



The Parish of the Collegiate Church of the Holy Cross and the Mother of Him who Hung Thereon, CREDITON

Address for correspondence:

The Parish Office, The Boniface Centre, Church Lane, CREDITON, EX17 2AH

Annual Report and Financial Statements

of the Parochial Church Council

for the year ended
31st December 2022

Rector:

The Reverend Matthew Tregenza

Bankers:

Nat West, Cowick Street, St Thomas, Exeter

Independent Examiner:

Stapletons Chartered Certified Accountant
4 Market Street, CREDITON, EX17 2AJ

Our web site:

www.creditonparishchurch.org.uk

The Parochial Church Council is a Registered Charity No. 1129124

The Parochial Church Council of Holy Cross, Crediton

Annual Report for the year ended 31st December 2022

Administrative Information

Holy Cross, Crediton is situated on Church Lane, Crediton and is part of the Crediton Benefice Community which covers three parishes and eight churches within the Cadbury Deanery of the Diocese of Exeter. The correspondence address is the Parish Administrator, Parish Office, Boniface Centre, Church Lane, Crediton, EX17 2AH. The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is a body corporate (PCC Powers Measure 1956, Church Representation Rules 2022) and registered with the Charity Commission – Registered Charity No. 1129124. PCC members are elected by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting in accordance with the Church Representation Rules 2022.

PCC members who served from 1st January 2022 to 31st December 2022 were:

<i>Incumbent:</i>	Revd Matthew Tregenza
<i>Assistant Curate:</i>	Revd Lewis Eden
<i>Licensed Lay Ministers</i>	Sandra Collier, Carol Price (and ex officio Deanery Synod), Antonia Tregenza (from October 2022 and ex officio Deanery Synod)
<i>Churchwardens:</i>	Sheila Ralph (and Vice Chair) until APCM 2022, Mike May (and Vice Chair from May 2022), Peter Brewer, Joanna Lunnon (from APCM 2022)
<i>Ex Officio (Deanery Synod)</i>	Anne Jerman, Carol Price, Jack Shelley (resigned from APCM 2022), Antonia Tregenza (from APCM 2022)
<i>Ex Officio (Diocesan Synod)</i>	Anne Jerman
<i>PCC Treasurer and Co-opted</i>	Glenda Hills
<i>PCC Secretary</i>	Anne Jerman
<i>Co-opted</i>	Ernie Heard Gill Lee (from May 2022)
<i>Elected Members</i>	<i>Until APCM 2022</i> – Gill Lee, Joanna Lunnon, Stella Stephens and Mandy Tomlinson: <i>All year</i> – Sue Barker, Stephen Mitchell, James Turner (resigned September 2022): <i>From APCM 2022</i> – Garry Adams, Debs Bunn, Peter Bunn, Sheila Ralph, Ted Staite (from May 2022)

Structure, Governance and Management

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules 2022. The Council comprises the Incumbent, the Assistant Curate, the Churchwardens, Licensed Lay Ministers, those elected to the Deanery/Diocesan/General Synod, other members who are elected at the Annual Parochial Church Meeting by those on the Electoral Roll or who are co-opted. Members of the congregation are always urged to join the Electoral Roll, and to stand for election to the PCC.

Unusually, Crediton Church Corporation (the twelve Governors) owns and is responsible for the repair and maintenance of Holy Cross, Crediton (which is a Grade I Listed Building), its artefacts and the churchyard and also for St Lawrence Chapel, Crediton which is a Grade II Listed Building. The PCC is responsible for the day-to-day arrangements and running costs. The PCC is also responsible for the church at Holy Trinity Yeoford and the Boniface Centre in Church Lane, Crediton although both have their own management committees. St Luke's Proprietary Chapel, Posbury is also within the parish but by long arrangement, is largely autonomous to Crediton PCC. It is a registered charity in its own right with its own Trustees and Management Committee. It submits an annual report and accounts to the Charity Commission each year (copied to the Diocese of Exeter).

