

Parish of Uffculme
Parochial Church Council Annual Report
For the year ended 31st December 2013

Working together to grow God's kingdom

www.stmarysuffculme.org.uk

www.ststephensashill.org.uk

www.squarecorner.org.uk



Our Way of Life

In 2013, we have been trying to live out the Christian Way of Life, pledging to follow Jesus and to:

- 1) **Grow in faith**..... through regular prayer, biblical reflection, holy rest, worship and communion;
- 2) **Be connected**..... by encouraging others, listening, offering hospitality, and by making a commitment to a Christian community;
- 3) **Respect and serve others**..... through working to alleviate poverty and injustice, caring for God's creation, and by making my unique contribution to God's mission where I live, play, study and work.

Parish of Uffculme. Deanery of Tiverton & Cullompton, Diocese of Exeter
Bank: CAF Bank Ltd; Independent Examiner: Marie Johns, Batchelor & Co
Charity Commission No 1146940

Parochial Church Council 2013

The Parish is part of the Culm Valley Mission Community with St Mary's Willand, St Mary's Kentisbeare and All Saints Blackborough. The Parochial Church Council has maintenance responsibilities for St Mary's Uffculme, Square Corner and St Stephen's Ashill. The PCC met nine times during the year, and also operated through a number of groups and committees, meeting as required following issues raised at PCC meetings. Current groups include the smaller PCC Standing Group, a service planning group, congregational meetings in Ashill, CREATE Management Group, a children and youth leaders group, Square Corner Management Committee, Pastoral Care Group, Church Facilities Group – St Mary's, and the Stewardship Steering Group.

The following served as members of the PCC:

Mission Community Leader: Revd Rob Wilkinson

Team Vicar: Revd Selina Garner

Reader/Ordinand: Jill Purser

Churchwardens: Tony Lane, Jimmie Hepburn

Deanery Synod Representatives: Keith Rushforth, David Hollis and Tony Lane

Elected members (following 2013 APCM):

Stephanie Burtchaell, Karen Green, Lucy Green, Penny Hepburn, Tony Kidd (PCC Secretary & Planned Giving Officer), Moira Pettifer, Martin Rock-Evans (Safeguarding Officer), Lesley Salter, Kelly Williams

Supporting roles

Revd Nigel Pocock (observer on the PCC)

Treasurer and Electoral Roll Officer: Babs Roach

The Licensed Ministry Team

The Revd Selina Garner is Team Vicar with pastoral responsibility for St Mary's Uffculme. Jill Purser works full time as our Licensed Lay Minister/Reader and is undergoing training for ordination, due to be ordained in September 2014. The Revd Michael Boyes continues to minister to our 8am congregation and offers a mid-week communion at 9.30am every Wednesday. The Revd Rob Wilkinson is our Mission Community Leader with pastoral responsibility for St Stephen's Ashill. The Revd Nigel Pocock has permission to officiate across the Mission Community. The Revd Chris Hudson offers a monthly communion within the parish.

Main developments in 2013

- We developed our leadership team working hard to be open to the guidance of God and to develop healthy ways of working together to grow the kingdom. We enjoyed a day with David Rowe from Lee Abbey as a leadership team to help us think about how we work together in Christ.
- We had a brilliant church weekend away in Lee Abbey in September which strengthened the church family relationships and our understanding of the shared way of life. We have booked ourselves up for another Lee Abbey weekend away in November 2014.
- Our Christian community continues to grow in spiritual depth and numbers. More people are exploring new ministries, which is exciting. New people continue to explore being part of the church community in Uffculme.

Looking forward to 2014

- We continue to explore being a community with a shared 'Way of Life' through teaching, small groups and conversations
- We will seek to develop a partnership approach to mission across the Mission Community in the coming year and through the process of appointing a new Mission Community leader
- We continue to develop the vision and mission of the church through the refurbishment plans and programme in Square Corner
- We hope that we will develop stronger links with children and families in Uffculme and Ashill in the coming year

The Revd Selina Garner *Team Vicar with pastoral responsibility for St Mary's Uffculme and Pioneer Youth Minister for the Tiverton & Cullompton Deanery*

Facts and figures

During 2013 there were 4 weddings (including 1 at Bradfield Chapel), 9 funerals in church (including 1 at Ashill), 4 funerals at the crematorium only, and 2 interments of ashes (including 1 at Bradfield).

