looking a credit to St James and the village. The churchyard and its volunteer team surely deserve a mention for their hours of work on this important community asset.

David Netherway, being a keen cyclist, put a lot of effort into getting Swimbridge on the map with the community effort here in helping organise our village response to the Tour of Britain cycle race. The Jack Russell hill-top image for the helicopter shots linked to our church and terrier heritage and the parade of bikes along the churchyard wall ensured we were very much part of the celebration. Whilst it was good to see the Jack Russell image on national TV, it was a pity we were robbed of TV footage

of the crowds and support there was right through the village. However, this was captured on the September page of the Friends calendar.

The Friends of St James have their own report here, but the impact of their activities upon the fortune of this church is colossal to our survival, in their vision of upgrading the Old School Room and an accessible church toilet and covering ambitious costs by grants, sponsorship and donations, along with many other repair and maintenance jobs beside.

I also acknowledge the brilliant speakers at the Swimbridge Q&AS organised by the Friends, who all helped raise funds in the Old School Room over the past few years, the three new sign boards, and now the replacement chairs and soon to be new carpet for the Old School Room, paying for the clock maintenance contract, asbestos removal work, the list seems endless as to what can be achieved when on the face of it finances are already in stress mode. Thank goodness for Mark Haworth-Booth and his expert team.

I don't wish to make this report any longer than it need be so I shall close by thanking everyone who belongs to our congregation for their support and contributions in the many ways they do and which often means dipping into your pockets when we all have our own needs and priorities. Thanks to all those who have what they term as ministries, in this church and for all the help they give me personally in easing my contribution as your churchwarden.

To dear Janet Patton our organist and the choir ladies with whom I share good companionship and derive great musical pleasure, to the flower ladies, lesson readers, servers, prayer readers, churchyard strimmers, the procurer of oranges, all the coffee morning donors, knitter and plant producers, jam and cake cooks: thank you!

We all miss Chris James and wish him a speedy and meaningful recovery, also our gratitude for the timely appointment of David Rushworth who is a very welcome addition to the fold. To Shaun and Kerry, the latter is now adopted choir mascot, "Well done Chuck". Thanks for your leadership Shaun and to you both for our wedding of the year.

Now I know that some very worthy names have not been individually mentioned, but please forgive, no slight intended in my final efforts to prise my finger from this keyboard.

Maciej (Matt) Bluge Churchwarden

Swimbridge Ringers

I've been asked to write a piece about Swimbridge Ringers.

Last February 2018. We started teaching learners at St James. The response has been very heart-warming.

On the very first night we were welcomed with hot drinks, biscuits and cakes. Janet was there waiting with a smile.

Ever since the group has been growing. Our learners are at various stages as they have started at different times.

We are very lucky, as we have a dedicated group of ringers who come from all over to help teach. So, the learners have a great standard of ringers helping and ringing with them.

The learner's abilities range from rising in full 6 top ringing and changing and lowering all in place to a young lady doing her Duke of Edinburgh award who started 2 weeks ago and can rise her bell to stay on her own, not setting yet.

There are ten learners so far, with ages from 8 up to 70.



We have now tidied and repainted the tower and are waiting for new ropes. The learners are so enthusiastic, it's a pleasure to go there and teach.

Without the people who help every week it would not be such a big success. Thank you to you all.

I think since we have started teaching at Swimbridge we have rung for many services, which we know is appreciated.

Looking forward to more learners in 2019.

We had the bells, frame, stays and all workings checked last January 2018 prior to starting teaching and ringing again at Swimbridge. We did any works needed, which included replacing stays.

The tower was checked by James Clark jclarke1947@btinternet.com

James inspects on behalf of the Devon Bell Restoration Fund, as well as the Guild of Ringers and the Devon Association of Ringers.

The bells and workings to do with the bells are checked each month to the best of our ability.