The PCC members are responsible for making decisions on all matters of general concern and importance in the parish, and for all financial matters. As the situation with Covid-19 continued to improve overall, both PCC meetings and the 2022 APCM were held in person. The PCC has a number of sub committees which report back to the full PCC - Worship; Ministry; Missions & Charities; Children & Young People; Communications; Housekeeping; and Social – and most of these met regularly during the year together with the Church Mission Group which considered areas identified for action at the PCC Away Day held in September 2021.

Aim and Purpose

The PCC has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish, the whole mission of the Church: pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.

Objectives and Activities

The PCC, as part of the Crediton Benefice Community, commits itself to carry out God's will through prayer, worship, learning and action. We will develop our life together as we reach out to others; affirm individual strengths; value the diversity of churchmanship across the Benefice; nurture growth, vocations and leadership; work towards greater accessibility and; respect and sustain our environment. These objectives from our original Benefice Mission Action Plan (MAP) provide a foundation for our mission and ministry and encompass the Diocesan Strategy to Grow in Prayer, Make New Disciples and Serve with Joy. Whilst that remains the case, the existing MAP has limited relevance in its current form as the Crediton Benefice remains a legal entity but no longer exists practically. The formation of the Crediton Ministry Hub has placed St Swithun's, Sandford with the parishes in North Creedy East. All the clergy vacancies in the emerging Crediton Ministry Hub have been filled (together with the vacancy in the Netherexe Mission Community) and work is ongoing to undertake the necessary legal work for the pastoral reorganisation as well as consider the practical implications and arrangements needed for the vision of the Hub to become a reality.

We want to welcome people into our worshipping community, offering a diversity of prayer and scripture, music and sacrament. We want to reach out into the local community and have involvement in community projects which enable people to live out their faith in daily life. We offer a wide variety of services and social events, as well as being involved with and supporting the local Foodbank and the local Diversity Festival.

Achievements and Performance

Worship and Prayer

Throughout the year, the PCC has responded as necessary to the situation with regard to Covid-19, taking into account both Government and Diocesan advice. Each proposed change in arrangements has been discussed by the PCC and the congregation kept informed. Some things have been harder to restart than others – use of the pulpit and lectern, reintroducing server teams, sharing the peace in the 'old' way and the common cup - but overall, there has been a steady return to 'normality' at all the churches.

We have maintained our regular pattern of Sunday worship which offers Holy Communion in the morning together with a variety of evening services ranging from Choral Evensong to Sacred Space which offers a time for quiet and reflection. In April, we introduced a Sunday afternoon service 'Explorers@3.30' which was aimed at families and those that 'don't do church' with videos, songs, a short talk and prayers. This was not as successful as we hoped and will not continue into 2023. However, as that ended something else began. Following a consultation exercise with the congregation, it was agreed to restart the service in the Boniface Centre on the 1st Sunday of the month but in a different style. It is now All Age Worship which is shorter, non-Eucharistic and makes full use of IT with all the words projected. The music is provided by a small and talented band of church members. All our mid-week services have been restarted with a Communion service moved from Friday to Wednesday at 10.30am. The later time is welcomed by those that have difficulty getting to church for 9.30am on a Sunday and those that prefer a simpler service. The service is followed by refreshments. We continue to livestream our Sunday morning Sung Eucharist.

The Church Mission Group was the catalyst for some of these changes and also started a fortnightly Prayer Group on Tuesday evening. Further discussion is needed on whether this is the right day/time to encourage greater attendance. There was a prayer tree at the Christmas Tree Festival with many visitors leaving their prayers which were offered up at a Sunday service after the Festival. There is an active prayer chain. Members of the Church Mission Group also put together a series of interactive pictures and information about the Christmas story. These were displayed at the Christmas Tree Festival and in the following weeks so that visitors to the church could enjoy them.