Electoral Roll Report for Uffculme Parish

122 (last year the figure was 121, there have been 5 additions, and 4 removals)
9 people on the electoral roll live outside the parish

Finances

Treasurer's Report

Our General Fund income increased in 2013 from £58,026 to £65,351 but our General Fund expenditure also increased from £61,720 to £62,818. We are pleased to report that planned giving has increased again this year and this helped to give us our small surplus.

The main surplus was in restricted funds due to the fact that we received grants from Exeter Diocese and Uffculme Trust and also substantial donations for the Square Corner Refurbishment project. These monies of course can only be used for the purpose for which they were given and therefore we must still look very carefully at how we operate our day to day finances. We have just had our five-yearly (quinquennial) inspection on the two church buildings and therefore can expect quite a bit of expenditure to come in that area.

In our giving, we have once again supported three main causes – Karen Action Group, CHAT and St Andrew's Evangelical Mission (Peruvian Orphanage) as well as our seasonal special collections.

Graham Miller, who used to be our examiner felt that it was time to hand over the reins and we are very grateful to Marie Johns of Batchelor & Co. in Cullompton for taking the accounts on and turning them round in double-quick time.

Babs Roach (Treasurer)

Planned Giving Officer's Report

It is pleasing to note that Planned Giving, the main component (about 60%) of our general income increased by 18% in 2013, and the amount we can claim back from the government as a result of Gift Aid, an additional 15% of our income, also increased substantially. Please do consider, if you are a UK tax payer, completing a Gift Aid form (available from myself), if you haven't already done this, and the church can then claim back an additional 25p for every pound you give, at no cost to yourself.

Although there is a small surplus this year, we would be grateful if you are able to pray about and review your level of giving on a regular basis – the necessary expenditure on ministry and mission continues to grow, and we all wish to develop and maintain our beautiful church buildings. We are taught to give generously from the resources God has given us, and we can all 'work together to grow God's kingdom' in our community.

Tony Kidd (Planned Giving Officer)

Churchwardens' Fabric Report

Both St Stephen's Ashill and St Mary's Uffculme have had their Quinquennial (five yearly) Inspections as required by the Diocese of Exeter. The reports are due shortly and it is anticipated that they will outline a range of works to be undertaken over the next five years. Both churches are in generally good repair, however there are a number of issues to be addressed.

St Stephen's saw the benefit of a new oil boiler, oil tank and radiators fitted in 2013 which was mainly grant-aided thanks to Colin Coombes' efforts and the Friends account. A new kitchen sink and units have also been installed in the school room thanks to Colin and Norman Fleet.

We have not progressed with the welcome area improvements at St Mary's as outlined in the last fabric report, with the focus on other matters. A number of small fabric jobs are carried over from 2013 to include paint repairs, radiator leaks and so forth awaiting the Church Facilities Group decision on priorities.

A lightning strike on St Mary's in September required a number of electrical repairs to be made and replacement of some of the audio equipment, all covered by insurance.

The church tower clock started to show the incorrect time in February 2013 and it has taken a great deal of time to first find out why and then to arrange to have a repair made to the main spindle connecting the hands to the mechanism. This work is to be undertaken in April 2014 and hopefully the clock will be back in action. We are grateful to Uffculme Trust for a grant to complete the works.

The **Church Facilities Group** was formed and met in September 2013 to review, manage and maintain church and churchyard facilities with a view to:

- a) Maintaining the existing church fabric
- b) Developing facilities to support the ministry and worship within the church building
- c) Link with and support the wider mission of the church.

They will report to the PCC with recommendations for their consideration twice a year or as and when required by the PCC.

Recent heavy rains have caused a major leak in the bell tower possibly due to the masonry becoming saturated. Following this we are looking into having the tower and steeple inspected to review the condition of the masonry/pointing.

We are immensely grateful to all those who assisted us in our duties this year. The church is much greater than the sum of its parts and we look forward to sharing in God's mission for our church community in the coming year.

Tony Lane & Jimmie Hepburn (Churchwardens)

Cleaning Report

Many people do not notice if the Church has been cleaned but would notice if it hasn't, so many thanks to everyone who has agreed to take a share in this over the past year. Babs Roach has faithfully organised the cleaning rota for a number of years, but is now handing over the reins, with Karen Green taking over responsibility at least initially.

