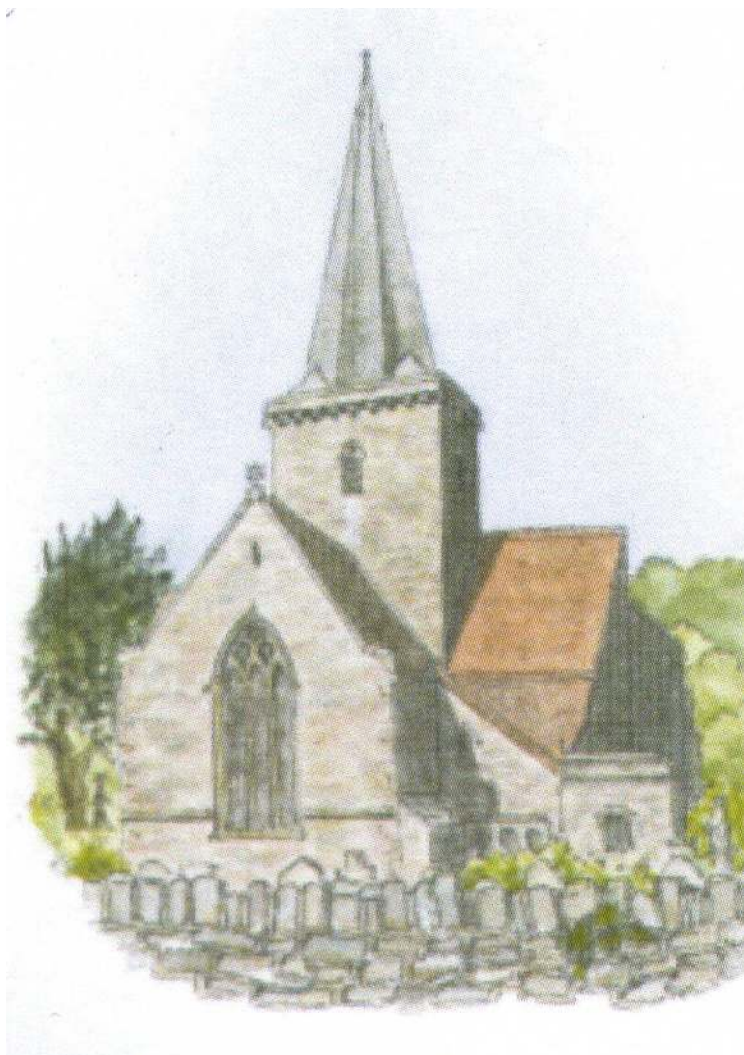


St Edmund's Church, Crickhowell
in the Diocese of Swansea & Brecon

Annual Report for 2019



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1. Foreword

As I write in early March, circumstances in this country are getting increasingly difficult. It is a case of "battening down the hatches" as we face the reality of a pandemic sweeping across the whole world. As Christians, such a time should not be one for despair, although there will inevitably be some very sad stories close to home. Rather, it is a time to recognise that the "living water" of God's love through the Holy Spirit is still flowing; a time to reflect on the blessings of the past and to seek God's vision for the future, as we continue to support the vulnerable members of our community.

The PCC awayday, which took place whilst I was on holiday, provided an excellent opportunity to have a day set aside to look at the future for St Edmund's Church: to enable us to reflect together, and to seek God's vision for the future, away from the hurly burly of everyday life. John Truscott, a Church Consultant who led the proceedings, is passionate about enabling Churches to be creative and effective in their Christian Ministry. The day provided an opportunity to reflect on Our Church's Story in all three tenses, past, present and future. A small group from the PCC are meeting to put together the main themes of the Away Day, so that a plan to take the project forward can be agreed. We had hoped to provide an opportunity for church members to contribute to the conversation at the AVM regarding the future vision for the church. But this will now be dealt with separately through online communications.

The most helpful part of the day for many focused on '*I have a dream..*' an opportunity for each person to imagine and write down what they would like St Edmunds Church to look like in three years' time. PCC members were enthusiastic in their responses. Emerging themes included reaching out to families and young people; recruiting a youth worker and modernising the Church building to make it more inviting and user friendly. It will soon be your turn to engage in this discussion - do you have any ideas for the future of the church? When the PCC next meets to review the report from the small group, we will be able to prepare a Mission, Vision and Value Statement, incorporating Rana's three components:

- A Church for tomorrow
- A Church for everyone
- A Church, everywhere

Thank you to all the contributors to this report. Again, it has been a busy and productive year for the church and that is reflected in the contents. All the leaders of the various groups and ministries in the church are committed up to their limit, often with minimal support and resources. Please read it and keep a copy at home for prayer and future reference.

Julian Stedman, Editor

2. Rector's Report

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ!

The past year has been one of challenges and opportunities across our Ministry Area, including our church of St Edmund's Crickhowell. We are facing these challenges with the power of the Spirit, and the support of our Ministry Team, both Lay and Ordained. Three new Lay worship leaders have completed their training and are already contributing to services in our churches.

Growing a small parish in a small town that is not growing itself is a robust enterprise. Indeed, building any church in any town or village is tough. The first thing we need to remember is that it is not us who make the parish grow, but God. But thankfully we have a noticeable growth in our engagement with the young people and the wider community.

Early this year, our parish was affected by flooding. Despite the challenging situation, people from our churches were helpful to the community during this difficult time. In particular, I would like to mention Sally Rees, who worked tirelessly in this regard and we as a church were able to make a generous contribution of £2,000 towards the flood relief fund.

Two joint services took place during 2019, in Llanbedr and Cwmdru, with visiting preachers, and musicians from the Unicorn Singers and the Crickhowell Choral Society. These were wonderful occasions for us to worship with members of other churches in the Ministry Area and also to share the gifts God has given us in fellowship together. We had to cancel our first joint service of this year at St Mary's, Brynmawr in March due to the Covid 19 pandemic; however, we are looking forward to the next joint service on 22nd November at St Edmund's Church, Crickhowell, when we will welcome Dr Rowan Williams.

We shall be presenting our annual reports to an unusual Annual Vestry Meeting which we shall have to conduct electronically to reduce the risks of COVID 19. Though we cannot be in the same room that does not mean we cannot be together to make decisions for the church growth. The reports we have received reflect what we have been doing in recent months. I am thankful to all those who are actively involved in the ministry of the church. At this time, coronavirus is currently at the centre of our conversations, prayers, and thoughts. As the church and society, we are struggling to know how best, as the church, we should face this.

We have all received the strict calls from the Church in Wales and the Prime Minister not to leave home unless it is essential. In the light of this, the time has come, in Crickhowell, not only for us to suspend public worship, but for us to close our church buildings entirely. To continue our mission and ministry in the parish and the community, we have the following three priorities.

- Stay Home, Keep Caring
- Stay Home, Worship Together
- Stay Home, Grow Together

The possibility of Crickhowell High School becoming a Church in Wales secondary school is still in progress, with the board of Governors still behind the plan. We look forward to updates here during the coming year.

The process of starting the new Missional Community in Brynmawr has been slower than we would have liked, but funding has been secured, proposals have been sent to the Lee Abbey team and meetings are being held to discuss the next steps.

Recently we have changed our schedule of services to include more non-Eucharistic services which do present a resource challenge but also gives us an opportunity for

visiting speakers to be invited to preach, and for different types of service to be considered.

I am pleased to report that our worship leaders' team is engaged with preparing pre-recorded services while people are not able to meet in the churches.

I want to thank our wardens, secretary, the organist, the PCC members and those who lead various ministries in the church and for their commitment to the church.

With you in the Lord,



Revd Rana Khan
The Rector and Ministry Area Leader

3. Lay pastoral Visiting

The Lay Pastoral Visiting team consists of Rev Sally Rees (Team Leader) and 15 Lay Pastoral Visitors and two people who are our prayer partners. Mairwen Large, Children and Family worker, visits baptismal families and other families who need support as part of her role as Children and Family Worker. Sally leads on pastoral visiting and activities concerning older people and those who are bereaved. This report contains information on the activities that are undertaken by the team. All members of the team undertake personal, home visits and there is a team of people who are dedicated to Greenhill and another team dedicated to Maes- yFfynnon, although there are some overlaps and another committed to supporting Caffi Croeso, our Dementia Friendly Community Cafe in Crickhowell.

Visits

As a team we visit around twenty housebound people regularly. Sally and Rev Rana Khan take Home Communion to those who cannot get to church (around twelve communicants).

Greenhill Care Home

The team continue to visit Greenhill every Wednesday afternoon at 2pm. During each month there is one service of Home Communion, one service of worship and the other weeks the team plans or helps with activities for the residents to join in with. We have lovely relationships with many of the residents there.

Maes y Ffynnon Independent Living Facility

One of the team attends the residents Coffee Morning every Saturday morning at 10.30. The numbers vary from week to week but the number of residents who wish to meet up on a Saturday has decreased considerably in recent months.