Holy Trinity Yeoford continued to hold two services a month with Holy Communion on the 2nd Sunday and a Family Service on the 4th. It also held special services for Christingle; Easter Sunday; a summer Songs of Praise; Harvest Festival (followed by Harvest Lunch); Remembrance; and in December, a candlelit Carol Service, Crib Service and Christmas Eve Holy Communion. At St Lawrence, monthly Evening Prayer commenced in April and continued until October. Other special services were held for the Chapel's patronal festival and at Christmas and were well attended. Both the Rector and the Friends Committee are working to discern the Chapel's place and vocation in ministry to the local community. Following the completion of repairs to the West window in late 2021, St Luke's Posbury held two services a month throughout the year with special services at Easter, Harvest and Christmas.

The new Director of Music, Jon Rawles, took up post in time for Advent Sunday 2021 and during this year, has overseen the choir as it too has returned to 'normality' with processing and taking its place in the choir stalls without the need for social distancing. Adult numbers were built back up as members returned post Covid and the number of the junior choristers has increased. Jon has introduced new hymns and music to both the choir and congregation and the choir was able to demonstrate its new confidence when it was invited to sing at both Exeter and Gloucester Cathedrals. The Choir Committee worked hard during the year to revise the Choir Constitution. Choir social events restarted as did the Junior Choir Social. Following Jon's appointment, Richard Stephens returned to his position as Assistant Organist but resigned at Easter. It is hoped to fill the post of Assistant Organist early in 2023.

There are 152 on the Electoral Roll following a revision with 4 removals and 3 additions. At Holy Cross, the average attendance at the Sunday morning services was 95 adults and 7 children and includes the choir, with an average of 102, often very short, views on Facebook for each service. A total of 156 adults and children attended the Easter Vigil and/or on Easter Day. Special services during Advent for the congregation and local community were attended by 416 people while 740 attended special services for civic organisations and schools. A total of 463 people attended on Christmas Eve and/or Christmas Day, of whom 270 were communicants. These attendance figures are all an increase on 2021. At Holy Trinity Yeoford and St Luke's Posbury, the normal attendance was between 5 and 10. With Covid restrictions lifted, there was an increased attendance at St Lawrence which welcomed 32 to its Patronal Festival, 25 to a Christmas Eve service and 44 to Carols by Candlelight including singers and musicians. There have been 19 baptisms, 5 weddings and 20 funerals in church with 14 at the crematorium. There were 2 funerals at Holy Trinity Yeoford. There was 1 baptism, 1 wedding and 1 funeral at St Luke's Posbury.

Church Fabric

While not the direct responsibility of the PCC, church members contribute to caring for the fabric at Holy Cross through their help and involvement with a Summer Event and the Christmas Tree Festival which raise money for works needed. The Governors have very little money available to them for repairs and maintenance given the size of the building. This year, we were able to hold a Craft Fair in church as the Summer Event and over 4,000 people visited the Christmas Tree Festival which was held without Covid restrictions for the first time since 2019 and raised over £6,500. Thanks are due to Stella Stephens (who stood down as events/festival co-ordinator after a number of years following the Craft Fair), the new Festival Committee and all those involved in managing these events. The Governors have drawn the appeal for the roof repairs needed into a larger Heritage Project with a focus on our cultural heritage and to improve and provide much needed facilities at Holy Cross. Progress with the project remains slow due to the level of thought, planning and work required. Urgent maintenance is completed as and when required.

Holy Cross is open each day from around 8.30am to dusk with an alarm and CCTV system contributing to the security of the building, crime prevention and the safety of volunteers and visitors. The Visitors' Book often records how pleased people are to find the church open and we are grateful to the small team that unlock and lock the church every day of the year.