There are a good few vacancies on the cleaning rota, so if you want the church to continue looking clean and cared for, please do contact Karen, who will be delighted to include you in the rota. As always, the more volunteers there are, the fewer times any individual person will be called upon to help out.

Flowers

This has been a quiet year, with only being asked to arrange flowers for one wedding and no other big event, but we have enjoyed decorating the church appropriately for Easter, Harvest, Remembrance Sunday and Christmas and providing flowers throughout the year. We have sadly lost two members - Valerie Hollis who was a very loyal and long serving member of our team who we shall miss very much, and Janet Billings who lives in Tiverton but will still take part in the decorations for the Festivals.

We are becoming an increasingly older band - I hasten to say with some exceptions!! - and it is becoming difficult to fill the rota. In fact there may be some weeks when it may not be possible to have flowers so I really should welcome some newcomers to the team. I should like to take this opportunity to thank the "flower ladies" for all they do and our supporters who give us very generous donations. We have £122 in our Savings Account and £35 in the petty cash.

Valerie Holbrook

From the Way of Life, we wish to follow Jesus, and to *grow in faith* through regular prayer, biblical reflection, holy rest, worship and communion:

Services

Sunday morning worship, St Mary's

8am congregation

Our 8am congregation offers a quiet space for a traditional communion service. The Revd Michael Boyes, Revd Selina Garner and The Revd Chris Hudson lead the services.

11am congregation

Our 11am congregation continues to offer a creative space for worship with a real mixture of styles, different from week to week, ranging from quite traditional services, to newer forms of worship, with participation from both younger and older members of the congregation. Songs of Praise services are an opportunity for people to say why particular hymns or songs are important to them, and there are generally opportunities for different people to get involved in taking part in, or leading, the service.

There is a large team involved in planning and leading the 11am service and offering a welcome and hospitality. Thank you to everyone who serves in this way. It is exciting to be able to work together, and to offer a warm welcome to new people and family members. Please do talk to Rachel Tucker, who coordinates the rotas for reading, praying, welcoming and hospitality, if you would like to get involved.

Wednesday Communion

The Revd Michael Boyes continues to lead the 9.30am midweek Communion.

Music ministry

We are very grateful to Geoff Roach and Richard Ruty continuing to lead our worship. Geoff reports:

I don't think we've ever quite got over the loss of Andrew (former Music Director) and Claire Down and all their industriousness, particularly with the young musicians. But those of us that are left still support the church music as best as we can, with Richard and myself on organ/piano often supplemented by Karen and Lizzie on flutes, Jack on clarinet and Chris on guitar (who also leads some songs). Hannah and Rachel also supplement with their vocal skills. Music at Ashill and Bradfield is principally keyboard based.

Several high points of the year, though, have been the performances by the voluntary choir, ably directed by Richard. We've performed at Easter, Pentecost, Harvest and Christmas and Richard coaxes out really good results from quite a diverse group of singers and other musicians, with the candle-lit carol service always the high point of our efforts. And we have a lot of fun along the way too. Well done, particularly to Richard of course, but also to all the singers and orchestra members.

Geoff Roach

Sacristans' Report

There is no longer a head sacristan as such but many individual people work solidly behind the scenes to prepare each of our churches for services, particularly Holy Communions, and change the altar frontals, bookmarks etc in line with the church seasons. And after the services the communion vessels are all put back away and the linen miraculously comes back beautifully washed and ironed. Some of this work virtually takes places anonymously but the church owes a big thank you to everyone who is involved in this work in any way. I would particularly like to record our indebtedness to David and Valerie Hollis, who have both worked tirelessly in this area for many years, and we shall all miss Valerie's cheerful, practical and down to earth approach.

Geoff Roach

Prayer ministry team

Prayer ministry is available after 11am services and a faithful team make themselves available every week to offer this coordinated by Caroline Wrigley. We now have a booklet about this ministry to support those involved and are encouraging people to offer prayer to one another more often.

Selina Garner

St Stephen's Ashill

This year saw a number of changes at Ashill.

Colin Coombes moved away after many years of active service in the village, to be nearer his family. He was publicly thanked during a service just prior to his leaving for all he had done to enhance the life and worship of St. Stephen's, and was presented with gifts in token of appreciation for his unstinting endeavours.

After discussion with members of the local congregation and with full agreement of the PCC, the decision was taken to reduce the number of Sunday services. On the second Sunday of each month there is Family Praise, and on the fourth Sunday, Holy Communion. In addition a quarterly evening service is held.