Chris Ley Captain and Past president of the Devon Association of Ringers

Streamside Garden

This special part of the churchyard continues to be a real asset to the village and an example of our church's outreach to our community.

In the past year it has been enjoyed by the Pre-school most term days, been a great resource for our church school, been the venue for a spring plant sale as well as being enjoyed by so many of all ages from our village and visitors alike.

Volunteers continue to look after the garden throughout the year. This included a group of adults and children who re-gilded the lettering on the poem stones.

David Netherway

PCC

The PCC have met every two months. The meetings have been positive and focus on trying to ensure our church continues to be at the heart of our community and an example of Christian life. This cannot be sustained without funds to pay our share of the Diocesan expenses and meet our church running costs, so this has been high on each agenda. However, with the huge effort of our Treasurer, Janet we now have a much better control of the finances and confidence in their management for which the PCC are most grateful. This should enable them to give more time to developing our mission in the community.

During the year Mary Sumner and Mo Hayward retired from the PCC after many years of loyal service. Their places are missed, and new members would be welcomed to add to the numbers. In

particular a proper secretary is needed as I am really only standing in having last year resigned the position. Maybe you could fill that role.

David Netherway

The church of the Holy Name, Gunn

This daughter Church of St James Church, Swimbridge, was founded by the Reverend John (Jack) Russell in 1873 and originally the Chapel was named the "Chapel of Ease". It can accommodate some 50 people with a further 30 when the extension is opened up to the main body of the Church.

The Church fabric is in a fairly good state, but as with all old buildings needs constant attention. The two garage roofs have been repaired, the back pitch stripped, felted, battened, slated, the front repaired and a new ridge put on. The previous owner of Gunn/Church Cottage covered the cost of this work on the basis that he had a full repairing lease obligation. One of the garage doors has also had the spring mechanism replaced on one side and both are now fully operational.

A new lease is in the process of being prepared by the Diocese in order to let the garages to the new owners of Gunn/Church Cottage. Initially it is their intention to use the property as a holiday let until such time as they decide what they are finally going to do.

We are extremely fortunate in Gunn in that there is a very good team spirit within the small local community, and most are quite happy to help out running the Church. Admittedly we only have one service a month apart from Festival Services. Nevertheless, attendance at all times remains very high considering the size of the community. Just a pity up to now we have not been able to attract some new younger members that have recently moved into the community, to join us at Church.

Towards the end of April, the Mission Community Service for the Group was held at The Holy Name Church, when the sermon was preached by the Archdeacon of Barnstaple The Venerable Doctor Mark Butchers. We are also most grateful to him for stepping in at the last moment when the Reverend Shaun was ill and unable to take our Holy Communion Service on Christmas morning. We do thank Shaun and our reader, Chris, for all the help and support they have given us over the year and we sincerely hope that 2019 will be a healthy and happy one for them.

The cost of maintaining our Churches doesn't get any easier and funds are hard to come by. We are most grateful to William for looking after our financial affairs so efficiently. In addition to everyday Church costs we do, of course, play our part in helping to meet our proportion of the Diocese Parish share. Last year we paid a sum of £1,500 plus £500 in private donations. Although at the last minute one or two fundraising events had to be cancelled. Simon and Roy put on a superb Supper Party at Dean Head at the end of June in glorious weather to help boost Church funds. At this point I should also mention the work William has done throughout the year keeping the churchyard clean and tidy. It is much appreciated and certainly not taken for granted – thank you.

It is when writing reports such as this we remember old friends. We are remembering, of course, Gerry (Moore) who died in the spring of 2018. He was a man of many talents, well known to many of us and we still miss his chatter and friendship. It is still lovely that from time to time we continue to see in Church his family of Julian, Jenny and Adrian. Again, it was also pleasing that the Burma Veteran Hill 629 Memorial Service took place on the 30th May 2018 and was so well attended. John (Squire) would have been so proud and delighted. Later in September many of us attended, in Swimbridge Church, the very special blessing of Shaun and Kerry's wedding. It was a very loving occasion and we all wish them a long and happy life together.