Bereavement Care

Sally and Rev Rana Khan follow up those whose funerals we as a church have been involved with, and also others who are known to be grieving and wish to have a visit. Some of the pastoral team also 'walk alongside' those who are grieving.

The whole team are involved in preparing and participating in the Annual Star Service in December for those who want to remember a loved one at Christmas time. This year St Edmunds again joined with St David's Hospice Care 'Light up a Life Programme' for our service. Those who attended found the service helpful. St Edmund's church and St David's Hospice Care have agreed to continue working together in future years.

Training

Sally provides at least one training opportunity and one retreat day. This year she led a session of Dementia Friendly Church Training. Our retreat at Llangasty in July was led by Rev Janet Russell and was a good day, however, not many of the team were able to attend. We will plan a date in September for our retreat in 2020.

Opportunities to work with our Community

Crickhowell gained a certificate from the Alzheimer's Society in 2019 for 'Working Towards a Dementia Friendly Community'. The steering group set up to continue working towards being a Dementia Friendly Community met for its first meeting in 2019. Sally runs a support group for those caring with someone living with Dementia. They meet monthly on the first Thursday of each month.

Caffi Croeso

Caffi Croeso, our monthly Dementia Friendly Cafe has been very successful and has grown to 40+ people attending and so we are now too many to meet in the Parish Hall. We meet each third Tuesday afternoon of the month at Maes y Ffynnon for tea, cake, chat, entertainment and bingo. The local Charity 'Living with Dementia' continues to fund this very enjoyable venture.

Powys Befrienders Support Groups

Following the closure of the Day Centre in Crickhowell in October 2019, several groups have collaborated to provide groups that all older people in Crickhowell and surrounding areas can attend per session as wanted. The Programme is being managed by Crickhowell Volunteer Bureau as a continuation and development of the Powys Befrienders Support Group.

Weekly sessions of Read and Remember and Knit and Natter, and trips out locally for lunch have been running for several years, but now there is also at least one group on offer each day from Monday to Friday and sometimes a choice of more than one session running concurrently. Weekly sessions of Cake and Chorus (a singing for the brain group), Line Dancing and chair exercises have been added and there are also several sessions concerning health care that can be attended ? an ad hoc basis e.g. Crickhowell v Arthritis exercise class and an eye clinic. The hairdresser is available on Wednesday at Maes y Ffynnon and services such as 'nail cutting' have also been offered.

AS part of this programme Rev Sally Rees and Mairwen Large have been invited to take a monthly informal service of worship at Maes y ffynnon, and we have started worshipping together using a Messy Vintage modelthe two sessions taken so far have been quite special and has proved to be a wonderful way to worship in an informal setting.

Since January 2020 the communal space at Maes y Ffynnon has been made available for groups and the programme is growing in numbers of those attending groups and in the variety of sessions that are now available. Group numbers are

variable but are very much enjoyed by those who go along and as the months go by more people are getting to know about the programme through publicity and through word of mouth. It looks as though the extension of the Powys Befrienders Support Groups is going to be a great success.

Ministry Area News

Sally continues to support advise and participate with the Lay pastoral Visiting Teams in the Ministry Area in Gilwern and LLangattock and with others involved in Older people's Ministry in Care Homes in the MA – Glaslyn (Gilwern), Oaklands (Llangynidr) Chilton Place (Brynmawr). A new team has recently completed the St Padarn's Pastoral Visiting course and have started visiting Oakland's Care home in Llangynidr twice a month.

Further Developments for Ministry to Older People

Rev Sally Rees has been asked by the Bible Reading Fellowship to take 'Anna chaplaincy for Older People' Ministry forward as a model for providing spiritual care in the community for Older People. Sally will be commissioned by Archbishop John as 'Lead Anna Chaplain for Wales' at the Mother's Union Diocesan Festival service on May 5th 2020 in Brecon Cathedral. For further information on Anna Chaplaincy, locally or Nationally in Wales, please ring Sally on 01873 811332.

Revd. Sally Rees

4. Evangelism

This year has seen the formation of the Telusk team in the Ministry Area "***Touching Every Life in the Usk Valley***". Apart from supporting the Annual Duck Race and having a display at the Llyngynidr Show, we have helped to support the ongoing vision for appointing a youth worker, working alongside Kerry and the other youth leaders.

In the summer, the team had the opportunity to engage with a Diocesan initiative to establish a baseline of information on our communities to support a bid for funding from the Church in Wales Evangelism Fund. We conducted a prayer walk along all the streets of the town, asking God's blessing to fall wherever we went. We then interviewed several local residents using a short survey focussed on gaining feedback from local communities using a semi-closed self-completion questionnaire. 111 respondents completed the survey from the Catwg Ministry Area. The two issues identified across the Ministry Area as causing people the greatest concern were: lack of/pressure on amenities & services; and lack of amenities/services for children & young people.

Julian Stedman

5. Worship and Music

Our church Services continue to be a source of inspiration and we are blessed in having many gifted church members who contribute in a variety of ways. In particular, I should like to thank Eric and Dilys and Mairwen, who have co-ordinated the lion's share of our 10.45 am services in the past year. I would also like to welcome Moseena, Simon and Alison who have just completed their training as

worship leaders. We are also grateful for Anna Bessant's contribution to leading our worship.

At the end of 2019 we embarked on new arrangements for our Sunday Services, with two non-Eucharistic Services at both 8am and 10.45am in most months. The clergy will lead many of those that occur at 10.45am on third Sundays, which will generally be available for baptisms. Eric Gower has continued integrating new Liturgy into our Services, based on that previously prepared for Advent and Lent.

We now have quite a varied group of singers and musicians to lead the 10.45am services. With the contributions of Anthony, Helen, John and Kaye, Vaughan has been able to continue taking some time off, with Kerry, Mairwen and Simon Large's support. We have continued to introduce some new songs to the congregation, but apart from 9.30am on Sunday mornings, we have found it difficult to find a suitable time when all the group can meet regularly to practice new material.

Julian Stedman

6. Children and Families Work

Pre-schoolers and Young Families. We started the school year (September 2019) with a campaign for advertising five toddler groups run by churches in the area: St Ed's, the evangelical church, Victory church (at the Old Rectory), Gilwern church, and the group running in Llangattock on a Friday. This brought in a couple of new faces via the CRiC too. Low numbers seem to be a common thread among the groups in the area! In general the feedback is positive and the warm 'relaxed' welcome is a selling point. I am grateful to Carol, Helen S-L and Judy C who have made the rota work smoothly all year.

The Under-5s Celebrations happen four times a year and are highly organised chaos. In 2019 we had a guinea pig which was missing, presumed dead, and then found alive and well on Easter Day, a miraculous catch of fish in the Summer sea and Autumn leaf 'thank you for our amazing world' prayers at Harvest. At Christmas, Year 1 joined Reception when we used the *Characters of Christmas* video to give a fresh interpretation of the story. Thanks to Judy R, Lyn Morris and Ruth G who supplement the Messy Monday team on these occasions.

Primary School Outreach. The Primary School used the church for their Harvest celebration in church on the last afternoon of the October half term and again, held their carol service with us on the last day before Christmas. I was honoured to say a prayer for them at the end of the Harvest thanksgiving. They appreciate their links with us: long may they last.

Open the Book. Mell has now stepped back from some of her weekly acting responsibilities but takes an active role in behind the scenes organisation. Rana joins us on a monthly basis and Anna Bessant has joined us for this year.

The OTB team enjoyed joining in the celebration of the 20th anniversary of Open the Book in Brecon Cathedral in June. We returned to deliver a visually spectacular version of the Creation story as part of the Cathedral Chaos event later that month. We are so good, they have invited us back to do Noah in their 2020 event. This is still an excellent opportunity for us to co-operate in ministry with our friends in the Evangelical Church and we work well together.

Waste Warriors Holiday Bible Club. With a number of people unavailable to help run the club for a week, we experimented and reduced the provision to a single day, from 10 am to 4 pm which was a manageable commitment.

We combined two x 2 1/2 hour 'sessions' in one day (morning and afternoon) with a packed timetable of craft, seed planting, Bible teaching, games and snack time for three separate groups - a decently attended year 6+ group and two smaller groups of Primary aged children. An hour for lunch gave us opportunity to watch David Attenborough's video about plastic pollution, which is still shocking. Nicci Bevan and Jean Barnes ran a small selection of Prayer Spaces in the school library which proved particularly popular with the older children who enjoyed the opportunity for quiet.

The Thursday evening barbecue became a much bigger event as a cancelled Diocesan teenager's event had produced a disappointed TAB group. After the activities and food we sat under the tree at Llanfellte farm and wondered at the amazing universe around us while reflecting on the words of Psalm 139.

In general the events went well and despite the very packed timetable there was plenty of opportunity to relax and talk with the children over lunch which we all enjoyed. The success of this timetable will need to be considered in the planning for the 2020 Holiday Club.