My sincere thanks to all involved with the worship at St Stephen's Church.

Revd Rob Wilkinson

Bradfield Chapel

Bradfield Chapel is under the care of the Uffculme Trust and an evening service is held there on the second Sunday of each month at 6.30pm during the months of March to December. (No Sunday services in January or February.) In the summer there is a Songs of Praise service, preceded by a cream tea, and the church is packed for the Harvest and Christmas Carol services.

Gordon Brown ceased being the regular organist due to commitments elsewhere. Our thanks go to him and to Geoff Roach for taking over that position.

Grateful thanks also go to the local group of people who decorate the chapel with flowers each month and keep the Christian witness alive in the village.

Revd Rob Wilkinson

Children and Youth Ministry

2013 has been a busy year for our children's ministry and we feel that lots of good foundations have been laid for the future.

KFC – Kids for Christ, Sunday Mornings

The Sunday morning children's club KFC continues to provide the younger members of the congregation with games, craft and stories about Jesus and the Christian faith. We have a regular small group of two or three young children who attend KFC and a few other children also attend occasionally. This year we have opted to use the Roots magazine for our KFC sessions and they have

gone exceedingly well, providing some great ideas for stories and craft as well as being in step with the church calendar year. Moira Pettifer and Jacquie Elsdon have been a great support in helping with these sessions.

Special events for children

We had a wonderful year of special events for children including; Pancake party, Good Friday craft, Mother's day, Father's day, Harvest service, Christingle service, Film night and the Scratch nativity. We have also held sessions for Kingwood Childcare and Uffculme Pre-School. These events often attract children and families who do not otherwise attend church and have provided a great opportunity to link with them and share aspects of the Christian faith.

Prayer

Sarah has continued to lead a prayer meeting for our children's ministry once a term in Square Corner. These meetings have drawn an encouraging number from the congregation who are not otherwise involved in KFC, which has been great to see.

Story Club

Jacquie Elsdon has very successfully established a story club twice a week in Uffculme Primary School, enabling children in Keystage 1 and 2 to hear and learn about stories from the Bible. Many of these children have attended other events in St Mary's since the story club started, and Jacquie's work has underlined the importance of getting to know children and families in the area and building strong relationships with them and the school.

Taste Café

Starting in October 2013 we have held a "Taste Café" event in Square Corner on the fourth Sunday afternoon of each month. Loosely based on the Messy Church model this has been aimed at 5-11 year old and their parents/carers, and combines games and bible story-themed craft with light refreshments. These events have been very successful, attracting several children who have also participated in the Story Club noted above, as well as regulars from KFC. The Taste Café relies on volunteers to run both the craft, games and stories and to provide refreshments and welcome adults who attend with the children. It has been an important outreach in our community and we hope it can continue after Jacquie leaves this summer.

Lucy Green and Sarah Rock-Evans

Youth

Youth group meets at Square Corner on Sundays and serves young people from other churches in the local community under the Squarefish youth banner. We set up a Wednesday night Squarefish group for young people aged 15 and older and this group is really growing in faith.

Selina supports a year round programme of youth ministry in the deanery often using Square Corner and St Mary's Uffculme as a venue to host events. We took 24 young people to St George's House and offered an exciting Easter programme including a pancake party, getting ready for Lent event, Maundy Thursday supper, Good Friday event, Saturday night vigil. Claire organised a Slum Challenge with Tony Lane and she ran some great prayer space events. We also enjoyed all-age windy walks, craft afternoons, films and barbeques. There is a regular after school café supported by youth volunteers on Monday afternoons and this has welcomed the after school clubs for special events. We encourage and support our young people to attend Christian youth camps over the year.

A fantastic team of volunteers and trainees help support this ministry – so a massive thank you to Helen, Jacquie, Claire, Jill, Lucy, Kelly, Julian, Sue, Penny, Tony, Martin and Sarah.



CREATE

Youth and Children's Ministry

A Centre for Rural Training and Excellence to raise young leaders in youth and children's ministry

CREATE supported Claire Stoney as a trainee youth worker and Jacquie Elsdon as a children and youth ministry consultant in the Mission Community. We also placed Helen Williams in the Sampford Peverell Team Ministry to support their work with children and schools. The finances for CREATE are held by St Mary's PCC and this is run as a restricted account. It is funded by individuals from across the churches, by grants and local fundraising.

