

St Sampson's church report to Golant Parish Council Meeting May 2024

How quickly time goes! The part-time post I have as Priest in Charge of both Golant and neighbouring Tywardreath has enabled the two parishes to explore how they might work alongside one another and come together for combined opportunities for worship. We have established a pattern for sharing some of the Easter services so that we alternate one year to the next how we gather together for services such as Maundy Thursday and Good Friday. All major festivals are held in both churches and it has been a joy to welcome so many village members as well as visitors to our Christmas and Easter services and events. Our next combined parishes service will be at the end of June in Tywardreath followed by a barbecue in the sunshine! Now that Carol Edleston has been appointed as Priest for Fowey we look forward to working alongside that parish and seeking ways of establishing closer links there too.

St Sampson's church has been glad to offer support to people at each stage of life over many centuries now, and last year was no different. We were able to baptise young children just beginning their journey of faith in the world and we were able to offer support to grieving family and friends at appropriate farewell services of thanksgiving for those who had died. It is always a privilege to be able to do this.

The church building has continued to be well maintained and this year has an added safety feature in the form of a handrail to assist those entering the bell tower and a dishwasher to help with the washing up after coffee at church. As ever, the church is open every day of the year as a place of welcome and quiet place for rest and prayer thanks to the volunteers who open and close every day. Visitors come for many reasons – some undertaking a pilgrimage along the Saints Way others looking for their ancestors among the graves in the church grounds and some, simply returning migratory birds choosing to nest in the porch!

The musical life of the church continues to embellish and bless our worship. Our big bell ringing team is available most Sundays ahead of our morning service and the three groups of handbell ringers add wonderful colour to our festival services as well as other community events. It was wonderful on New Year's Day to open up the church for people to come and try their hand at ringing the bells. It is not just the

bells that offer musical delight and we have a wonderful choir made up of many village people, as well as some from further afield, which has a wide repertoire which adds beautifully to our Sunday services. We were delighted as well to host the St Mewan Sinfonia earlier this year which many people were able to attend – and to experience some very modern as well as very traditional compositions.

Last summer was a fundraising year for the church and a fabulous Safari Supper was enjoyed by around 50 people on a beautiful summer evening. Fundraising is important for us to ensure the ongoing upkeep of the church but so too is the regular giving that many are able to offer and for which we are very grateful. It is not all about fundraising for ourselves and we have been able to support a number of charities over the year.

The worshipping community of St Sampson's may be up the hill from the rest of the village activities but we are very glad to be part of all that goes on and are grateful for the willing support of so many who volunteer to ensure everything runs smoothly. It has been a joy for me to get to know so many local people over the last year and I look forward to many more cups of tea and time to chat.

Revd Shona Hoad
(Priest in Charge, St Sampson's)