Family@4 /Messy Church Team. There are 11 Messy Church celebrations in the year which cover a variety of themes involving stories from both OT and NT. In 2019 the themes were:

Prayer Spaces, Love thy Neighbour, Gideon, Always With Us (The Easter story), My Father's House (the Child Jesus in the Temple), Pentecost Grace, Psalms of Praise (Summer BBQ), Samson, The One who said Thank you (Harvest Thanksgiving), Remember (The story of Barry Roche's Dad's First World War) and Christingle.

Simon has joined the regular team of Barry and Judy, Lyn, Moseena, Liz and Sherill and more recently Anna, and one of the TAB members is running an activity each month. One of the Mums helps with activities on an occasional basis and Cecil comes to man the tea pot. Throughout the year, Ali and Lynda have organized a lot of meals, assisted by Mell, Lyn, Judy R and Teresa, who give generously in this respect. Each celebration takes a huge amount of preparation by a lot of people and big thanks go to them all.

Occasional events.

Good Friday All Age Worship

This service was again written to order, to complement the 'In the Footsteps of St Peter' Lent study course and involved the TAB children.

Prayer Spaces in Schools

Nicci Bevan is the main organizer of these experiences, which have taken place in Gilwern, Brynmawr, Llangattock and the High School. They are always well received by children and staff. I was able to join in at the High School and Brynmawr events.

I had hoped that Crickhowell Primary might host a Prayer Spaces activity at Easter (2019) but the timing was not right and we will continue to offer these popular experiences for the curriculum in 2020.

Continuing with the Gilwern link, Nicci, Fagner, Cass and I have worked together to provide a children's session for the Combined MA services in Llanbedr and Cwmdru

(which I was able to lead on in the September event) We enjoy working together and it is good that we can do so and build bridges within the Ministry Area.

Cubs: The pack has grown considerably and there are usually fun and games when they are around. In 2019 they joined us at Easter for both their usual Autumn session, for the Christmas late night opening when they decorated their Christmas tree and they came *en masse* to the Christingle service.

Christmas We returned to the knitted Nativity Characters this year and I am grateful to all 'my' knitters for the speed at which they produce these lovely characters each year for the Nativity Trail. The winners were announced at the Crib service, ably produced by Kerry and the TAB team who worked together to make the Crib service the usual lovely event that is so popular with our community.

Thanks to the Tuesday Morning Coffee drinkers, funds were available this year to buy books for each child at the Messy Monday, Christingle, two copies went to the Primary School and also the winners of the Nativity trail. This is a wonderful opportunity to spread the Gospel and to tell the story of Christmas.

Mairwen Large

7. Open the Book Report

Our team of nine people is privileged to be invited into Crickhowell Primary School each Tuesday morning during term times to tell the stories of the Bible to the whole school. St Edmund's and the Evangelical Church provide the storytellers and this year we have two new members, Anna Bessant who is in training for Church in Wales Ministry and Morgan Britton, intern with the Evangelical Church. They have both settled quickly into being valued members of the team.

This year we have been using year two of the three year rolling programme, covering Old and New Testament stories, dramatizing them and including the children in the active telling of stories. This has involved dressing up as bible characters and creating props that set the scene to help the children to understand the stories.

In May we were asked to present the story of the creation from Genesis in Brecon Cathedral during the Cathedral Chaos morning, which hosts children from around the Diocese to engage in many activities. We were preceded by a music group leading singing and made full use of the stage to tell the Creation story in a colourful drama, involving children and adults from the audience. This year we have been asked to tell the story of Noah at the same event.

2019 was the twentieth anniversary year of Open the Book, now part of the Bible Society, in the UK and celebrated in several centres through the country. Our local celebration was held in Brecon Cathedral in June, where the author of the Storyteller Bible, Bob Hartman, was one of the guests. Crickhowell Primary School has been hearing Bible stories for eleven of those twenty years, it was good to celebrate with other teams from South and Mid Wales and West of England. We all renewed our individual commitment to the ethos of storytelling, including always using the approved script, not using our own words.

Air and Share regional meetings are held annually to bring together different teams in an area, inform them of the latest developments in Open the Book and share good practice. At the recent one in Gilwern we were led by a new enthusiastic staff

member, brought up to date on recent developments within Open the Book, the increase of new schools including new teams in Ghana and the aim to raise the percentage of participating schools in Wales to 50%.

Planning for these assemblies takes place every 5-6 weeks, when we allocate parts, choose props, consider the staging, introductions and conclusions to the stories. We are grateful to Melloney for making sense of our scribbles and typing up the programmes for the term and each session. The teacher who leads assembly relates our stories to the themes of values taught on the PESH programme in school.

The most encouraging thing for the Team going into school each week is the wonderful attention with which the children listen to the stories. They remember the characters and events from previous weeks and are always keen to volunteer to take part. They are rewarded with an Open the Book sticker to wear on their jersey for the rest of the day!

Alison Stedman

8. “OnlyBellsAloud” - Bell-Ringing Team

The same dedicated band of ringers from last year, who were joined by Sadie, Ceri-Anne and Emily, continued to chime the bells at St Edmunds every Sunday morning for the 10.45am services and for 9 weddings and a few special occasions.

In the autumn, due to a big year of exams looming for the older members, Hannah, Rose, Molly and Lucy stepped down from ringing the bells on Sundays. Sadly, Anika and Sadie moved away later in the year. We are very grateful to them all for many years of dedicated service and for teaching new members their skills.

During the year, several more young people joined the youth club and came to OBA. As there are sometimes as many as 20, we can't all fit in the tower at once! Only some of the young people want to ring the church bells so there are other activities and games for them all to do in the church when they are not ringing. We have been given some board games and a pool table and have been offered a table-tennis table. It's also an opportunity to chat and for us all to get to know each other a bit better. As we regularly have larger numbers, I am very grateful to Alison, Brenda and David for their regular help as well as continued help from Hannah and Moseena.

The practices will mostly continue on the 1st Thursday each month from 5.30 – 7pm but may occasionally be moved to accommodate other activities or events.

If you would like to have a go or want more information, please contact Kerry on 01873 812093 or 07976 737665 or email kerryadrian555@hotmail.com. We are still open to new ringers of any age if you'd like to learn – our ringers would love to teach you! We look forward to welcoming you in the tower.

Kerry Andrews

9. “TotesAmazeBells” Youth Club Report

'TAB', as our club is known, still meets every Thursday in the Parish Hall from 5.30 – 7pm, except for 1st Thursdays (OnlyBellsAloud - see separate report). The age range is from 10 (year 6 pupils) to 14. During the year we were sad to say goodbye to 3 members who moved away but we have welcomed several newcomers too. There are now 20 in the core group and occasionally a few others. On average 12 to 18 young people attend each week and there is a good mix of boys and girls now.

Hannah R, Moseena and Hannah J, have continued to help and Bethan, Rose and Molly gained further experience of volunteering for their Bronze D of E and Welsh Bac Awards until Easter. They have now left club but continue to enjoy the older youth group. Since September, Alison, Brenda and David have kindly offered their help on a regular basis and Nicci (Bevan) comes occasionally too and sets up a "prayer space".

Our club nights are still quite varied and include activities like crafts, quizzes, games and team-building activities. They always enjoy making and eating food, so biscuits, cakes, pancakes and pizzas, were on the menu throughout the year! We also include some Bible-based activities, learn about various Christian events, and discuss social and other issues.

On Good Friday, some of the young people took part in the mini-sketches which told the Good Friday story during the 10.45 Family Service. Following hot cross buns, 20 people of all ages including a few visitors, went on our annual Good Friday Pilgrimage up Table Mountain, pausing occasionally to read short passages from the books of Isaiah and Matthew, reflect on a few small visual aids and pray for different parts of our community, the environment and outreach of the Gospel Message. We enjoyed wonderful weather, a picnic on top, a lot of fun and chatter, especially on the descent!

Judy Cave came to talk to us about our pen-pals in "Club 67" which we support at the school in Rukungiri, to inform our new members and update those who have been corresponding with them for some time. We wrote twice during the year and made them colourful friendship bands which Judy took in person when she visited them in October together with a donation to buy them some clothes.

Our link with the High School is developing. In the summer term we set up a whole classroom with several "prayer stations" which were visited by most of the classes in years 7 and 8 over 2 days. They were well received by pupils and staff.

During the summer holidays, the young people wanted to continue to meet so we mostly went to the park and played games, making the most of the fine weather. We had hoped to go to a weekend camp but unfortunately it was cancelled last minute by the organisers. The Holiday Club Team invited us to their BBQ instead. We also enjoyed an afternoon at Llangorse Lake. We played games, hired some pedelos and cooked hot dogs and burgers. In August, two young people were able to spend a week at the Christian Sports Camp at Brecon, which we had visited on a day trip on previous years.

We started the autumn term with a BBQ of our own. After playing games, we had a challenge to make things out of waste plastic. Some interesting and creative ideas were then judged by one of our BBQ cooks, who happens to be a real judge!