Selina Garner

From the Way of Life, we wish to follow Jesus, and to be connected by encouraging others, listening, offering hospitality and by making a commitment to a Christian community:

Mission Community

Numerous activities took place across the Mission Community during the year. These varied greatly in style from formal and informal services in church, to ladies' breakfasts, to men's curry evening meetings in a pub, to weekends away with youth, to children's activities, to prayer meetings, to coffee mornings and much more besides. We thank God for each one, for the way they have been a blessing to so many, and for all involved in making them happen.

During the year Revd Pam Thomas announced that she will be retiring from her post in early April 2014. She has been very involved in the life of Kentisbeare and will be greatly missed. The position will be advertised before she leaves and it is hoped that there will only be a short timespan between her leaving and the appointment of a successor.

We were delighted that Jacque Elsdon, our Youth and Children's worker, agreed to be employed full-time for the current academic year. Previously she was part-time with us, and her becoming full-time has led to more opportunities, openings and links being established with young people across the Mission Community.

As anticipated, Messy Church commenced in January and this has proved to be a great way of outreach to families we would not otherwise have contact with. Messy Church is held on the third Friday of each month, apart from August, from 3.30pm to 6pm in Willand Church Hall.

Plans for the major re-development of Square Corner have progressed steadily and it is anticipated that the building works will commence within the coming year. See elsewhere in the report for additional details.

My sincere thanks go to all involved in the life and witness of St Mary's, Uffculme, especially, Selina Garner, Jill Purser, and Tony Lane and Jimmie Hepburn, the Churchwardens.

Change does not always come easily but as the song says, 'the times they are a-changin'. Consequently the church continually needs to adapt its style of mission and ministry, but not its message, accordingly. As we go forward, and 'seek to proclaim afresh [the faith uniquely revealed in the Holy Scripture] in each generation', to use words of the Ordinal, may we do so together, united in Christ and by his grace.

Revd Rob Wilkinson

Community Lunches

These continue to be very popular, and are held twice a month. Our teams of workers from the three churches in the village have been augmented by helpers from the village community and their input has been greatly appreciated, but of course more volunteers are always needed. We are *still* exploring the possibility of offering more fellowship after the meals but this will entail more commitment not only on the part of the existing teams but in recruiting others who would be willing to assist in turning a possibility into reality! **Jill Purser**

Special events

We continue to host various special events to share hospitality and show God's generosity. Thanks to everyone who has worked really hard to make these possible.

Ecumenical links

Our links with the URC and the Baptist Church continue to remain strong. This is underpinned by our joint United Service every 5th Sunday in the month, taking it in turns to host it in the three churches, our shared ministry in Community lunches, a joint Women's World Day of Prayer which we hold in Square Corner, and our joint prayer meetings on a Saturday morning. In addition we work together to offer coffee mornings in Square Corner twice a week.

Ecumenical Prayer Meetings

Monthly Ecumenical Prayer Breakfasts and an evening Prayer meeting are held regularly on the first Friday and Saturday mornings on a three-monthly cycle as follows:

1st month – Friday evening at the Baptist Church at 7.30pm

2nd month– Saturday morning breakfast hosted by the URC at Curwood House at 8am

3rd month– Saturday morning breakfast hosted by St Mary's at Square Corner at 8am

These meetings provide an opportunity to join with our brothers and sisters in Christ from the URC and Baptist Church in praying for the needs of the wider church and our village community. There is always a warm welcome and plenty of food to eat!

Jill Purser

Small Groups

A small group offers a place to learn, share and grow together in faith, hope and love.

Men's Group

The monthly Men's Group has continued to offer a relaxed space to chat over a curry and beer about various issues relating to Men and their Christian Faith, and to provide support to one other.

There is a core group of about 14 people, with up to 18 people coming to some evenings. We meet for a drink at about 7.30pm, have some form of discussion or presentation led by one of the group, and then have a meal at about 8.45pm.

Over the last twelve months topics have included a 'New Year's Resolutions', 'What breaks your heart?', 'Life on the Frontline', and a 'Romance MOT'. We have also had a BBQ – with partners – and joined the carols and mince pies in December. We'll be continuing the 'MOT series' for the next few months, looking at men's health and managing money.

If you haven't been before you would be very welcome ... the first beer and curry are on us!

