



***Changing lives and building community through Jesus***

**The Parish Church of St. Peter and St. Paul  
Uplyme**

**Group Reports 2021**

Uplyme Church  
Pound Lane  
Uplyme DT7 3TT  
Charity number: 1131962

**Prayer Fireplace**

We regularly pray for our Church and Axe Valley Mission; the clergy, PCC, leaders of services, etc., and, in particular, that the Gospel of Christ is preached and heard by many.

Our small group of intercessors has met regularly at 10.00am on Wednesdays. We seek guidance through scripture and the Holy Spirit as to how to pray about global as well as national developments. Regarding the current volatile Ukraine situation, we are reminded in Psalm 46 that our Lord can “Break the bow and shatter the spear” in pleading for God’s intervention. Nationally, we plead mercy (Ezekiel 22v 30&31 and 33v 6&7) for God to turn our UK rebelliousness via repentance back to himself (2 Chronicles 7 v 14) to avoid judgement falling on our nation – as happened to rebellious Israel in days gone by (Ezekiel 22 v30 and 33 v 6). We ask for the Lord to raise up our nation fresh, anointed leaders in both Church and Government.

We pray for the Lord to grant Prince Charles and Camilla the Christian faith that has upheld our Queen else it will be impossible - come the time, for Charles to swear allegiance to retaining our Christian-based constitution as did his mother before him.

Regarding the ongoing theological and financial confusion within the U.K., CofE, we pray the “the faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints” (Jude v3) will once again prevail throughout the UK Anglican community. There are also, always personal needs within our fellowship requiring prayer.

*Andy Bateman and David Dare*

## **Music 2021 - 22**

With the easing of Covid restrictions, music has gradually made an increasing contribution to our worship.

**Morning Worship** We have greatly benefited from the musical experience and expertise of Bruce and Eunice, who have taken responsibility for choosing the hymns/songs for our morning services. The new pattern of services – Holy Communion on the first Sunday, Morning Worship on the second and fourth Sundays and Together @ 10 on the third Sunday gives plenty of scope for varied styles of music.

They both formed our Worship Band before Covid, which unfortunately caused disruption to its development. However, as things return to normal, our morning worship is undoubtedly being enhanced once more. We are grateful for all those who came forward to join the band and we will continue to develop the Worship Band and its repertoire. New singers/instrumentalists are always welcome!

**Evening Worship** The pattern of evening services has changed from pre-Covid times, with Evening Worship on the first Sunday, and Holy Communion on the third. We are delighted that Harry Eaton is now playing for us once more on the first Sunday, whilst on weekend leave from his university.

**Festival Choir** The choir re-formed for the first time for over a year and a half to sing at the Harvest Festival in September. Because of restrictions on numbers of singers, an open-air Carol Singalong was held in the church grounds early in December. It was very well supported and much

enjoyed by all present. We hope it will become part of our annual Christmas celebrations. Thanks go to Rev Nicky for leading it and to Adrian for conducting. We look forward to the Festival Choir's next contribution – Songs of Praise on Easter Sunday.

When numbers were restricted, a small choir was formed for special occasions, contributing on Easter Sunday, Pentecost Sunday, the Patronal Festival and at our traditional Christmas Carol Service. Thank you to those singers for their support.

**Thanks.** Thank you to all those who have played on a regular basis: Adrian, Bruce, Eunice, Mike, Harry and Kay and to our band of singers and instrumentalists.

**Roger Grose**

## **Pastoral Care**

As part of the new 'Focal Ministry' plans in the Axe Valley Mission Community, I have been given responsibility, with the Rector, for pastoral care across the eight churches. Andrea and Graham Sheargold have taken specific responsibility for pastoral work at Uplyme church, and we are very grateful to them both for this commitment. They will be implementing the Pastoral Care Plan

which was approved by the PCC sometime ago, but Covid intervened. A Pastoral Team will be set up, comprising one representative from each Home Group, although anyone with a particular heart for this area should contact Andrea and Graham.

Pastoral care includes supporting the sick, isolated and bereaved; preparing/supporting/following up baptisms, marriages; supporting those with relationship difficulties; working with new members, taking home communion.

