

Various Group Reports for APCM 2023

Meditation group and Quiet Days

The Meditation group continues to meet in church on Tuesdays for 4.15pm We meditate for 25 minutes. This is the second year of the group and it is always well attended. Numbers have peaked at eleven this year.

Two Quiet days have occurred since the last AGM Last July we went to Hilfield Friary, near Cerne Abbas. In December we were led by Rev. Nicky on a day at the Othona Community based on the teachings of St Julian of Norwich. There were about 16/17 attendees on both. The next Quiet day will take place on July 7th at Hilfield Friary again. This time the theme will be based on the teachings of St. Francis. **Catherine Lightfoot**

Open the Book

'Open the book' offers the children of Mrs. Ethelston's Primary School the opportunity to share key bible stories, told to them by a team of Christians from Uplyme Church. Every fortnight, the children look forward to taking part in bringing bible stories to life through action, song, and drama. This academic year we have acted out the theme of God's Promise to the Hebrews, looking at significant characters in the Old Testament: Noah, Abraham, Joseph and Moses. We also said a sad farewell to Morag Kingsbury, the founder member of the OTB team. Through her dedication, Uplyme Church enjoys a strong relationship with the school through worship.

Sheila Stratton

Uplyme Church Annual Art Festival 2022

Our 2022 Art Festival, dedicated to raising funds for local and international charities, opened with a talk by two local artists, Lynda White and Sam Cannon. Each speaker described their career to an enthralled audience. Lynda, an experienced teacher and artist, has over time, using a diverse range of mediums to express her love of landscapes. Sam, who began her career as a graphic artist, expressed her eye for colour, experimentation, and design. The talk raised over £300.

Over thirty local artists, from amateurs to professionals, entered a total of 90 exhibits for our three-day art exhibition. The church's flexible layout displayed the huge variety of paintings and 3D exhibits. The Church was constantly buzzing with visitors interested in the building, the artwork and, as ever, the wonderful refreshments.

The final total raised at the Art Events was £2,237.39 and was split between three charities: Exeter-based St. Petrock's Charity for the Homeless and two Ugandan based charities – the Ekisa Ministries caring for children living with disability and the Bosuga Trust which provides clean water and sanitation. **Sheila Stratton**

Shining Stars Playgroup

Shining Stars Playgroup is part of Uplyme church's outreach mission. The group aims to share God's love, support local families and have fun!

We meet every Friday morning during term time at the Scout hut in Rhode Lane. We give a warm welcome to children under 5 years old and their parents, grandparents or carers, providing a safe and friendly place in which adults can relax and children enjoy themselves. The average attendance for 2022 was 12 children per session.

As all ways, we are very grateful for the dedicated team of volunteers who set out tables, chairs, play equipment and toys before each session. They also serve refreshments, chat to the adults, engage with the children and clear away at the end. The hour-and-a-half session includes lots of fun, creativity, chat, singing and story time.

Our rent and insurance is covered by Uplyme Church, who's support also includes DBS checks, safeguarding training and risk assessments. 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. **Jan Impey**

Home Group

We continue to be a group of some 12 members. Part way through the year we abandoned meeting by zoom and resumed meeting face to face on a fortnightly basis, at Anne and David's house on a Monday afternoon 3 - 4.30 pm.

A variety of resources have been explored over the year. Using study booklets we have been challenged as we looked at James, followed by Ephesians. We have just started considering a thought provoking area namely ' Angels 'and anticipate it will stretch us in a variety of ways. We share readings, prayers and leadership amongst the group and all of us have to do a bit of preparation prior to the meeting but there is always time at the start and end for some catching up and some supportive fellowship.

Twice a year we have a social occasion normally at Christmas/ New Year and in the summer prior to our August break. **Anne and David Hardman, Carole Fowkes,**

Badgers Brook Home Group continued to meet fortnightly in 2022, on a Tuesday morning at 9.30 – thanks to the continued and generous hospitality of Esther Jones.