Julian Garner

Weekly small groups

We had a number of small groups running in 2013 to offer Bible study, prayer and fellowship. New members are always welcome.

Jill Purser

- Tuesday : Selina hosts a morning prayer and Bible study in Square Corner on Tuesday mornings at 9am.
 John & Barbara Knight's group meet at Stenhill at 7.30pm.
- Wednesday : Dave and Beryl Lewis' group meet at The Piggery at 7.30pm
 A Mission Community Home Group meets at 8pm at Dye House Farm, Willand and is run by Chris Rutty. This offers a meaty Bible study and the occasional trip out.
 Kelly Williams runs an evening Bible study, held at various members' houses, please phone Kelly for information.
- Thursday: Jill Purser leads an ecumenical bible fellowship group which meets at Square Corner at 1.45pm.

Retreats, Prayer Breakfasts, Simple Lunches and Simple Suppers at Mill House

Mill House offer a programme of monthly simple lunches and suppers where we can enjoy round table fellowship, discussion, prayer and, of course, good wholesome food. We also run regular retreats there. Please speak to Selina or Jill if you would like to join in, or check their website. **Jill Purser**

Lee Abbey Weekend, 27-29 September 2013

No review of the year would be complete without a short report on the parish weekend at Lee Abbey. Around 55 church members and families, of all ages, were able to take the trip to the beautiful North Devon coast, and experience as their website says being where 'God is felt to be very near – a thin place'. We were able to come together as a community, to grow together, and to seek God's will for us as individuals, as families, as a congregation, and as a community. There was inspirational teaching, fun to be had together (including zipwiring for some intrepid younger, and older, guests; and dressing up in newspaper), and time to be alone with ourselves and with God. Many thanks to David and Rachel Tucker for all their work on the admin – it was a memorable weekend for all who were able to be there.

Deanery Synod

Cullompton and Tiverton Deaneries have now officially merged to become one large deanery. We saw the retirement of Bishop Michael from the Diocese in 2013 and the appointment process beginning to discern his replacement, the new Bishop Rt Revd Robert Atwell being announced in January 2014.

In February the Revd Ken Benjamin from the London Institute for Contemporary Christianity presented at the Synod on whole life ministry and being encouraged and envisioned in our day-to-day mission as Christians. June saw Synod being brought up to speed on the revised timetable for the Women Bishops' legislation. Finally in October we heard from the Diocesan Advisory Committee [DAC] about their work processing faculty applications for works in church buildings. This Synod also saw the election of a new Deanery Co Lay Chair. Simon Friend took over from myself and Dr Fern Clarke as the Lay Chair of the new merged deanery.

Keith Rushforth is standing down as Deanery Rep this year and so we need to elect a third rep for the parish of Uffculme. Please speak to David Hollis or myself if you are interested in finding out more about the Deanery. Everyone is very welcome to attend Deanery Synod meetings. You don't have to be an elected member to attend. Just turn up! **Tony Lane (Deanery Rep)**

Bell Tower Report for 2013

We have rung for three weddings in 2013 and other significant events such as Rod Moffatt's birthday in March. We managed to ring all eight bells for Remembrance Sunday and Christmas to a high standard despite challenges in getting enough ringers. We have not been active in the competition front this year and cancelled the Fred Edwards Shield due to a lack of interest. Whittingtons to Kings, then Queens and Rounds has become a staple call change. On many occasions, we have struggled to muster sufficient band members to make up a full team for weddings and other key commitments and have had to reach outside to past ringers and other towers. We are grateful to our ringing friends from other churches for lending a hand.

On the social front, Alison & Gordon Milne hosted the Summer Lunch in August which was a great success. We managed just the one tower tour in late October to Timberscombe, Cutcombe, Exton & Brompton Regis.

We hosted the NE Branch of the Guild of Devonshire Ringers AGM meeting this year starting with ringing, then an act of worship followed by the AGM. Thanks to Revd Nigel Pocock for leading the worship.

Recruiting is undeniably a challenge across the Guild region and is perhaps reflecting the general challenge of the church to connect with contemporary society. We are however hopeful that with a concerted recruitment drive this coming year we can increase our numbers. **Tony Lane (Tower Secretary)**

Communications

Spotlight

'Spotlight' is our parish magazine and is put together by the church for the village. Rachel Tucker collates and edits all the articles every month and Babs Roach liaises with the advertisers.