We all need reminding that Jesus' command to 'love one another' means that all must take responsibility for others. All church members have this pastoral role and it is an expression not only of love, but also of the particular gifts they have been given by the Holy Spirit. Part of our mission is also to care for those outside the church as we witness to Christ's love for all.

**Roger Grose**

## **Worship**

The **Worship Committee** is now well established and meets every three months. Its main aim is to work with the AVMC Ministry Team, Uplyme PCC and the Uplyme Worship Team to maintain and develop appropriate patterns and styles of worship, both within the parish and online, which encourage and enable people to come to know and glorify God.

The new post-Covid patterns of worship were noted in my music report. The Worship Committee have developed a new service – Together @ 10, which is on the third Sunday and designed to offer something for all ages. A planning team, led by Rev Nicky, put these services together and they will be reviewed later in the year.

The **Worship Team** have met regularly during the year. We always begin with prayer and Bible Study, in order to focus our minds on God. We discuss practical issues arising from past worship and plan ahead.

As a result of Covid, several services have been **live-streamed**, and thanks are due to the technical team who work so hard to produce them. They have been invaluable when numbers attending have been restricted, such as the Carol Service which has been viewed by over one hundred.

The **Telephone Service** has continued to be supported, particularly by those less able to attend church, so acting as a link between them and the church. It now takes place on the second and fourth Sundays at 4 p.m.

Thanks are due to all those who take part in our worship, particularly to Rev Nicky for her support and encouragement. It bears repeating that we are indeed fortunate to have a strong team who are willing to give their time and talents in helping others to worship God.

**Roger Grose**

### **Uplyme Church Flower Arrangers**

The flower arrangers have continued to decorate the Church throughout the past year, we remain a relatively small group of enthusiastic creative people, who this June hope to Celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee with a Flower Festival.

*Felicity Langford*

### **Report on School links**

Mrs Ethelston's School in Uplyme is part of Acorn Multi Academy Trust (MAT). The MAT consists of Primary schools and Nurseries: Primaries: Axminster, Chardstock, Loders, Mrs Ethelston's. Marshwood, Membury, St Andrews, and now Thornbury; Little Acorns (nurseries) Axminster, Loders and Chardstock. We have an excellent Chair of the MAT in Brian Impey, also a member of our church in Uplyme. We also have an effective MAT Executive Head in Andrea Rice and an excellent Head of School in Katy Lyons. Katy is very supportive of the Church links and is ably assisted by all her staff, with Bethany Stapleforth, Year 6 teacher, being a key link between the school and the Church. We are very fortunate that our Vicar, Rev Nicky Davies, has a real heart for children and young people. She takes regular worship in the church building with the children. She has also been involved in several other ways, such as demonstrating a baptism with young children at the school, and taking a Christingle session with the whole school. In that session each class came in and made Christingles, and then had worship with the candles lit in the Church.

The school does a range of worships, including class worship, house worship, celebration worship, where parents are welcomed in, and also worship celebrating the main Festivals in the Church calendar.

Bruce Roberts and Elaine King, both members of our church, are making good contributions to our board as Foundation Governors. Jo Cursley is now Chair of the Local Governing Board very ably assisted by Corinne Hales, who is very experienced. We now have two Parent Governors and four Foundation Governors. Corinne Hales is lead Governor in charge of Safeguarding and also Literacy and reading, doing an analysis every term, with Jo Cursley lead Governor for SEND (special educational needs and disabilities), who does a termly visit to cover those children's progress and also covers the teaching of RE. Each Governor makes several reports over the year after visiting the school to explore different aspects of it, Bruce sciences and maths, Elaine the Arts. Jo Cursley also goes in every week to listen to readers.

Some children initially found it difficult to settle back into school with concentration being an issue after the time spent away in lockdown. However, much work has been done to bring children back up to speed. Although the school is not due an OFSTED or SIAMS inspection this year there is still always work being done to ensure all children are progressing appropriately. The academic side of the school has a strong priority, but the social needs of the school have not been forgotten particularly after the difficult few years the children have had. Some at the start of their education had hardly been in school at all before this September, so the transition for them has been quite difficult. The war in Ukraine has affected some of the children who have told me they are fearful of the UK being bombed. The staff do all they can to allay their fears, but with frequent news reports and photos in newspapers this is difficult for the children to ignore.