We had a committed membership of 9 people and our Bible Studies were usually led by Philip Tolhurst. In 2022 we looked at (a) women in the Old Testament (a few of these sessions were led by others in the group – which was encouraging!) (b) Biblical wisdom and (c) John's gospel which is continuing into 2023. We had special sessions for Easter and Christmas.

Meetings normally began with coffee and chat; and included a time for a couple of worship songs and for prayer." **Philip Tolhurst**

Graham and Andreas 'Home Group

We have suffered loss of two members this year and what with holidays, ill health and others matters we really haven't met that much through the year. Presently we have suspended our meetings and are not sure whether we will continue to be viable in the foreseeable future.

Graham Sheargold

LEGs (Ladies 'Evening Group).

We are about eight ladies (from different churches and none) who meet fortnightly (Monday evenings) rotating around the houses.

We have nearly completed a study by Jeff Lucas called Notorious (an integrated study of the rogues, scoundrels and scallywags of scripture).

We also pray and support one another. **Nicky Terry and Jan Maccoy**

Black Dog Coffee Morning

The coffee morning recommenced in October and has continued through to the present time and is regularly attended by up to 18 local folk some of when attended pre pandemic but also with the addition of some new faces. It is always a light hearted and spirited gathering which seems to be enjoyed by all who attend. Particular thanks go to Pat Dench and her daughter Nicola who both help to support the event. **Graham Sheargold**

The Men's Breakfast has now been renamed the **Men's Brunch** as the Talbot Arms could only manage a later time than in previous years.

After a break of over 3 years, due to Covid restrictions and illness at the Talbot Arms, I am delighted to say that we have started up again. Our first meeting in February 2023 attracted 27 guests which was a great joy.

We have always tried to include both members of the Church and those who do not attend St Peters and St Paul's and the ratio at the moment is about 50/50 .

We would like to increase numbers attending but the capacity at the Talbot Arms is 30

maximum at the moment. If we could find an alternative venue then I believe more non Church members would join our Fellowship but at the moment we will remain at the Talbot Arms.

Martin Wells

Prayer Group

The Prayer Fireplace wall board was stored away for some months. Re-displaying it illustrates how priorities are changing. The importance of activities listed have altered. One thing remains the same - the importance of intercessory prayer and the need for our fellowship to understand this calling is for all. Our meetings take place each Wednesday morning in church from 10.00 to 10.30 am and all are welcome. There are two boiler rooms in the building - the new gas heating one for body temperature and our prayer meeting for spiritual temperature!

David Dare

Charities Report 2022

Uplyme PCC has agreed to support the following 3 charities for a period of 3 years until mid 2024 when the position will be reviewed. The 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. We were pleased to welcome the manager of this charity who spoke at one of our services in June 2022.

The main fundraising events for these 3 charities were the donation of 50% of the proceeds of our gift day plus the money raised at the Art Exhibition in August 2022. In addition specific events and collections have been held to support people in war torn Ukraine, Pakistan following the flooding there, The Royal British Legion and the Axminster food bank.

The PCC also received an anonymous cash donation of £3610 which, as requested, was passed on to 3 children's charities.

With other donations a total amount of £12669 was paid out to Charities in 2022 as follows

The Busoga Trust	£3,230
Ekisa Ministries	£3,230
St Petrocks	£2,147
Home Start E Devon	£1,203
Ukraine	£1,869
Christian Aid Pakistan	£210
Axe Food Bank	£101
Historic Churches Trust	£474
Royal British Legion	£205

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 Ringers

The past year has seen much positive activity for the bell ringing in Uplyme. With the help of experienced ringers from other East Devon towers we have had some excellent tuition and support, for which we are exceedingly grateful.

Our ringer numbers had fallen to below three in recent years and we were without a Tower Captain. Over the past year to eighteen months, due the tuition and support, we have had regular ringing practice on Thursday evenings. We have also been joined by ringers who have moved into the area and have previously rung elsewhere and we have two people who were brand new to ringing and are now able ringers. We also have since January of this year four more new to ringing and are just starting to learn the ropes (pun intended).