The following week we visited the Llangattock Community Woodland to see what they are doing there. We plan to join in with some of their projects and look into other environmental and green issues which we can be involved with.

On 31st October many young people came for the Pumpkin/Light Party, our alternative event to Halloween. We made pumpkin lanterns and played fluorescent light games in the dark.

In October we organised a weekend away at Lee Abbey for both youth groups. 20 young people and 5 youth-leaders enjoyed an amazing time at The Beacon Activity Centre there. We all participated in team-building activities, various games, walks, climbing, archery and zip-wire, gaining new skills, confidence and bravery! There were also special times of teaching and reflection.

Hand-bellringing still remains part of our youth club and new-comers learn quickly. Although we have not rung the hand-bells very much during the year, a small group played at 3 venues in town for the Totally Locally event (having first decorated a Christmas tree for the competition!), and rang for residents at Glaslyn Nursing Home, Greenhill Care Home and at the Carol Service in St Edmunds.

The year concluded with the performance of our annual Crib Service play on Christmas Eve. This year it was co-written by Alison, Mairwen and Kerry. We saw the Wise Men discovering The Star before they set off on their journey, Mary and Joseph (and talking donkey) arriving in Bethlehem, and the familiar story continued with a fresh insight from a new character, the delightful inn-keeper's daughter. Following some challenging rehearsals, we were very proud of the 12 young people who made a great effort to produce a memorable performance and bring this wonderful Christmas Message to our community and visitors. We were grateful again for the support of those who managed the props, costumes, staging and audio/visual effects. The church was packed and the performance was enjoyed by all.

During the last couple years, those of us involved with the young people, together with Rana and Julian, have been meeting to discuss the need for a paid youth-worker and to pray for a way forward. Since our visit to Lee Abbey, some progress has been made, more of which will be revealed during the coming months.

During 2020 we hope the groups will grow and gel together further. We also plan to take them to another camp in July organised by the Diocese in association with "Spree Wales". The young people are energetic, have questions and ideas, and are fun to be with. However, many experience very challenging issues in life which surface periodically during club and are of concern to the leaders. We have applied for some training to help us to offer support more effectively.

Please pray for all the young people in our clubs and the many who live in this area, that they may have the opportunity to hear God's amazing message of hope and love in these formative years of their lives.

If you would like more information or can offer any help or support, please do get in touch with me on: 01873 812093 or 07976 737665 or kerryadrian555@hotmail.com

We look forward to welcoming new young people and helpers into the group.

Kerry Andrews

14 to 18 Youth Club Report

A great group of up to ten young people, loosely connected to St Edmund's, meet at our home from 7-9pm on Monday evenings and we continued to follow the youth Alpha course until Easter. In the summer term we met fortnightly, at the request of the young people, as all but one were involved in external exams. The emphasis was on developing self-esteem and a real trust in God in difficult circumstances.

During the summer, we contributed our energy and enthusiasm to serve the church by spending a few hours as a group cutting back an overgrown corner of the churchyard. We enjoyed a group BBQ and garden games at our home, and then towards the end of the holidays we took 12 young people for a fun evening Ten Pin Bowling in Cwmbran.

The new academic year was a potential challenge, as Mondays no longer worked around all the many activities the young people are engaged in – it was almost miraculous that they could all now meet on a Wednesday night! During the Autumn term, we had a series called “Encounters with Jesus” – using the Gospels to look at a range of very different people who met Jesus and His impact on their lives. We met fortnightly until half term because of our family circumstances, and after that weekly.

In October, some of the group went for a weekend at Lee Abbey, which was an opportunity to have extended time together whilst enjoying a selection of great activities and reflecting on God in our lives. We held a Chinese Banquet just before Christmas, and enjoyed food and good fun together. During the evening, we also looked at the virgin birth, and were helped in our discussions by an excellent CS Lewis video.

In the Spring term, 2020, we are following a series called “Sticky Faith”, considering how faith is relevant for the whole of our lives. During Lent the group are also taking up the 40 ACTS challenge to “do Lent generously”. Each day we all receive an email with a motivating Bible verse and a choice of three different levels of task to complete in the next 24 hours.

Last AGM, we identified an urgent need for a young, youth worker to come and help us with all the opportunities and challenges that we have here. We are delighted that a young man with enthusiasm, passion and relevant skills will be joining the team in September. Along with new and very generous donations, applications have now been made to two charities, and together we hope that this will provide sufficient funding for the youth worker position. This will make a huge difference to what we are able to provide for the young people in Crickhowell in the future.

Suzanne Walker

10. Prayer Ministry

‘When I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or command locusts to devour the land or send a plague among my people, If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land. Now my eyes will be open and my ears attentive to the prayers offered in this place’

2 Chronicles 7 v 13 -15

It is fortunate that to pray, we are not dependent on being in church. In Matthew's Gospel chapter 6 v 6, he says "*Go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.*" All this is highly relevant to our situation. If we look back over the last six months, drought in Australia, locusts in Africa and now a world-wide plague - pandemic, as we call it. The above instruction is addressed to 'my people', not just the Prayer Chain, or the Prayer Ministry team, it's to all of us who believe and trust in God.

We have, over the last year, consistently met for prayer each Tuesday morning, been available in the Lady Chapel for personal prayer support after the morning service, held a men's prayer breakfast twice a month and endeavoured to pray before the morning service each Sunday. But now we need to move into a different gear. More is being required of us all. The above verses show that the history of the last six months is no coincidence, that the God of Heaven and Earth is willing to listen to us. This is the opportunity, while we are shut in our homes, to talk to God our Father, tell Him what is on your heart and take time to listen to him in the peace and quiet.

Rennie Gold

11. Men's Prayer Breakfast

Men from any Parish or denomination meet at the Parish Hall in Church Lane, Crickhowell on the 1st and 3rd Saturday of every month at 8.00am. We chat over a continental breakfast exchanging news and views. This is followed by one of us selecting a bible reading or article which is read and discussed. Request for prayers follows with prayers itself. We finish at about 10.00am usually uplifted and invigorated.

Richard Crole-Rees

12. Mothers' Union

The highlight of the year for the Province of Wales was the visit in September of our new Worldwide President Sheran Harper. Sheran spent a day in each diocese starting in North Wales. Her visit to Swansea and Brecon began at St. John's Family Centre in Brecon followed by a short tour of the cathedral where she met members gathered from the north. We enjoyed coffee together and Seran spoke to every member individually and prayed with several – something they will never forget. She is such a gracious lady deeply committed to the mission and objects of the Mothers' Union and its future.

We have shared some exceptional meetings this year including Annabelle Elletson's long walk in Nepal, Anne Hayward's Pilgrimage to the Isle of Man and Sue and Barry Letson's visit to Japan. Rev. Janet Russell led a Bible Study during Lent and Moseena spoke about Christianity in a Muslim Country. Rana opened our autumn session with a Eucharist at St. Edmunds and Provincial President Kay Warrington and Provincial Secretary Helen Williams helped us to understand the implications of MULOA – Mothers' Union Listening, Observing and Acting. MULOA came about as a result of a worldwide meeting in Rwanda and together with our global themes of

Self-reliance, Peace and Safety and Gender Justice is inspiring change around the world. We are grateful to all those kind people who gave up their time to bring these interesting topics to our meetings.

This year's theme is Building Hope and Confidence and writing this report in the midst of the coronavirus outbreak it could hardly be a better theme as we begin to deal with the outcomes of this worrying pandemic. May we dream of a time when fear becomes faith, when love and respect walk side by side and when all people see each other as God's own children.

Ella Thomas Branch Leader

13. Home Groups

Oak View Home Group

We must begin with an enormous thankyou to Peter and Gill Madley who led this group for many years before moving to Shrewsbury. The Group has continued this last six months on Wednesday evenings at seven p.m. at Oak View, the home of David and Brenda Gooding. We are pleased to have seen good attendance continue, with new members too!

We began the Autumn with The Bible Course, a new eight week video and teaching course covering the whole Bible in outline. The success of the course was marked by a request from the wider congregation for a repeat course during the day, and this 'satellite' group has attracted up to a dozen on Tuesday mornings at 11 a.m. It's been notable that the course invites all members to participate in discussion and prayer together in a refreshing way.

Since the completion of The Bible Course we have been following Part 2 of the Pilgrim Course on The Lord's Prayer. This a quite different study in more traditional style. In conclusion I want to mention a remark by one of our long standing members, who said, 'I love my Sunday worship, but if I'm honest it's here in my home group that my fellowship and faith is founded' That's a challenge. Perhaps others might find joining one of our Home Groups the same.

Barry Roche

The Alternative Home Group - so named as we alternate our group meetings around our different homes.