The children go on many visits and as I write now, indeed two classes (years 4 and 5) are out at a residential at Hook Court. This helps them gain independence, learn to work as a team and to accept and achieve challenges. Visitors are welcomed into the school and inform classes of different aspects of the world outside.

If you are wondering how you can help...the school also welcomes people into the school to listen to readers. This is such a valuable and enjoyable task, so please do come and see Jo Cursley if you are interested.

Jo Cursley, Church and school link.

### **Uplyme Gospel Singers**

The Gospel Singers have enjoyed being able to meet once more. Chloe Stratta is our inspirational leader and gives us a mixture of songs from various cultures for us to learn. We enjoy the challenges she sets us which comprises much joyful singing but also much laughter. We have a lovely group which has become like a family with us all being very supportive of one another. We gave a successful concert in December which the audience seemed to enjoy very much. As usual after a concert, we gave money to charity. On this occasion, we were delighted to give £200 to St Petrock's for the homeless and £200 towards the repair of the church clock.

There are on average about 16 in attendance each week, about four from our church. Some go from other churches but some just like singing and we are always pleased to welcome them in as the arms of our church are wide, as you know. We charge £5 per session so that paying Chloe does not come out of church funds and indeed we do make contributions to the church to cover use of the church facilities (£50 in December). We also are sensitive to the financial

needs of some of our members and always offer either a lower fee or free membership where this is needed. This is always done very sensitively and privately.

If you are interested in being a member, please contact either Jo Cursley or Jan Impey.

Jo Cursley.

## **Home groups**

### **Badgers Brook**

After a 15 month long Covid break, we were delighted to meet again in July, when we welcomed Kate Tolhurst who shared with us the latest developments of her work in Uganda.

We resumed regularly after the school holidays, with a couple of sessions on "What is God saying through the virus?" and "God so loved the world": followed by some studies in biblical wisdom, and a Christmas act of worship.

During the Spring Term 2022 we are looking at Women of the Old Testament, using Fiona Stratta's book. In the Summer Term we hope to look at the epistle to the Colossians.

All these topics have been suggested by members of the group.

We continue to meet fortnightly starting with refreshments and fellowship. We usually include a couple of worship songs; and spend some time in prayer.

We greatly miss both Alan Jones and Ian Waters but rejoice that they are at home with their Lord. We are so grateful to Esther Jones who continues to host us.

*Philip and Alison Tolhurst*

**Graham and Andrea Sheargold**

**With regards to our Home Group activity we have undertaken the following:**

**The Church of England – Living in Love and Faith Course.**

**Similarly, Pastoral Principles for Living and Learning well together.**

**And presently, The Good Book Guide to 1 John – How to be sure.**

**We continue to meet fortnightly or thereabouts on a Monday evening from 7.30pm onwards and try to finish by 9.00pm. Our meetings are on Zoom which has proved very successful during these trying times. We probably will return to House Meetings again as and when circumstances dictate. We were 8 in number but this has now dropped to 7 and we do have limited space for new members, if anyone is looking to join a group, do telephone if you would like further information on 01297-442095.**

*Graham and Andrea Sheargold,*

### **David and Anne Hardman and Carole Fowkes Home Group**

We continue to be a group of some 12 members who normally meet fortnightly at Anne and David's house on a Monday evening 7.30-9pm. Despite the occasional technical frailties of the hosts we have continued to meet via zoom with other members of the group occasionally hosting the meeting. We look forward to being back together in person.

A variety of resources have been explored over the year. Using study booklets we have been challenged as we looked at each of the 12 disciples. Following on from the 12 Male disciples we looked at the impact of

10 Women featured in the New Testament and have just completed a 6 session course on Prayer and Listening which we found thought provoking.

We all have to do a bit of preparation prior to the meeting but there is usually time at the start or end for some catching up and some supportive fellowship. We also share readings, prayers and leadership amongst the group.

*Anne and David Hardman and Carole Fowkes*

### **New Life Group**

Our numbers dwindled until it became untenable and we decided to abandon it for the foreseeable future.