Uplyme PCC are aware that some restorative work needs to be undertaken on the bell tower floor that actually houses the bells and are in the process of waiting for estimates for this work. This work is needed to make sure that the structure that houses the bells continues to be safe.

The Uplyme Tower ringers have now joined the Devon Association of Ringers. The Association hosted a Novice ringing event in Tiverton on March 11th. A team of our newest ringers entered the 'Rounds' category and came 4th out of eight teams. We are very pleased for them and could not have envisaged this happening two years ago. This does feel like exciting times.

We would like to thank Andy Jarvis, Anne Burn, Dee Hearne for their support, guidance and tuition. We would also like to thank Rev. Nicky and Uplyme PCC for their ongoing support.

Jo Clarke

Gospel Singers

The membership of the Gospel Singers remains fairly constant, though life events mean some have to leave while others come to replace them. The group remains great fun and is ably led by Chloe Stratta. We continue to sing a wide range of numbers. As I write this we are rehearsing for Mothering Sunday in our Church. Our contribution will be five songs, some familiar to us and some newly learnt for this occasion..

We are often asked to sing at various venues around Christmas and this year went to Holyrood School one Sunday where we joined in with Forefront Church. We also sang at the Waffle House in Axminster before Christmas, which was well received. Last year we were able to perform a concert in support of Ukraine. We were able to put £50 towards the church heating in December and support Remembrance Sunday with the presentation of a wreath. In the summer we shall perform a concert within the church and will choose a charity to support. We love singing in our church. The acoustics are amazing! However, the fact we are asked to perform in other venues is testament to the work which Chloe puts into the group. When venues see us rehearse beforehand they see how Chloe pushes us towards the professionalism we aim for in our concerts.

We are always looking for new members, so feel free to turn up any Tuesday in term time just before 7 30. **Jo Cursley**

Building Team

Decorate and refurbish toilet

Paint wall at east end of gallery

Repair and re plaster arch to north side of chancel

Install secure gate and independent light to bell ringing floor

Replace emergency exit light over main door

Install lockable cover to heating thermostat controls

Hang draught excluding curtains in front of west door

Install insulation panels behind radiators against external walls

New Boiler Following competitive tendering a new boiler was installed by Fords in June 2022 as the old boiler was life expired and leaking.

Once a heating demand was required (in Autumn) problems were identified and rectified by Fords at no additional costs; this included a new pressure valve and expansion vessel, 'pipestat' and condensate pump. Since then the boiler has been operating fine. A boiler service and gas safety certificate will be required in June 2023. Note: The boiler will require 'topping' up with water a couple of times per year to maintain pressure.

Notwithstanding that the new boiler is more efficient the temperature settings on the church thermostat (35 in all) have been adjusted, lowering the set values in order to save on fuel costs.

Outstanding works to be done

Inspect and clean roof and gutters

Seal and paint areas of wall affected by water staining

Update Logbook once satisfactory means of access has been achieved.

Improve 'weatherproofing' of boiler room.

Clock and bell tower

Apart from being the launch pad for parachuting teddy bears and paper aeroplanes, the most prominent feature of the church attracts the attention of residents and visitors by sight and sound. The clock was serviced by Smiths of Derby in March 2022 and has operated largely satisfactorily since then. There is now an annual maintenance contract so another service is due at the time of writing.

With an enlarged and enthusiastic team of bell ringers regularly practising and ringing prior to Sunday morning services, it has been acknowledged that refurbishment of the bell frame and associated ring fittings is long overdue. In a salty atmosphere as pertains in Uplyme, the iron frame should be cleaned and treated with preservative at least every 15 years. However, nobody can recall when it was last done. Hence, quotations for doing the work were obtained and grant applications are being submitted to try to help defray the bulk of the significant costs. The first offer was received from the Devon Church Bell Restoration Fund for £950

Rob Walker, Andy Bateman and Andrew Lightfoot

Church Films 2022-23 season

We managed to show four films this "season". They were well received and on the whole well-attended. Maximum number was 27.