Over the past year we have been studying various topics. At the beginning of the year we had studied a number of chapters from the book of Isaiah followed by a study on the 'ranking' of angels. We all took a break for Lent to follow the Lent course in church, "In The footsteps of St Peter." After Easter we looked at 'Handel's Messiah' researching where all the 'words' in the music came from and how they relate to our faith in Jesus.

After the summer I took a rest from leading Home Group and Ed Walker led a study called "Surprising the World" which was basically on how we should evangelize in our local community. We finished the year with a Bring and Share dinner, followed by a short Nativity Question and Answer quiz.

For your information we do not meet on a regular basis but try to get together fortnightly. We start with tea, coffee and that very important biscuit and on special occasions, cake. We then move into worship and praise followed by open prayer. We try to draw to a close at around 9:30pm with more prayer and worship but we seldom manage to keep to this time.

For the New Year we are planning to look at John's Gospel and the "Blessings Course" from Ffald Y Brenin. This is about, and I quote "How can we become God's conduit for blessing to those around us?" All our meetings are published in the church newsletter, stating times, dates and topic.

John Matty

Bryn Nant Home Group

Despite its name we have been a bit nomadic for several months, meeting at different members' homes because of my personal circumstances. We have been studying several of The Pilgrim Courses, The Creed and The Eucharist. We love the format and they give us lots to talk about.

Our group meet every Wednesday at 7.30pm. Starting with refreshments and we usually have some church business to discuss as we are all involved with other aspects of church life – mainly fundraising and hospitality. We aim to start the study before 8pm and to finish between 9.30 and 10pm. We end with prayer which gives us the opportunity to discuss anything personal and pray for each other. We meet every week, including through the summer holidays, we would all miss it if we didn't. We take this opportunity to do things we don't have the opportunity to do through the rest of the year. Watch a film or TV programme we have recorded or discuss one-off subjects, just have an impromptu worship sing-a-long or sometimes just open a bottle of wine and call it a social evening!

Kathryn Bullon

14. Mission Group Report

The Mission of the church is both local and global and we try to be supportive of many different aspects of mission during the year. Most of the organisations to whom we make a financial contribution are represented by our members, so that we can continue to be informed and involved. We gave over £6000 during the year to organisations with whom we are actively involved; there were additional gifts at Christmas, Harvest and Open Studios weekend.

In May the collection for Christian Aid during Open Studios weekend exceeded previous amounts. In 2020 the centenary of the founding of the Church in Wales will be celebrated by the setting up an appeal to raise £100,000 over five years to be shared between the Christian Aid partnered project of Peacebuilding in South Sudan and Housing Justice Cymru. We shall hear more of this as the Centenary year progresses. Our Open Studio 2020 refreshment donations next May will be added to this appeal.

In July Judith came from S Pakistan to have her annual break from ministry. She shared with St Edmund's about her work and the plans for a new Tuition Centre for

education, crafts and many aspects of ministry. She encountered many problems on return, e.g. not being able to access money from the bank and problems with the new building. But in October she reported a completion of the tuition Centre and the grand opening with great celebrations. She plans to return next June for her annual break.

Carl and Sally have encountered visa problems since 2019 in attempting to return to India to deliver their training, through OM in Hyderabad, of Community Health Workers. Their project has successfully trained school nurses to give first aid, vision tests, de-worming medication and health education, which the children then pass on to their parents. Thus families and communities are benefitting. In villages Health Workers are educating anti-natal women, mothers of small babies, detecting diabetes and testing blood pressures. A manual is being written to contain all the lessons Carl and Sally have been teaching. Our financial contribution will enable a book to go into all their schools.

In September we heard from Rosalie what Chile for Christ is doing in that troubled country. At a Mission Evening she recounted her mission work on a recent visit, having had specific direction from God to go there; an inspiring evening. Brenda Gooding is the Director of Chile for Christ.

At Harvest in October a video was shown of our CMS partners, Joel and Fiona Kelling in Jordan. Having not met them yet we hope that they will visit us in the summer while on furlough. We receive regular letters telling of their activities.

Judy Cave was able to report back to the church in December about her Autumn visit to Rukungiri Modern School in Uganda and the effects of the contributions made by individual child supporters and our annual contribution to Alice and John's work with the children. Sarah Powell is planning to visit Uganda in June with Give me Hope Africa, part of a project called Dignity, working with women and their issues.

The Tearfund Big Quiz was hosted by St Edmund's for the first time in November, attended and enjoyed by 60 people drawn from the Ministry Area. We raised £375 towards £11,000 coming from Wales towards a national total of £210,000. The next Quiz will take place on 13 November 2020.

St Edmund's congregations have continued to make quarterly contributions to the Brecon Food Bank. The summer, Harvest and Christmas parcels were gratefully received and we are now planning the pre-Easter collection. We thank Melloney and Rennie who co-ordinate and deliver these collections of food to Brecon and our church members for their continuing generosity.

Our supported student at St Thomas's Theological College in Karachi is in his final year of study. After his graduation we shall discuss whether to support another student; we don't receive much information from the student but he has been enabled to develop his Ministry with the aid of our contribution to his training.

We heard about the varied ministries of the Mothers' Union at a Mission Evening in January, from Ella Thomas, deputy for the Diocesan MU. Many who attended were amazed how much this organisation is involved in both in the UK and overseas – another inspiring evening.

We have continued to be a part of the Connected Church programme with Tearfund, receiving quarterly letters from Kale Heywet Church in Ethiopia. It has been proposed by Fiona, the Wales Co-ordinator that we could change to becoming a Partner with Tearfund, also part of Connected Church but updates come in video form instead of written. This may be a more accessible way of communicating the work of Tearfund in different countries. Our annual contribution would be to General Fund and allocated to '*where the need is greatest*'.

In March we look forward to a visit of Rev Nadim Nassar of the Awareness Foundation which supports Christians in Syria, another of our supported organisations. The visit in January of the Pakistani lawyer, Saif-Ul-Malook, well-known for his obtaining the release of Asia Bibi last year, was very well attended.

Local mission continues with weekly Open the Book in the Primary School, Holiday Club, and support for Brecon Street Pastors, United Beach Missions, Shelter Cymru, St David's Hospice, Faith in Families.

Ours is a generous church in its praying, involvement in and financial contributions to Mission in many forms, for which we thank God – and you!

Alison Stedman

Rukungiri Orphan Partnership.

We have been greatly encouraged by the ongoing support from St Ed's by annual donations plus members of the congregation who sponsor a child in our school in S.W. Uganda. I visited the school in late October/early November with my son Simon. It was good to see everyone again and I got to see the P7 Leaving Exam (those who were in year 7 and will be going to secondary school this year) for the first time. Not that we were allowed anywhere near the pupils as there was a group of invigilators who were very vigilant! The results are out now and the school did very well. All but 2 children passed in the grade one section. Unfortunately, the toilet block project has been delayed but I'm hoping that it is now under way. They also want to pave the school yard as during the rainy season there is a great deal of mud and puddles.

Alice and John Tumusiime who founded and run the school always ask me to pass on their thanks to all who help at the UK end to educate these poor and needy children.

Judy Cave.

15. Friends of St Edmund's

Over the past year the Friends have paid for new posters for the display by the font, repair of Rev Boscawen's grave in the community graveyard, as well as our £5,000 contribution towards the cost of the new porch doors. Grateful thanks to the Friends who have made these donations possible. At the time of writing this report, we have 35 couples and individuals who regularly subscribe to the Friends scheme, and we welcome Mike Smith as a new Friend. All couples who are married in St Edmund's, and families who choose to have their children baptised, are welcomed as honorary Friends for a year. Several newlywed couples and baptismal families have been

contacted on the anniversary of their special day, but have not, as yet, chosen to support this particular fund-raising scheme. We look forward to welcoming others in the future.

The bank balance for the Friends currently stands at £1802 and we look forward to receiving a payment from HRMC for £305, the amount raised by the Friends who have signed up to Gift Aid, for which, Many Thanks.

Kaye Bennett

16. Safeguarding

I continue to support both St Edmunds and the Ministry Area of St Catwg with any safeguarding issues that might occur as well as being a member of the Diocesan Safeguarding Committee. Fortunately, our queries are few and not of a major level. We now have a new Provincial Safeguarding Manager – Dorian Davies who is based in the Cardiff Office. Also, the Province is in the process of establishing a larger team of staff to support the Church in Wales with safeguarding which is good news.

All safeguarding training is now provided by St Padarn's but this in an area which is under future development. However, a modular programme of training is due to be launched in April, some of which will be online.

In addition, there will be introduction of a Dashboard to keep track of both training and DBS across the Province.

Sherill Worgan

17. Church Wardens' Reports

Rector's Warden

This report gives me the opportunity to once again record my thanks to the members of both congregations whose roles include those of sides persons , Eucharistic assistants , readers and intercessors. Without their continued support and dedication our services would run far less smoothly. I would also like to mention the volunteers who provide refreshments after the 10:45 service which has become a much appreciated opportunity for us to sit and enjoy fellowship together.