*Mike Maccoy*

### **Ladies Groups**

Nicky Terry and I co-lead the Ladies Evening Group fortnightly on Mondays, rotating around the houses. We have about eight regular attendees. Currently we are using a book and DVD by Jeff Lucas called Notorious as a study guide. We have a bible study and then pray together.

*Jan Maccoy*

### **Concerts in Church**

As the Covid restrictions were eased we were able to hold four concerts in church in 2021. In August a young local singer held a concert in Uplyme Church organised by her family. In November Trio Klein performed their twice-postponed Concerts in the West concert and in December there was a concert by an old friend of Uplyme Church, the cellist Lionel Handy followed by a concert from our own Uplyme Gospel Singers, who also performed in the shelters on Lyme Regis promenade in August. All these concerts were well attended.

*David Jones*

### **Safeguarding Report**

Safeguarding has recently taken a positive step forward in the Axe Valley Mission Community. As well as each church having safeguarding officers we now have an overall safeguarding officer who will coordinate meetings, policies and other requirements between all churches. This will enable a unity of working and processes.

At Uplyme we update our safeguarding policies at PCC yearly. We had always returned a yearly audit to the Exeter Diocese safeguarding team, however this has now been improved by the use of an electronic safeguarding dashboard. This dashboard works on a traffic light system of green, amber and red. The results of this are shared with Rev. Nicky and the PCC.

As of this January there has been a change to the process of DBS Checks that are required for certain activities with children and vulnerable adults that are run by Uplyme Church. The requirements are now that the DBS Checks are renewed every three years and to help Robin Hodges has joined both of us as verifiers of documentation for the DBS process. In the church porch there is a poster with the contact details of us and also the Exeter Diocese safeguarding team. There is also a reference handbook explaining safeguarding process within the Church of England that is kept for general use in the vestry.

Jo Clarke  
Noreen Watson  
Safeguarding Officers, Uplyme Church.

### **Film Nights**

For obvious reasons we were not able to conduct Film Nights in early 2021. However, we were able to start up again in October 2021 and showed 3 films up to December continuing into 2022. Numbers attending were down on previous years but adequate enough to make it a worthwhile outreach.

*Mike Maccoy*

### **Community Walks**

Following the easing of Covid restrictions we were able to recommence the monthly Saturday Community walks in May 2021 and these are now held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday monthly at 10.30am. The numbers vary from two to double figures and at

least one of our regulars does not attend church services. I started the walks in January 2014 so we have now completed eight years and have started on our ninth. The aim is for a walk of about an hour at a pace appropriate to those taking part.

*David Jones*

### **Building Team**

During last year (2021) the church wardens asked 3 church members to form a building's team to help oversee the maintenance of the church and following an initial setting up meeting, it was decided that the 3 of us should each take on an area of current concern and that is;

Andrew Lightfoot - clock

Andy Bateman - boiler

Rob Walker - roof

Geoff Linsley was also co-opted onto the team to utilise his vast knowledge of the church building and systems.

Progress so far;

Andrew Lightfoot has overseen the work to get the clock working again and is now looking at sorting out the striking mechanism.

Andy Bateman is obtaining 3 quotes for the new boiler installation of which 2 have been received so far cover. 2 alternative positions ( existing boiler room or in the adjacent shed) are being considered by the boiler companies. Decisions will then have to be made regarding the preferred contractor and the positioning of the new boiler. It is hoped that the new boiler will be installed this summer.

Rob Walker has obtained one quote for replacing the lead lined roof gutters just to get some idea of current costs. If any work is done it would probably be done in 3 stages with the first stage being replacing the main centre gutter with an estimated cost of £15,000 + VAT (VAT is reclaimable on this work under the listed places of worship grant scheme)

The building team and the church wardens would like to thank Geoff Linsley for his helpful advice and input.

*Rob Walker*

### **Shining Stars Playgroup**

Shining Stars is Uplyme church's playgroup which meets every Friday morning during term time at the Scout hut in Rhode Lane. We give a warm welcome to all parents, grandparents and carers with children under 5 years old, providing a friendly place in which adults can relax and children play safely.

Due to the Covid restrictions in 2021, Shining Stars did not open until June. Many of the Summer sessions were held outside and it was good to welcome new families who were very happy to be able to socialise again. The average attendance was 11 children and babies per session.