The Holy Name Gunn continues to remain in good heart and continues to receive the support of the congregation and local community. The practical help we receive in seeing the Church is kept clean, in good repair, covering the monthly refreshments, monthly readings and flowers and articles for the monthly magazine, is tremendous and willingly given.

We still have live music at our monthly services provided by Brian (organ) and Peter (guitar), though Brian is planning to retire in the spring. Our many thanks to them and to Bryan and Iris for the many tasks they see to, to ensure the Church always continues to run smoothly.

This will be my last report, I have enjoyed doing it but I am beginning to feel jaded and it is time for a younger person to take over. I will continue to support the Church for as long as I can.

Arnold J Bradbury & Bryan Hawkins Deputy Church Wardens

Organ and Choir Report

The pipe organ was attended to and tuned by Mr James Mattheson in March. No problems were identified. During the hot dry period in the autumn there were a few syphon occurrences with one or two stops activated. However, a bowl of water carefully placed within the organ seemed to settle the instrument after a few days. We are due a visit from the tuner in the spring.

Choir members have been involved with the weekly services and weddings and seasonal services – Easter, harvest festival with the Newton St Petroc male voice choir, Advent songs of praise with the Archdeacon; Christmas 9 lessons and carols and midnight mass.

The first Sunday in the month evening services – a mix of songs of praise and evensong - have been well supported during the year. Light refreshments afterwards give everyone an opportunity to have a chat. The bellringers have also been busy ringing for many of the morning and evening services. Seasonal ailments like cold and flu have been a bit problematic for our singing but members have supported the services well.

A special thankyou to choir members who freely give of their time and talents providing a high standard of singing at the services, help with coffee mornings, church cleaning/polishing parties and grasscutting in the churchyard.

Our thanks are due to Mike Clift and Dr Miller who help swell the singing at various festival services.

We have not had regular choir practices more recently for various reasons, mostly cold temperatures and seasonal coughs and colds.

Anyone is welcome to come along and join us for some singing. Practices have now resumed on Thursday evenings, in time for Easter in April 2019.

Janet Patton Organist and Choir Mistress

Food Bank

The collecting point at the back of the church encourages people to donate food and toiletries for those in our area who are struggling. It is good that we are among very many churches in the area who support the Trussell Trust in North Devon. Last year 129.55 Kg of food and sundries was donated – the equivalent of nearly 308 main meals.

David Netherway

Swimbridge Church of England Primary School

On behalf of the children, staff and governors of Swimbridge CE Primary School, I would like to thank you once again for including us in your Annual Report.

Swimbridge CE Primary is a small village school, which has served this community for over 150 years. We continue to thrive, with 106 pupils on roll, arranged in four mixed age classes. The children are enabled to achieve excellent progress throughout our broad and balanced curriculum, by an extremely dedicated, highly skilled and ambitious team of teachers and wonderfully enthusiastic support staff who are committed to the wellbeing and academic progress of each and every child.

Our school vision - To Inspire, Enable and Educate for 'Life in all its Fullness' provides us with a strategic direction and guides our curriculum design. We endeavour to recognise, celebrate and encourage creativity and spirituality in the children and provide them with aspirations to achieve all that they can in their lives.

Our school provides a creative, topic-based curriculum full of high quality, exciting and ambitious teaching and learning, whilst maintaining a calm, purposeful and stimulating atmosphere. Central to our ethos, is the emotional wellbeing of our school community and we work hard to embed our values of Wisdom, Hope, Community, Dignity and Love to ensure that social and emotional barriers to learning are reduced, academic progress is made, and the children develop resilience that will support them through life. We encourage investigation, independence and mastery, through hands on, practical learning experiences as much as possible within our topic-based curriculum. The children enjoy a comprehensive sports programme, travelling to the Tarka Tennis Centre, North Devon Leisure Centre, South Molton Swimming Pool and North Devon Surf School as part of our annual rolling programme.