My gratitude also goes to the dedicated team who ensure that our lovely church is open daily for both locals and visitors. I am often being told what a joy it is to be able to sit and enjoy its peace and tranquility. The team have recently readily agreed to some necessary changes to the rota for opening and closing church and a copy is on the notice board for your information.

Last year our cleaner resigned and in an effort to save money some members of our congregations (and one from the community) have undertaken this task. We are extremely grateful for this valuable contribution which keeps our church looking cared-for and welcoming.

Our hospitality team go from strength to strength and are constantly in receipt of well-deserved accolades. I feel I must mention here the welcome changes to our church room with the replacement of the old kitchen units and the addition of much needed storage. A huge thanks to Mr. J. Bull (a friend of St. Edmund's) who

installed the new units free of charge and to our fundraising team for providing the necessary funds. Thanks also go to Mr. D. Gooding who has recently installed a much needed heater. I think everyone will agree that the room is now more welcoming and user friendly.

Finally, I would like to wish Anthony all the very best in his 'retirement '. It has been both a pleasure and privilege to work with him and he'll be greatly missed. Although this was my last 'official' year as Rector's warden, I am continuing for another year to help the newly appointed People's warden in his / her role.

Sue Foster.

People's Warden

Churchwarden's Report (Joint report of Anthony Silwood, People's Warden and Brenda Gooding, Building's Manager)

Church Building Report

The greatest achievement during 2019 has been the completion of the Roof project. Having received a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) in March 2018 we went out to tender only to discover that the work required was far more costly than had been anticipated. With a lot of fund raising during 2018 we were able to see the scaffolding going up in January of 2019 and, when the weather improved work was started on the West Roof. As the roof work was progressing our in-house technology team and historian were busy working on the Bluetooth Low Energy Beacons. Grateful thanks go to the Friends of St Edmund's who provided funds for the new doors at the West end of the church. Unfortunately the fourth section of the project was abandoned as we were unable to gain a faculty for the desired restoration of our two Pouncefoot effigies.

The three sections of the project were completed by the middle of November. Anyone using a Smartphone can load an app as indicated at the back of the church and then walk round the church (at a steady pace) when information about heritage items in the church will appear on your phone. More data will be loaded over time, in particular, in the Welsh language as well as English. The new doors are clearly visible from inside and, with the outer porch doors open, outside the church. The good news is that, despite the torrential rain recently, the West roof is now watertight. We have a plaque acknowledging the contribution from HLF and need to have something to acknowledge the contribution made by the Friends of St. Edmund's.

The rest of the year was used to start to investigate the other building issues that had been raised in the 2018 Quinquennial Inspection.

Brenda Gooding

Further to Brenda's report, a structural engineer was commissioned to report on a number of concerns raised in the Quinquennial Report. These related to the internal structure of the bell tower, the internal and external elevations of the east gable wall and the boundary walls with particular reference to the western retaining wall. This report has been received and is currently receiving attention.

I am pleased to report on the positive feedback received from members of the congregation and many of non-church going parishioners on the well-kept appearance of the graveyard through the grass growing season. This however did come with an increase in maintenance cost which fortunately could be met by the savings achieved when members of the congregation took on the responsibility of cleaning the church when the cleaner employed resigned.

As in previous years I am pleased to report that the Church continues to support local and other organisations by offering its premises as a venue for holding their events. Organisations and events this year included the Crickhowell Choral Society, Friends of Brecknock Sinfonia, Arts and Craft Exhibition held during the Crickhowell Arts Trail and Open Studio event, Bookish, Crickhowell High School and Crickhowell Primary School.

I must again comment on how popular St Edmund's has become as the Church of choice for couples getting married. During this year we had 6 weddings. It is pleasing to see and hear from couples after their weddings.

Finally, I must report that at the September meeting of the PCC I announced my intention to stand down as Peoples Warden at the April 2020 Annual Vestry Meeting. I have enjoyed my four years in this role and would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who have helped and supported me through these four years. I offer my support to the new Churchwarden.

Anthony Silwood

18. Fundraising

We've had another really busy year and raised the most money we have ever done.

The trip to Oxford was a great success, I didn't realise there is so much to see and do. Everybody had a great day out and we are already planning to repeat it this year. Friday 14th June saw the church packed for The Beaufort Male Voice Choir concert. It was so good to have such a large turnout, especially since the choir gave their time for nothing.

August is the busiest but most enjoyable month of the year for the Fundraising team. It's the month we welcome lots of visitors into our lovely church building and show it off! There were people from all over the world this year as well as some living as near as Church Lane in the town. We were joined by members of our worship group and bell-ringers and were especially lucky to have some of the "Friends" join us on several Saturday's. Green Man festival weekend was a highlight, the weather was dreadful but it was great so many people came to shelter from the rain, and the roof didn't leak! The following weekend was one of the hottest I can remember. This time people were coming inside to the cool. We really can cater for every eventuality. We sold what seemed like several tons of cake and served gallons of tea and raised just short of £3,000.00. We met so many lovely people, had lots of interesting conversations and loads of fun. It really is the highlight of the calendar.

In October we are hosted an afternoon tea and Eric Gower re-told the story of Rev. Boscowen. It was a re-run of the talk he presented at the AGM earlier in the year with a few extra bits. Saturday 9th November was our coach trip to Bath. This time

we went before the Christmas Markets start. It wasn't as busy as last time we went so was much easier to get around. Several people went to see the Rembrandt exhibition that was showing at The Holburne Museum. Thursday 5th December was our annual coffee morning in The Bear Hotel. It was well attended as usual.

We are so lucky to have had more storage facilities in the church room. The addition of a fridge and freezer and the reconfiguration of the sink and draining board will make our lives a lot easier. A big thank you to everyone who made it possible.

Kathryn Bullon

19. Treasurer's Report

I took over as Treasurer in 2019 from Martin James. He served as Treasurer for a remarkable 17 years, and St Edmund's Church owes him an immense vote of thanks.

Fabric of the church. The extensive works to the church roof began in the early Summer. They were urgent and essential. A substantial commitment had been required from those church funds set aside for fabric of the church. One of the applications for outside grant money was unexpectedly refused In the Spring of 2019. A further commitment was made from the church's fabric remaining fund, leaving the financial cupboard almost bare; and appeal was made for a further £32,500 to be found. This sum was found, by contributions from within (and some outside) the church, including some particularly generous gifts from those within, but also those outside the church congregations. Among the latter, the Beaufort Male Voice gave a very successful benefit concert for the roof works in June 2019.

All this was challenging. It came only 5 years after the crisis of lighting and electrical works in 2014 (without which the church building would have closed) when some £58,000 after gift aid was raised in addition to grants from outside. I am both proud of, and grateful to, those who made it possible to achieve the full roof works, including the ladies who held and supported fund raising events which in 2019 raised a wonderful sum of (effectively) £9,000 (see below).

Following completion of the works, the trustees of the Parish House charity (which maintains the Parish Hall) made a donation of £10,000 to the church, which has enabled us to restore stability in provision for possible further demands from the church's fabric, on which others may report.

Ministry Area (MA). The post of administrator to the MA is essential to ministry of the MA and to ministry in the individual churches of the MA, given the reduction in numbers of salaried clergy in and associated with establishment of the MA. It is to be hoped that the Diocese will recognise that this is so and will - voluntarily - not seek that the churches in the MA fund the post of administrator on top of their payment of Parish Share.

Parish Share. This is the "quota" which the Diocese collects from each church in order to recoup specified costs of ministry, in each Deanery Area, in the Diocese of

Brecon and Swansea. The annual sum notified as Parish Share for St Edmund's Church to pay in 2020 is **8.5%** higher than the sum assessed for 2019; which is some £6,000 extra to pay to the Diocese.

Some increase was expected. A part of it is due to inflation of salaries costs and the like, of some 2.6% in the year. A part of it is explained in that we have in the past benefited from two areas of subsidy to us by others, which we will not have this year. The churches in three of the four Deanery areas of the Diocese (including us) have over a number of years been shielded from greater rises by the generosity of churches in the Gower Deanery Area, who paid more than their proportionate share of Ministry Share costs throughout the Diocese; they have felt unable to continue to do so. In addition, one central part of the exercise by the Diocese is to assess the amount payable by reference to the number of regular worshippers in each church. It has become clear that one of the other benefices in the Deanery of which St Edmund's Church and the MA are a part, had paid over the odds given the actual numbers in their congregations; and they are now to pay only their proportionate share. **Therefore the increase this year is 8.5% not the 5% which we had thought likely.** Our Parish Share, and our outgoings, have risen and the value of money has fallen. Inevitably, some will have far lesser means to contribute anything to the costs of the church, and some will have more. Giving, and the amount of giving, is a matter of the highest confidentiality; and will continue to be.