We did not show one in February or March as we felt it unfair to ask people to come in to a cold church, and unadvisable to pump up the heating! **Mike and Jan Maccoy**

School Link

The links between Uplyme Church and Mrs Ethelston's school remain strong. This year the Head Teacher, Katy Lyons, has been away on maternity leave. She plans to return in July. However, her deputy, Debbie Kellaway, has been an excellent stand in and has kept the staff team together and the children happy and well cared for. Year 6 Bethany Stapleforth has ensured the choir has continued, and indeed it put on an excellent turnout for the carols by candlelight which had to be held in January because of illness in December. The children's voices were enhanced by the excellent acoustics in the church. School class worship is held regularly in the church where one class is responsible that week for running the worship. Indeed various genres of worship are held within the school most days of the week. Some piano lessons also take place in the church. Church members are very involved with supporting the school. The Chair of the MAT, Brian Impey, is a very active member of the Church, Three Governors including the Chair of the local governing board are all members or attend our church: Elaine King, Bruce Roberts and myself. A very creative and able team run 'Open the Book' which meets with the children in Church regularly through the term and is very much enjoyed by the children.

The school can always use volunteers, if you would like to help, especially helping children with their reading, though there are other ways too in which your help would be appreciated. Please contact me if you are interested in helping this excellent school.

Jo Cursley

Parish News

We have produced 12 issues of the magazine this past year, as it was becoming very difficult to organise the two double issues at the right time. This has meant more work and a higher cost for production. This coupled with the rising costs we have faced in its printing means that it is unlikely that it will even break even for the next year or so.

Advertising has been pretty steady, and we have lost and gained a few over the year. The magazine could do with someone else organising and looking after the advertising to try and grow new customers, as editing the magazine on my own I just do not have the time to be effective in that area. It takes about a good 16-18 hours of work to get the magazine sorted, paginated, balanced and ready to go to the printers, so it's not a quick job.

The magazine is still very much valued by the community and I have had a number of volunteers to pick up the deliveries as others have given up the role.

Robin Hodges

AVMC Saturday Football

Players have been a bit thin on the ground this year. Many of our older players left to join the local football clubs in 21-22, and with them some of the leaders who helped. Many of those in the 7-11 age group now go straight to the football clubs rather than join our group, but it's great to see the teams doing so well, and to know that we had a part in their development as footballers. 4-7 yr olds seem to be our new group, and like all groups we will have fallow years and then see them pick up again. The spring of this year has seen a small increase in players.

With the winter period over on the Axminster 3G pitch, we have seen a small increase in numbers from the local Axminster area. It may be that this could become our target area to provide football to the local children. We have to be aware of where the most need is and as christians adapt to support where we are needed most.

We are always looking for helpers to join us, and are very grateful to Fletch Hulbert & Dave Long who are a regular help along side Robin & Dave from the Church and Simon Smith our main coach and Youth leader

Robin Hodges

Youth Work

The youth groups Xplosion (renamed Friday Night Fun), Vibe and Xplore are continuing to thrive, as is the Saturday football. These groups cater for young people from across the Axe Valley. Some are involved in other churches and some of the young people, particularly the Friday night group, are mainly Year 6s from Mrs Ethelstons Primary School.

A group of people, from different churches, work as a team to support the continuing part-time work of Youth Worker 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 for Axe Valley Youth have recently returned to be our responsibility, following the closure of Seaton Baptist Church.

Team Vicar, Rev Nicky, is part of the support team. Because of time constraints Nicky mainly supports Friday Night Fun. Our older teenagers, part of Xplore, are continuing to attend our monthly Compline at Uplyme Church followed by hot chocolate and chat at The Rectory.

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 prayerfully consider this. It is great fun.