Examples of trips and visits over the past 12 months include: 'Crew' theatre company's History performance to KS2 children, trips to Rosemoor Gardens, Barnstaple town, Cobbaton Combat and Codden Hill, Crealy Adventure Park and Collard Bridge district camp site. It remains important to us as a school that we are promoting our school values in action throughout the community and recent community projects have included fundraising for the 'Over and Above' charity at Tesco, a beach clean at Saunton Sands, a visit to (and collection for) the local foodbank and visits to Swimbridge Nursing Home.

Our School Council are actively involved in a number of initiatives and projects that continue to develop our school and they are presently working on online safety awareness and a child-friendly anti bullying policy. As a whole school, with support from our PTFA, we are currently fundraising to develop our playgrounds and outdoor learning environment. Our children are also enthusiastic in their endeavours to raise money for many other charities, and over the past year we have raised funds for local, national and international charities including Care for Kids, North Devon, Children in Need and Action Aid.

We are extremely proud to be part of the local community and to make use of all that is here in Swimbridge village. We make frequent use of the Jubilee Hall and Streamside Gardens, and enjoy a close relationship with St James Church, where we hold a number of celebratory events throughout the academic year.

Our school website is regularly updated and provides a great deal of information so please feel free to log on at www.swimbridge-primary.devon.sch.uk

I am now in my third year as Headteacher of Swimbridge CE Primary and I am extremely proud of the school, our staff, children and whole community because I believe that, despite being small in number, we are huge in ambition and heart!

Mrs Sandra Tibbles, Head Teacher

Swimbridge Pre-school

How quickly the years go by and Swimbridge Pre-school manages to survive despite the pressures of rising cost and lack of adequate funding! The number of children attending remains at a good level and luckily, we have a staff and committee that work hard fundraising to supplement our income. We have raised money with events that include a quiz with a ploughman's supper, a big breakfast event and breakfast with Father Christmas. In May we had an inspection from Ofsted and were rated as being good. Comments from the inspector included that the staff know the children very well and that they show that they feel safe and secure in the setting.

During the past year we have worked hard to secure funding from Awards 4 All and have recently been given just over £3000 to use for IT equipment. This will be used not only by the staff, committee, children and parents but we will have equipment that other groups might find useful! We are looking forward to helping secure more funding for the refurbishment of the Old School Rooms both for us, the church and our wider community. Pre-school appreciates the continued support it receives from the church.

Pre-school places are available for children in the term that they have their 3rd birthday. Sessions run during the school term each week day 9am-12 noon
Stand and Play – babies, toddlers and under 5s with parent/carer Friday 2-3pm (term time).

Sarah Smith Pre-school supervisor www.swimbridgepreschool.com

Friends of St James Church, Swimbridge

The Friends have had another successful year in delivering on their mission, to preserve, maintain and enhance for the public benefit the church of St James, its churchyard, Streamside Garden and Old School Room. By having a Friends charity, we can access support, grants and donations that we may not otherwise receive. Last year The Friends provided a total of £6927.16 to this end. The growth of the funds we deal with has meant we have had to upgrade our status to a Registered Charity. We published a Newsletter in February that has been widely distributed to our supporters.

An abbreviated version of our AGM below held on 7th February in the Old School Room gives more detail of the activities.

Present: Rev S O'Rourke (in the chair), Philip Dalling, Brenda Dyer, Mary and Richard Fardon, Dave and Ros Jordan, Mark Haworth-Booth (minutes), David Netherway.