The Parish Share proposed by the Diocese for 2020 for our own church amounts to an average of **£13.50** per week for each regular worshipper, before coming to the costs of heating lighting insurance, essential maintenance, and all the other things. **We have to find therefore an average of some £18, each week throughout the year, for each and every regular worshipper.** Some in the church give heroically in relation to their likely means, both in regular planned giving and in response to appeals. The response to the appeal to fund the works to the roof is proof positive of this. Others are heroic in the time and effort they give to the church and to its fund raising. I know that some individuals have quite recently reviewed, and increased their regular giving. On behalf of the church, I am extremely grateful to them.

Moreover, it is a tribute to St Edmund's that we have achieved what we have as a church to date, not only in relation to fabric but in its wider work. For some, any increase in regular giving is simply unachievable, or inappropriate. What I do say, to those who give regularly is first, and all-importantly, Thank you; and second, if you have not very recently altered or reviewed your regular giving, please do reflect. If you feel that a different sum is appropriate – and achievable – then please do let me know, or simply act on that.

Fund raising. Even brief scrutiny of the accounts reveals that in 2018 £4,541 was raised by the fundraising [group], and in 2019 £6,680; or if we include the Beaufort Male Voice Choir concert, initiated by Eluned Watkins and supported by the fund raising group, almost £9,000. The ladies in the group (and they are almost exclusively ladies) have over recent years coped with cramped and insufficient facilities within the Church Room and I am delighted that during 2019 these were replaced renewed and improved, which was enabled by one particular donation specifically for that purpose by a person who wishes to remain anonymous, and by support of others. Our particular thanks also to Jeff Bull of Crickhowell who carried out the fitting entirely free of charge.

Friends of St Edmund's Church Crickhowell. The works carried out in 2019 included the provision of the new internal doors into the church from the West porch into the church. The Friends made a donation of £5,000 which substantially covered the costs of those doors and I am grateful to them for this critical improvement to the welcome of visitors into the church.

Youth work. We have, since September 2015, had the services of Mairwen Large as Children and Families Worker.

My particular thanks as Treasurer. First, my heartfelt thanks to Phil Reed who deals with the paperwork and claims for Gift Aid and planned giving, a big task; and to Vaughan Bennett who understands the accounting programmes (which one day I also may understand), and rationalises the raw material of individual records into an intelligent analysis. Second, my great thanks to Martin James - *not* for persuading me to take over from him - but for passing the baton with such a fount of experience and wisdom.

Anthony Seys-Llewellyn

ST EDMUNDS CHURCH, CRICKHOWELL

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR

ENDING

31st DECEMBER 2019

*Vaughan I Bennett, Accountant
Crickhowell
Powys*

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF THE
PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST EDMUNDS CHURCH,
CRICKHOWELL**

I report on the accounts of the Parish for the year ended 31 December 2019, which are set out below.

Respective responsibilities of members of the Parochial Church Council (PCC) and examiner

The PCC's members are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The PCC's members consider that an audit is not required for this year (under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- Examine the accounts (under section 145 of the Charities Act);
- To follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act); and
- To state whether 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. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the parish 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 as the members of 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 view given by 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 Charities Act; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and to comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities 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.

Vaughan Ian Bennett
Accountant
47 Oakfield Drive, Crickhowell,
POWYS NP8 1DR

March 2020

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL - ST EDMUNDS, CRICKHOWELL

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2019

	Note	2019	2018
CURRENT ASSETS			
Debtors & Prepayments		675	322
Income Tax Refunds Due		3,446	2,858
Income Held by SBDT (Hilliard Trust)		0	52
National Savings		1	5,263
Bank Balances		57,458	60,908
		<hr/>	<hr/>
		£61,580	£69,403
Deduct: CURRENT LIABILITIES (creditors due within one year)			
Creditors		7,309	1,245
		<hr/>	<hr/>
NET CURRENT ASSETS		54,270	68,157
		<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL NET ASSETS		<u>£54,270</u>	<u>£68,157</u>
 REPRESENTED BY:			
Accumulated Resources (Unrestricted)	9	25,063	30,583
Fabric Repair Fund	10	20,910	24,454
Restricted Fund: Youth Worker	4b	8,297	13,121
Restricted Fund: JE Price Bequest	11	0	0
		<hr/>	<hr/>
		£54,270	£68,158
		<u>£54,270</u>	<u>£68,158</u>

Anthony Seys Llewellyn

Hon. Treasurer

March 2020

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL - ST EDMUNDS, CRICKHOWELL

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2019

	Note	2019		2018	
		Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Total
INCOMING RESOURCES					
Incoming Resources from donors					
Direct Giving:planned		49,850		49,850	50,448
other		5,406		5,406	5,056
Indirect Giving - Income tax refunds		13,077		13,077	13,615
Special Appeals: for the Worldwide Church					
Exceptional & Donations	4	5,603	10,371	15,974	14,429
Income from Investments					
Bank interest & Investment income		398		398	85
Income from charitable & ancillary trading					
Fund Raising	2	0	6,680	6,680	4,541
Other Ordinary Incoming Resources					
Other Income	1	3,944		3,944	4,079
TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES		£84,958	£10,371	£95,329	£92,253
RESOURCES USED					
Activities directly relating to the work of the church					
Giving outside the Parish(Special Appeals)	3	5,289		5,289	6,450
Mission in the Church	7	4,376	10,371	14,747	13,643
Social Concern	4	2,545		2,545	3,300
Church management & administration					
Maintenance of Ministry:Quota		62,898		62,898	51,022
Maintenance of Church	5	11,154		11,154	10,715
Maintenance of Services	6	1,438		1,438	1,683
Parochial Expenses		833		833	3,098
General Parish Expenses	8	1,088		1,088	592
Capital Expenditure (Chairs)		857		857	0
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		£90,478	£10,371	£100,849	£90,503
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)		(5,520)	0	(5,520)	1,750
TRANSFERS BETWEEN FUNDS					
Transfer from J E Price Fund		0	0	0	800
Transfer to Fabric Repair Fund		0		0	0
		£0	£0	£0	£800
		(5,520)	0	(5,520)	2,550
UNREALISED GAINS AND LOSSES ON INVESTMENTS					
			0	0	0
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS	9	(£5,520)	£0	(£5,520)	£2,550

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL - ST EDMUNDS, CRICKHOWELL

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS - 31 DECEMBER 2019

	2019	2018
1 Other Income		
Weddings & Funerals	3,944	4,079
	£3,944	£4,079
2 Fund Raising		
Oxford/Bath Trips	846	943
Open Church 'Saturdays'	3,000	0
Roger White talk	387	0
Harvest Supper	0	66
Flower Arranging	340	739
Photocopying	328	0
Community Singing	116	0
Church Stall/Craft Fair	85	0
Prints & Postcards	36	234
Coffee Mornings	532	2,084
Granny Attic	76	0
Church Hire	934	475
	£6,680	£4,541
3 Special Appeals		2018
(Mission giving outside the Parish)	Received Paid Balance	
Archdeaneries Charity		0
Association of Evangelists		200
Awareness Foundation		400
Brecon Street Pastors		200
CMS		550
Carl & Sally Venn Indian Charity		500
Chile for Christ		400
S & B Board of Social Responsibility		150
Embrace the Middle East		200
Faith in Families		300
Himlit		300
Messy Church		150
Metropolitan Mission		(200)
Rakungirli Orphan & Vocational Project		400
Kunri Krafts		400
Kalka Care Home		400
Mothers Union		400
St Thomas Theological College		1,000
United Beach Mission		200
Tear Fund		500
	£5,289	£6,450

Other Collections were taken during the year for e.g. Christian Aid etc. These funds were received by the charities directly and did not pass through the Church Accounts.

4 (a) Other Income- exceptional items	Received	Paid	Balance	2018
Shelter Cymru	189	189	0	(6)
St David's Hospice	260	260	0	(22)
Usk House, Brecon		200	(200)	(200)
Open the Book		150	(150)	(150)
Womens' Refuge, Brecon		200	(200)	(200)
Dial a Ride		200	(200)	(200)
St Catwyg Ministry Area		0	0	(300)
British Legion	846	846	0	0
Miscellaneous Donations	4,308	500	3,808	2,500
	£5,603	£2,545	£3,058	£1,422
(b) Youth Worker Appeal	13,121			
Donations Received	5,547			
	18,668			
Less Expenditure	10,371			
Carried forward to 2019	£8,297			
	2019			2018
5 Maintenance of Church				
Gas, Electricity & Water		4,223		4,155
Insurance		2,352		2,096
Maintenance, Cleaning etc		4,579		4,464
		£11,154		£10,715
6 Maintenance of Services				
Sacristy, Organ & Worship Group		1,438		1,683
Xmas Services Promotion (Card Distribution)		0		0
Hymn Books & Other Resources		0		0
		£1,438		£1,683
7 Mission in the Church	Income	Expense	Net	2017
Children & Youth		447	(447)	(390)
Holiday Club			0	(139)
Parish Hall Hire (net of Men' Breakfast Club Contribution)		1,200	(1,200)	(1,185)
Advertising		70	(70)	(220)
Speakers		267	(267)	(876)
Magazine	412	462	(50)	5
Easter Lilies	188	182	6	20
Telephone & Broadband		351	(351)	(370)
Secretarial Expenses		18	(18)	0
Ministry Area Travel		1,121	(1,121)	(531)
Training		678	(678)	(145)
Gifts		10	(10)	(65)
Publications		170	(170)	(40)
	£600	£4,976	(£4,376)	(£3,936)