A dedicated team of volunteers arrive beforehand to set out tables, chairs, play equipment and toys. At 10am we open with free play while the adults have a coffee or tea and biscuits. At 11am we all help in the tidying up. At story time the children have a healthy snack after a short prayer. This is followed by songs with actions and musical instruments, parachute games and bubbles. More information including our term dates, activities and crafts can be seen on our Facebook page and regular newsletters. We also have a page on the church website.

We are very grateful that our rent and insurance is covered by Uplyme Church and that this support also includes DBS checks, safeguarding training and risk assessments.

At Shining Stars we have a lot of fun as well as sharing God's love by supporting local families, Visitors are welcome to come to any session to see for themselves.

*Jan Impey*

## Open the Book

Open the Book is a nationwide organisation, part of the Bible Society, which uses scripted Bible Stories during primary school assemblies. We, at Uplyme, have been part of this organization since January 2012 and recently have been responsible for Mrs E's worship every other week on Tuesdays. Many of the Open the Book sessions this year have been 'virtual', i.e. filmed and transmitted electronically. However it has been wonderful to do some 'in-person' ones too, when it was deemed safe both by the school and the team. We were welcomed back very warmly by the staff and children at our first live worship after a significant break. Martin Wells, known for his dramatic death

scenes and often being the 'voice of God', handed in his equity card at the end of the summer term, but has been ably replaced by Kate Whittome.

Morag Kingsbury

## Parish News

The magazine continues to be well received in the parish, and although there were a number of issues online during the early part of 2021, I did manage to get the printed version out from April onwards. Many events and groups have only recently been getting going again, but I have had one or two new people submitting articles, which is very encouraging

Advertising has been a bit thin on the ground, and we have a few spaces going forward into 22/23 for advertisers. I do not have the resources to spend much time looking for new advertisers, as I have to edit and layout the magazine, send it to the printers and then bundle it for distribution. It bothers me that the magazine is now costing the church money, and it would be really helpful if the advertising and making the magazine cost neutral could be run by someone else and leave the editing, distribution, promotion and production to me.

*Robin Hodges -Editor*

## ▪ Uplyme Church Saturday Football

Now known as '**AVMC Saturday Football**' we have been going again since September 2021 and have recruited a few more helpers. We now operate regularly between Uplyme playing field and Axe Valley 3G pitch. This has proven to be very successful and we are attracting more people from the Axe valley area to the group.

There has been quite a change heading into 2022, as many of the young players (7 and above) are now playing for the football clubs around the area. Our group is delighted that many of the young players we have brought on are now kicking lumps out of each other in matches rather than us!!

The next generation of players are coming along as we welcome the 3,4 & 5 year olds along on Saturday mornings. We still have a core of older players with us (14 and above) and some are here to do part of their DofE awards. It is great to see that some of the 17+ yr old players that had been with us for a number of years, are now playing for the senior teams in the area and I am now seeing the children of the players I first welcomed 25+ years ago come along to play.

*Robin Hodges – Group Leader*

## **Youth Update**

The pre-covid youth groups Xplosion, Vibe and Xplore are now firmly re-established as is the Saturday football. These groups cater for young people from across the Axe Valley, some with no faith and others are involved in a mix of churches .

A group of 10 people, from different churches, work as a team to support the continuing part-time work of Simon Smith, formerly employed by Uplyme Church.

Simon, supported by funding from Waffle and other donors, including our PCC, set up the Axe Valley Youth initiative and website and there is more information here: <https://axevalleyyouth.com/>

The finances and safeguarding are now the responsibility of Seaton Baptist Church.

Team Vicar, Rev Nicky, is part of the support team. She was delighted to host a weekend camp at The Rectory last August and attends groups when she can. At the moment our older teenagers are enjoying attending our monthly Compline at Uplyme Church followed by hot chocolate and chat at The Rectory. The group have also committed to leading another service in June 2022 in Uplyme, as they did a few times online during lockdown.

The team are grateful to all those who support the work and especially to Robin Hodges for organising and running the football sessions with Simon's support.

There is an ongoing need for more adult volunteers to be present at sessions on a rota. Please pray and think if you could offer to be involved like this? It is very rewarding and fun.