1. Welcome by Chair

2. Apologies for absence: Matt Bluge

3. Annual Report by Mark Haworth-Booth, Secretary/Treasurer

3.1 New Constitution and Charity number: Charity Commission require that FoStJ trustees must be independent of the PCC. Registered Charity No. 1178390

3.2 Membership: 45 paying members, five hon. members. In 2018 we lost Bernie Langmead and Ald. Ray Liverton (who paid memberships for his son Max and Jacqueline Gist, his niece). Gained Elizabeth McLaughlin, Paul Ellis, Julie Whitton and Anne Benham. Also Philip Dalling and Brenda Dyer have just joined: members 61 and 62.

3.3 Calendar: Calendar sales and sponsorship £990. Production costs £587.28. Profit: £402.72. The calendar highlighted events in the church calendar that may attract greater attendance in future (eg

Plough Service, Good Friday Procession of the Cross, Remembrance Sunday, Harvest Festival) and gives information about The Friends' work and current projects. DJ proposed unsold copies to be offered to patients at Swimbridge House. [MHB has done this and also given 10 copies to residents of Francis House]. RJ advised that any future calendars should provide more space for writing in appointments.

3.4 Events programme: Successful Spring series titled Where Shall We Go This Spring?, with Richard Fardon entertaining us on Arlington Court ('It shouldn't happen to be a room guide'), plus Julia Bigham on Arlington's gardens; David Squire on Rosemoor and the irrepressible Dr John Marston on Gorwell House gardens. Splendid autumn series of Q&As: An Actor's Life for Me! By Gill Nathanson and John Surman was excellent but audience numbers were hampered by a yellow weather warning. b) Cy Margieson on an Optician's life and Nicky Schellander on being a female joustier. c) Philip Dalling on Swimbridge and the Railway.

Our Spring Q&As planned to be held in the Old School Room at 7pm for 7.30 on the following dates:

- a) Thursday 7 March, Philip Dalling: 'Jeremy Thorpe: in search of the legend'
- b) Thursday 21 March: Dr Richard Westcott: 'Words in practice' (on his life as GP and writer)
- c) Thursday 4 April, Michael Gee: 'Devon's orchards and how we took to cider' (the subject of his new book from Halsgrove)
DN has produced poster – SO'R to print x20 copies. Ideas for talks included Air Ambulance. Events to consider: Handbell ringing; Exmoor Carollers.

4. Financial statement presented and approved to go to accountant for audit. Income and expenditure during the year was roughly equal at about £7600 with a total of £3993 remaining in the bank.

5. Current Friends' projects reports.

- a) Newsletter Spring 2019. Approved for circulation in print and online.
- b) Anne Hayes Memorial in Streamside Garden
Drawings shown. Concept approved. MHB to work with DN on choosing words for the stepping stones using the hymn One more step along the world I go.
- c) Old School Room refurbishment
Drawings shown. These are with diocese awaiting approval. Interim improvements under way: new folding chairs on trollies which can double as furniture; art and craft exhibitions planned; coffee drop-in area, signage and new carpet. Approved; old chairs to be disposed of. DN reported a grant of £200 from NDDC and thanked RF for his help in securing £250 from South Molton Masonic Charities. MHB to write to thank Mr A Parsons, Charity Steward and pay in cheque. A Lottery Grant of £1300 from the Communities Fund was received in February. Seat sponsorship should bring in more funds for this project.
- d) Church improvements – electrical, asbestos and architect's report.
The Friends have been able to help with electrical work and paying for a report on asbestos in the church and Old School Room. Particular concern is the old boiler under the nave. Quinquennial report to be done in February by Architect Jonathan Rhind and paid for by the Friends.

6. Resignation of trustees at year's end – as required by constitution

7. Appointment of trustees – all re-appointed unanimously.

Mark Haworth-Booth Secretary and Treasurer

The Church Website

The website has maintained its visitor numbers, typically around 1000-1500 per month.

The more popular pages currently are the Contact, History, News and Friends.

It may be beneficial to rebuild the website so it can be more easily accessed by mobile devices – this could broaden the use especially with younger members. The annual maintenance cost of £90 is paid for by the Friends.

Colin Jones Webmaster