The Friends of St Lawrence Chapel assist the Governors by raising funds to contribute to the maintenance, care and health and safety of the Chapel and garden. The internal decoration was completed followed by a thorough clean of the Chapel. Outside, the timbers of the roof of the brick garden shed were replaced and it was then retiled. The shed fascia and guttering were fixed and a water butt provided. Thanks are due to Jill de Silva who keeps the garden looking lovely. The sunken part of the pebble path just inside the gate leading to the Chapel door has been mended.

The PCC has responsibility for the fabric at Holy Trinity Yeoford. It was a frustrating year, trying to secure the funds for the installation of kitchen and toilet facilities, as the grant application to the National Churches Trust did not succeed. Everything was finally in place for work to begin in November and should be completed in early 2023. The churchyard is managed on a wild life friendly system, not mowing until July but the graves are kept tidy at all times. At St Luke's Posbury, there was a special service to re-dedicate the main stained-glass window and completion of this work marked the end of several years of necessary maintenance in the chapel.

The PCC is responsible for the Boniface Centre which, through the Management Committee, keeps a maintenance schedule for repair and replacements. The Centre is well-maintained and in excellent condition.

Mission and Evangelism

Our Assistant Curate, Revd Lewis Eden was ordained priest in September and is a valuable member of the clergy team. As well as his ongoing training, he has forged connections with the local Connect team and the Crediton & District Foodbank and has been heavily involved with baptism preparation and restarting the First Sunday service in the Boniface Centre. During the year, we celebrated the licensing of a Lay Minister and another LLM has been in training throughout the year for the distinctive diaconate. The work of the Holy Cross Pastoral Care Team and Bereavement Team continues and during the year, one of our church members was commissioned as an 'Anna Chaplain'.

Weekly notices are available to all the church members whether by email or hard copy. We continue to have large numbers of people accessing our livestreamed services on the Holy Cross Facebook page. The Facebook page is also used to advertise events and services. The Crediton Benefice Community Parish Magazine was produced throughout the year with 300 copies available in church, in the Boniface Centre, by email and at Evans Newsagents. We are very grateful to Evans Newsagents for their support. The magazine is sent further afield electronically to former congregation members and to our link parish in Makongeni, Thika. The magazine contains details of services and forthcoming events, a prayer diary, articles of general interest, reports on previous activities and from church groups. Holy Cross has an informative website - www.creditonparishchurch.co.uk and St Luke's Posbury also has its own website. There are regular articles in the local newspaper, the Crediton Courier, about services and events at Holy Cross. The design and appearance of posters has been improved and there is a rolling display of photographs in church.

Open the Book continues to deliver Bible stories to the pupils at Hayward's School. The aim is to share well-known Bible stories with children in their primary years and to have fun (children may volunteer to take part, dressing up and following the team leader's directions). All volunteers must be DBS checked and their safeguarding training kept up to date as local churches and schools require. Throughout the pandemic, the OtB team based at Crediton Parish Church has faithfully carried on and combines going into school for a real live assembly twice a term with quite sophisticated recordings produced for use by the school at other times. The recordings are skillfully directed by Jacki Hayes, ably assisted by Sue Martin in charge of costumes and props. Team membership has remained pretty stable and we have with us the oldest OtB volunteer in the world. John Allen is 103 and is hugely loved and respected by the Hayward's children and staff. Unfortunately, the eagerly anticipated visit to school for our OtB Christmas assembly was cancelled at short notice due to the rising numbers of children with StrepA throats or Scarlet Fever and staff with flu' – a disappointing but wise decision by the school. Despite all adversities, we maintain a warm, close contact to our mutual benefit.

Christingle, Carol and Crib Services were held and school carol services took place in Holy Cross once more. The choir sang at the local Farmers' Market in mid-December when flyers about the church services were also handed out. The local schools, including those from nearby villages, and Rainbow/Beaver/Scout/Guide groups are all great supporters of the Christmas Tree Festival. They decorate trees, enjoy group visits to see the Festival and the Scout groups help in the café and with stewarding. Babes & Toddlers has continued with a good number attending each week. Sister Act continued to offer an opportunity for women to learn and pray and enjoy social activities. Men Shed has been held throughout the year. Bellringing has been maintained and the team welcomed some new members following a Church Open Day in August. At Holy Trinity Yeoford, Messy Church is held in the Village Hall five times a year. Café Company is held on a Monday together with a monthly Community Lunch. All these services and events are much enjoyed by the village community and also attract people from further afield.