Rev Nicky Davies

Deanery Synod

This year has been the first full year of Synod meetings in which we have been all able to meet together in person since the pandemic. In August Cate Edmunds retired as our Rural Dean and Bishop Robert has appointed the Archdeacon of Exeter, Andrew Beane, to be our acting Rural Dean for a year.

With 36 parishes in the Deanery there is always much to share amongst the various Mission Communities. In July, Andrew Beane presented to us the Church of England strategy of Simpler - Humbler - Bolder; then at the November meeting after various updates from across the Deanery the Archdeacon suggested restructuring the Synod meetings so that one item was discussed in depth by all members present. This new format started with our March meeting where we had a presentation on the national Church's commitment to Net Zero, followed by a variety of discussions on how we can work towards this goal in our individual churches.

As you will probably be aware, in February General Synod voted to allow the House of Bishops to issue Prayers of Love and Faith for use in blessing same sex couples. These prayers are due to be finalised at the July meeting of General Synod and this topic will no doubt see much discussion at our local Deanery Synod and at Diocesan Synod as all the particulars of this decision are worked through. We will keep you all informed as things progress. Synod is open to all, so should you wish to attend any meetings, then please let Robin or I know and you would be most welcome to take part.

Matt Roe

Uplyme Church Flower Arrangers Group 2022

The group have had a successful year producing simple and sometimes elaborate arrangements every fortnight throughout the year excepting Lent and Advent.

In June 2022 they organised a Flower Festival to honour and celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. The inspiration for the displays came from carefully selected photos of the Queen through the decades in a variety of colourful outfits. The Group chose their favourite framed photo, then invited as many village groups and individuals to participate by arranging their matching coloured flowers in imaginatively designed displays! Altogether it was a wonderful sight and much admired.

After the festival, the group were sad to learn that their leader – Felicity Langford - would be stepping down after many years at the helm. The group would like to thank Felicity for her remarkable leadership, inspiration and encouragement that they have benefitted from over the years. The group have decided not to replace Felicity but to all work together with Carole Hodges continuing her role as group secretary.

The group would like to welcome new members to the group, no skills are necessary as we would like to encourage many more to participate. New members may like to work alongside established arrangers until they are happy to go it alone! We are as happy with a simple vase of tulips for example as we are with an arrangement on a pedestal – anything that brings colour to our church is much appreciated.

There are three festivals a year ; Easter, Harvest and Christmas where as a group we all work together to decorate the whole church. We are a happy friendly group and love what we do and we'd love you to join us !Carole Hodges, Sue Wells, Jenny Perham, Paulene Frost, Jo Clarke, Felicity Langford and Pam Cridge.

The Uplyme Church Flower Arrangers Group

ROGER'S READER MINISTRY

Until recently, I have been known as a Lay Reader in the church. The Diocese of Exeter has now designated Readers as Licensed Lay Ministers, or LLM's. They are licensed by the Bishop, but their licences had ceased at the age of seventy, but they could hold the Bishop's 'permission to officiate', as PTO's. This has now changed. PTO's will be able to apply for the Bishop's licence once more, which they may hold until the age of eighty. They may continue beyond this point, provided they are competent and capable for an active ministry (at least once a month fulfilling a role that cannot be undertaken by a lay person without licence or permission.) They need to be fulfilling a demonstrable need within their local ministry team and must have the support and consent of their PCC and incumbent.

A brief reminder of the role of Licensed Lay Ministers. They are volunteer church members from all walks of life, who are called by God, theologically trained and licensed by the Church to preach, teach, lead worship and assist in pastoral, evangelistic and liturgical work. They may conduct funerals, but not weddings, baptisms or celebrate Holy Communion.

At present, I have the Bishop's permission to officiate, but plan to be re-licenced at Exeter Cathedral in October. Could I encourage you to consider LLM training? It is a very rewarding and fulfilling role. If you are interested, please ask me for details, or look at the Diocesan website: <https://exeter.anglican.org/ministry/reader-ministry-officers/>