	2019	2018
8 General Parish Expenses		
Printing, Stationery & Postage	248	382
Photocopy Lease	840	210
	<u>£1,088</u>	<u>£592</u>
9 Accumulated Fund		
Balance as at 31 December 2018	30,583	28,033
Surplus for the Year	(5,520)	2,550
Balance as at 31 December 2019	<u>£25,063</u>	<u>£30,583</u>
10 Fabric Repair Fund		
Balance as at 31 December 2018	24,454	35,546
Transfer from General Fund	0	0
VAT Refund	25,582	0
Donations Received - General	123,844	6,985
Friends	2,022	1,284
	<u>175,902</u>	<u>43,815</u>
Expenditure:		
Info Pillars	(538)	0
Grimbald Restoration	(750)	(100)
Bascowen Grave	(350)	0
Parish Room Refurbishment	(3,805)	0
Door	(9,060)	0
Roof Repairs	(140,489)	(19,261)
Lighting System	0	0
Balance as at 31 December 2019	<u>£20,910</u>	<u>£24,454</u>
11 J E Price Bequest		
Balance as at 31 December 2018	0	800
Less transfer to General Fund (Churchyard Mtce)	0	(800)
Balance as at 31 December 2019	<u>£0</u>	<u>£0</u>
12 Miss A M Hilliard Trust		
The market value of of the 217 Units held in the above fund at 31st December 2019 was £345.00 (est) (2018:£345.39)		

St Edmund's Church, Crickhowell
Annual Vestry Meeting
Sunday 15th November 2020 at 10.45am
Agenda

1. Opening Prayers
2. Apologies:
3. Minutes of the 2019 Annual Vestry Meeting
4. Annual Report for 2019
5. The revised Electoral Roll
6. Financial Report 2019
7. Review and renewal of Safeguarding Policy
8. Elections and Appointments
 - Rector's Warden
 - People's Warden
 - PCC Nominations
 - Ministry Area Council Representative
9. Appointment of Independent Examiner
10. Any other business (for which prior notice has been given)

St Edmund's Church, Crickhowell
Annual Vestry Meeting
Sunday 7th April 2019 at 9.15 am
Minutes of the Meeting

- 1) **Opening Prayers:** Were led by the Rev: Rana Khan.
- 2) **Apologies:** Alan Foster, Anthony and Helen Seys Llewellyn, Melanie Gold, Simon Large, Anne Smith, Jan Franks. 39 people were present
- 3) **Minutes of the 2018 Annual Vestry Meeting:** were agreed and signed. Proposed by Anthony Silwood and seconded by Virginia Robotham. There were no matters arising.
- 4) **Annual Report for 2018.** The Rector introduced the 2018 Annual Report, and commented that it was a comprehensive report which would be good to share with our local community. Julian Stedman was thanked for collating the report, and it was suggested by Anthony Silwood that Julian might like to collate it again next year.
- 5) **The revised Electoral Roll:** This was provided by Ruth Griffiths who is Electoral Roll Officer. We have lost 5 people from the roll this year, and next year (2020) the Electoral Roll will be completely revised as will start again. The rector thanked Ruth for her role in maintaining this important document.
- 6) **Financial Report:** This is Martin James final report to the Church as he is standing down after 16 years, and **Anthony Seys Llewellyn** is taking over as Treasurer. To summarise, income exceeded expenditure by £2745, out of which £4500 was from fundraising, and £13000 from Gift Aid – please see Financial report figures in the Annual Report for more in depth information. Total outgoings were £79000. The main area of concern for the future is a rise of 5% in the Parish Share for 2019, and a similar increase for 2020. The Diocese has recently pointed out that they expect churches to prioritise paying their Parish Share before all other expenditure. In order to meet our Parish Share in 2019 each church member needs to give £12 per person per week. Martin also stated the importance of people Gift Aiding their giving. Martin thanked everyone for their support over the last 16 years, and he went on to say that St Eds has the largest number of worshippers in the Swansea and Brecon Diocese, including the Cathedral, and we have maintained our worship numbers, which shows that we are a vibrant church, and that we must be doing something right. Martin thanked everyone for their support, and then took questions as follows:-
 - What is the Parish Share used for? The Rector explained the significant number of uses that the Parish Share was used for. In addition, we have had to support Cwmdru and Tretower as they are in deficit with their Parish Share.

- Do we as a church have any say in how the Parish Share is spent?
The Rector responded that there is a scheme, through a Diocesan sub-committee in which parishes can have a say about their Parish Share.
 - It was suggested that we should understand that some people cannot afford to contribute this amount of money (£12 per week per person), and that if God wants us to do something specific He will make the money available. Much discussion and further clarification followed, and Rev Sally Rees concluded this discussion by saying how much Martin has been valued in his 16 years of being Treasurer.
Acceptance of the 2018 Financial Report was proposed by Julian Stedman and seconded by Ed Walker, and unanimously accepted by all present.
- 7) **Review and renewal of Safeguarding Policy:** Sherrill Worgan, as appointed Safe Guarding Officer, explained that the Safe Guarding Policy had been updated and that she was currently wading through the revised policy looking for amendments, so that the Policy can be re-printed. Sherrill asked if there were any questions, and there were none.
- 8) **Elections and Appointments**
- **Rector's Warden:** Sue Foster appointed by the Rector
 - **People's Warden:** Anthony Silwood proposed by Rennie Gold and seconded by Rosalind Matty
 - **PCC Nominations:** 8 people were proposed, seconded and unanimously elected, 6 people are ex officio, and 2 people were co-opted (John Matty as Ministry Area Council Representative, and Hannah Jones as Young People's Representative.) For specific information re these elections, please see attached Nomination Form.
 - **Ministry Area Council Representative:** John Matty proposed by Sue Foster and seconded by Rennie Gold.
- 9) **Triennial Elections.**
- **Diocesan Conference:** Principle Member: Kerry Andrews, Supplemental Member: Janice Block
 - **Deanery Conference:** Lay Representatives: Eric Gower, and Vaughan Bennett.
 - Supplemental Representatives: Adrian Andrews, and John Matty.
- 10) **Appointment of Independent Examiner:** Vaughan Bennett is happy to continue in this role, and he was thanked for his contribution to the management of church finances.
- 11) **Presentation and Thanks:**
- Virginia Robotham presented a picture of St Edmunds Church as a gift, and she was warmly thanked for her contribution to the life and work of the church through her artistic gifts.
- Martin James was presented with a voucher on his retirement from his role as Treasurer.
 - The Rector thanked Julian Stedman for his time as Lay Chair of the PCC and also thanked him for all the other roles which he so willingly fulfills within the church, and for his new role as Diocesan Evangelist.
 - Anthony Silwood thanked Rosalind Matty for her role as Secretary to the PCC, and all the other Teams within the PCC and the Church.

12) Any other business (for which prior notice has been given)

- Sherill Worgan asked how she would report back to the PCC now that she she was no longer a PCC Member. The Rector said that she would be invited to attend specific PCC meetings when needed, and she would be invited to write reports as necessary.

As there were no other questions the AVM Business Meeting closed at 10.15am.

PCC Nominations 2019

Name	Proposer	Second
Ed Walker	Alison Stedman	Judy Roche
Rosalind Matty: (Secretary)	'Rennie Gold	Anthony Silwood
Kerry Andrews	Rennie Gold	Ruth griffiths
Anthony Seys Llewellyn (Treasurer)	Anthony Silwood	Rosalind Matty
Hannah Jones (co-opted to represent youth)	Rosalind Matty	Anthony Silwood
Kathryn Bullon	Ruth Griffiths	Sherrill Worgan
Rennie Gold	Kerry Andrews	Virginia Rowbotham
John Matty: (MA Council Rep – co-opted)	Sue Foster	Rennie Gold
David Gooding	Richard Crole Rees	Rennie Gold
Virginia Robotham	Sue Foster	Martin James
Ex – officio members		
Rev: Rana Khan (Rector)	Ex Officio	
Rev: Sally Rees (Deacon)	Ex Officio	
Anthony Silwood (People's Warden)	Ex Officio status Rennie Gold	Rosalind Matty
Sue Foster (Rector's Warden)	Ex Officio	
Mairwen Large (Reader)	Ex officio	
Julian Stedman (Lay Evangelist)	Ex-Officio	

8 Elected PCC Members

6 Ex Officio Members (including elected People's Warden)

2 Co-opted members

PCC is thus made up of 16 members, 2 of whom are co-opted