There was a special service to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee with a rowan tree planted in the churchyard to mark the occasion and in memory of a much-missed choir member. The flower arrangers put together some stunning arrangements in the church which were much admired and a testament to their skill and artistry – something we see throughout the year. The catering team produced an amazing celebration tea. As we know, the joy of the Jubilee was followed three months later by the sad news of Her Majesty the Queen's death. Holy Cross hosted a Civic Service and a public service of remembrance and thanksgiving and had a Book of Condolence available. The Rector also took part in the ceremony for the public acclamation of King Charles III.

Holy Cross is an active member of Churches Together in Crediton and works collaboratively with the other denominations on the week of prayer for Christian Unity, the World Day of Prayer, the Good Friday Walk of Witness, an August holiday club, a summer Fun Day in the Park and Light Quest in October. Holy Cross was

represented at the Crediton Diversity Festival. Holy Cross is part of the St Boniface Pilgrim Way from Holy Cross to Exeter Cathedral and has welcomed two pilgrim groups during the year. There is a Pilgrim Corner set up in the church.

Helping those in need is a demonstration of our faith. The PCC allocated £6,300 to the five charities recommended by the Missions and Charities Committee – CMS, Christian Aid, Connect, Crediton Foodbank and Farming Community Network. The Harvest Supper raised £734 including Git Aid for Ripple Effect (formerly Send-a-Cow). There are also ad-hoc collections in response to emergencies and natural disasters at Holy Cross and St Lawrence.

Other Activities

The Boniface Centre continues to play a major role in the activities of the church and outreach in the local, wider, communities. The PCC, through the Centre's Management Committee, seeks to keep the Centre as a respected and highly valued venue for events including worship, social occasions, business meetings, charitable use and so on. By the end of 2022, bookings and usage of the Centre were nearly back to pre-Covid levels, signaling the end of a very difficult period. It remained available throughout 2022 for visits from the National Blood Service. Church groups, such as Sister Act, Men Shed, Mothers' Union met in the Centre whenever possible. PCC, committee and Deanery Synod meetings were also held there. Tuesday morning Drop-In for tea/coffee and cake is held all year round and during the current energy and cost of living crisis, it has also been included in the list of Community Warm Hubs.

There were more PCC fund raising activities in 2022 – a Plant Sale raised £526, 2 Quiz and Suppers - £942, Craft Fair - £428, St Nicholas Fair - £1500 and the bric-a-brac stall at the Christmas Tree Festival - £556. These events are all open to the local community who welcomed their return from May onwards as an indication of normality. The August Fair at St Lawrence raised just under £350 with £100 of this being donated to Médecins Sans Frontières which is supported by the Chapel every year.

Financial Review

The accounts are prepared in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006. It is again with immense gratitude that we thank our regular planned givers who have stood by us so loyally through continuing financial challenges. We received a generous donation from the Music Endowment Fund to assist with the increased costs of Music Stipends for the Director of Music and the Assistant Organist (whilst still in post), together with increased Occasional Organist costs. We have also been fortunate to benefit from a Diocesan Discretionary Fuel Grant. The Contactless Payment Device has proved its worth and provided nearly £1,000.00 towards Sundry Donations. There is a lot to be thankful for.

In spite of an encouraging increase to our Fund-Raising receipts during the year, continuing cash flow concerns meant that, in total, we withdrew £8,500 00 from the Deposit Fund. However, this has meant that we were, thankfully, able to fulfil our over-riding aim of settling our Parish Share in full. We finished with an operating deficit of £5,662.53. Although dividends from the Investment Fund held up well, there was the additional impact of a valuation decrease at the year end. In conclusion, it would be fair to say that we have achieved a lot this year in spite of some setbacks.