*Rev Nicky Davies*

## **Support for the poorest in the World Uplyme PCC**

### **Charities Report 2021**

At a finance review meeting in 2021 the PCC decided to finish supporting Tear-fund in the year and agreed to support the following 3 charities for 3 years. The new charities are:-

- 1) **The Busoga Trust**, a charity working to rehabilitate and construct wells, boreholes, latrines and wash rooms in Uganda.
- 2) **Ekisa Ministries**, which supports children with special needs in Uganda so that they can thrive in communities and families
- 3) **St Petrock's Exeter Ltd** , who support homeless and vulnerably housed people in the Exeter area.

Due to Covid restrictions and the fact that the church did not have a gift day in 2021 fundraising for charities has been restricted. The main fundraising event in the year was the Art Festival held in August which made a profit of £2,863.84. The festival organisers agreed to split this between the 4 charities supported in 2021 with each receiving £715.96.

After other donations a total amount of £3280.07 was paid out to PCC Charities in 2021 as follows

Tear Fund	£932.19
The Busoga Trust	£715.96
Ekisa Ministries	£715.96
St Petrocks	£915.96

We have received grateful thanks from all these charities for our support and it is hoped that we will continue to build our relationships with them in the future.

Sharyn Walker Treasurer Uplyme PCC

### **Bell Ringing Report**

With enormous gratitude to a group of East Devon bellringers, who are providing teaching and support, some previous Uplyme ringers and also some completely new to bell ringing have been able to start up a weekly bell ringing practice. This takes place on a Thursday evening with a smaller shorter practice for very new people on a Monday evening.

As of September last year we had three returning ringers to weekly ringing practice and also four ringers brand new to bell ringing. We also have a new member who has come to live in the village and has previously rang bells elsewhere.

This is a very exciting prospect because after a period of several years we now have the possibility of eight ringers for the bell tower at Uplyme. Those new to ringing are progressing well and those of us whose previously rang are learning to leave our bad ringing habits behind. We hope that perhaps later this year we may all be in a position to ring as a team when required.

Uplyme Church has six bells and have the reputation locally amongst ringers of providing a particularly beautiful sound. We will in time and when the time is right need a Tower Captain. This role is for an individual to take responsibility for the ringing and who also understands the workings of the bells and ropes.

With the help of the east Devon ringers the bells were rung for Remembrance Sunday and we are hoping to be able to ring at some point over the weekend of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

Jo Clarke

## **Fundraising**

2021 was a difficult year for fundraising, mainly due to the pandemic which meant that we decided not to have a Gift Day and had to cancel the Christmas Fayre which is normally the major fundraiser for church funds in view of rising Covid cases. This has led to a deficit on General Funds (the normal income and expenditure of the church) for the year of £13,635 which is not sustainable. We shall try to rectify the position by having a Spring St. Georges Fayre on 23<sup>rd</sup> April, a Gift Day on 12<sup>th</sup> June, a sponsored walk on 18<sup>th</sup> June and a Christmas Fayre, all in 2022.

In addition to the funds raised for our charities (please see separate report), our fundraising in 2021 amounted to £480 from the Quiz which will be used towards the repair of the church tower clock as will a very welcome donation of £200 from Uplyme Gospels Singers.

With envisaged expenditure in 2022 of Between £12,000 and £18,000 to replace our boiler and £15,000 for the first stage of replacing the lead on the church roof we hope that our members and the community at large will give their usual generous support to these events.

*David Jones*

## **Christian Meditation Group**

Uplyme Church began a Christian Meditation Group in September 2021. It meets weekly on a Tuesday in Church at 4.15pm., although members are asked to arrive soon after 4pm so that we can be settled and relaxed ready for the start at 4.15pm.

We have used material from the World Council for Christian Meditation (wccm) in setting the group up and are now registered with them as an official group.

Meditation is a prayer of the heart affiliated to the more mystic and monastic traditions of the church. We begin with a short reading to take us into the silence which is usually 25 minutes and end with another short message.

Thus far we have had a healthy attendance but more members are always welcome. No experience is necessary.

*Catherine and Andrew Lightfoot*

**Groups which have not been meeting since the first lockdown but which are hoping to recommence in Spring 2022.**

## **Black Dog Luncheon Club**