Reserves Policy

The PCC aims to maintain, if possible, net reserves at a level representing 3 months operating costs, plus a minimum of £15k to cover potential repair liabilities at the Boniface Centre and Yeoford.

Safeguarding

The PCC has complied with the duty under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 to have due regard to the House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children and adults at risk. No Serious Incident occurred during the year that should have been reported to the Charity Commissioners. Consideration is given and arranged as necessary for appropriate training with the required DBS checks and confidential declarations completed. All the Parish policies are reviewed annually and we use the Safeguarding Parish Dashboard.

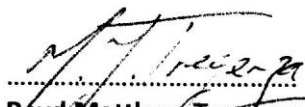
Deanery Synod

The parish is entitled to four elected members on the Cadbury Deanery Synod but is currently carrying a vacancy which it hopes to fill at the 2023 APCM. The parish also has two members on the Diocesan Synod. A report of the Cadbury Deanery Synod meetings appears in the Crediton Benefice Community Parish Magazine and includes feedback from both Diocesan and General Synod. Specific items were brought to the attention of the PCC as necessary. The first meeting of the year provided an opportunity for the four incumbents (three newly appointed) to introduce themselves. The Deanery Synod endeavors to have speakers relevant to the issues facing the parishes. In July, it welcomed Lydia Perris, Diocesan Social Justice and Creation Care Officer on Climate Change and Net Carbon Zero. In October, it was the turn of Neil Williams, Diocesan Director of Finance and Revd Jeremy Putnam, Diocesan Giving Advisor. Financially, the Deanery was done very well, paying over 96% of its Parish Share for 2022 despite the continuing challenges post-Covid. As Rural Dean, Revd Matthew Tregenza has had another busy year as the three new incumbents settled in. Everyone looks forward to further progress on the formation of the Creedy Ministry Hub. The necessary legal work has started for the pastoral reorganisation into a Team Ministry for Crediton with Shobrooke, North Creedy West and North Creedy East & Sandford. An email newsletter is also being launched in North Creedy East & Sandford with effective communication across the Deanery a high priority.

Retired Clergy and LLMs, Music Staff and Volunteers

The PCC would like to thank everyone who has worked tirelessly during this year to make our Churches a lively and vibrant community. Special thanks to all our Retired Clergy and Licensed Lay Ministers; to Jon Rawles as Director of Music, Richard and Stella Stephens as their involvement with the choir ended, Peter Gilks (who has resumed the position of Acting Assistant Organist) and Luke Tayler as Choral Assistant for their efforts with all things choir; to our Churchwardens during the year, Peter Brewer, Sheila Ralph, Mike May and Joanna Lunnon; to Ernie Heard for his time on the PCC as Governors' Representative; to Gill Lee, Anne Jerman and Glenda Hills for dealing with the administration and finances; to all committee and sub-committee members; to Bill Jerman for church tours, greeting visitors and dealing with family history enquiries; to the bellringers and flower arrangers; to Sue Lavery and the catering team; to the Boniface Centre Management Committee and to all our other volunteers in so many areas. We need to thank once again, our vergers, Steve Collier and Andrew Ware plus Mandy Tomlinson and all the sidespeople who have played a vital part in keeping us Covid Secure during the last three years. At St Lawrence, thanks are due to the Friends of the Chapel for all their work. At Holy Trinity Yeoford, we are grateful to Carol Price for her tireless efforts in caring for the church, congregation and village and for the many volunteers working in the churchyard and helping to run the café and lunches. Thank you all so much!

Approved by the PCC on 8th February 2023 and signed on its behalf by:


.....
Revd Matthew Tregenza (Incumbent)


.....
Mike May (Vice Chair)