Over 1,400 copies were distributed every month in 2013, keeping people up to date with church services and village activities. David and Valerie Hollis and their team did an excellent job delivering them to people in the parish.

Church newsletter

We have a church newsletter every month that is put together by David and Rachel Tucker. This plays a vital role in our communications. Do email them or call them with any notices or public prayers for the church community.

Website and email communications

The website continues to play an important role in keeping everyone up to date with all the exciting things going on across our church community. We have started using MailChimp for the email newsletter so people can adjust their preferences, or opt out if they would prefer. Articles for the website are always welcome – so if there is something you would like to share with the fellowship or wider community send it to julian@thegarner.me.uk. **Julian Garner**

Headings from the website news pages for 2013, giving some snapshots (lots of photos...) of events through the year – look them up if you want to know more, or remind yourself of the year:

- January – Prayer Request from the Karen, Thank you Joan!
- February – Whole Life Discipleship, Street Challenge – we survived!
- March – St Andrews Orphanage Peru, St George's House Youth Weekend
- April – Easter Animations, Annual Review in Video
- May – Christian Aid Week 2013, Easter Video
- June – The 'IF' Campaign, Steeton Male Voice Choir, Square Corner Consultation closes, I will sing with the Spirit
- July – Men's Group BBQ, Beach Trip!, Consultation Feedback on Square Corner, The Power of Prayer, Amy's Baptism
- August – Summer BBQ and Goodbyes..., Our Work Experience Week
- September – Ten Personal Decisions for the Common Good
- October – Parish Weekend at Lee Abbey, Choir sings 'Look at the World'
- November – Remembrance Day, Celebrating the Baptism of Prince George!
- December – Taste Café-the story so far, Andrew Down Curacy in Exeter, Christmas Community Lunch, Uffculme Lights, Primary School Christingle Service, Carol Singing in the Ostler, Carol Service with St Mary's Choir, Uffculme School Carol Service, Church Family Film Night, Scratch Nativity

PA and video system

A small but dedicated team help ensure that everyone can hear what is being said in Church each week! I was once told that the mark of a good PA system is that you never notice it ... and I think we generally achieve that ... remember the old system that used to pop and crackle all the time?!

In addition to the regular services, weddings and funerals we have had some big events to support, and record, in terms of technology, including the Squarefish Celebration which uses every microphone, cable and video device going, the annual Carol Concert and the Uffculme School Carol Service.

Thanks to Martin Rock-Evans, David Tucker, Tony Lane and Geoff Roach for helping 'run the desk'.

Julian Garner

From the Way of Life, we wish to follow Jesus, and to *respect and serve others* through working to alleviate poverty and injustice, caring for God's creation, and by making our unique contribution to God's mission where we live, play, study and work:

Karen Action Group, CHAT and St Andrew's Evangelical Mission (Peruvian Orphanage)

The church continues to support financially the work of these three organisations.

Karen Action Group

A dedicated group within the village continue to work on behalf of the Karen people along the Thailand/Myanmar (Burma) border, in conjunction with Asian Tribal Ministries, working for new schools as part of the Children of the Border Project, and for a new Bible College. Political changes within Myanmar are very welcome, but bring their own dangers of increased tensions. David and Beryl Lewis were able to visit the Thailand border region in May.

CHAT

Churches Housing Action Team (CHAT) is based in Tiverton. CHAT gives free impartial and confidential advice to those experiencing housing difficulty in Mid Devon, and houses and supports young people in its Youth Housing Project houses in Tiverton. It also supports the Tiverton Market Centre Youth Drop In, a safe and neutral venue for young people to meet. In February, Tony Lane and Claire Stoney organised a night of sleeping 'rough' in St Mary's Church for young people, raising £400 for CHAT.

St Andrew's Orphanage in Peru

Church members support this orphanage at Chosica, near Lima, Peru, caring for around 30 children of all ages, abandoned children brought to the orphanage by police and social workers, or children from families facing a crisis. They are looking to set up their own school, as school fees are expensive by local standards. They have a training workshop, a day nursery, and a clinic and dispensary.

Christian Aid

Christian Aid week in May raised over £2000, with Gift Aid. Many thanks to everyone in the community who contributed, and to our organiser, Lyne Edwards.

Pastoral Care

We have set up a team of people with a heart for pastoral care. We are committed to this ministry, and have already attended a four-week course on 'listening' from the Acorn Christian Trust, and are looking to arrange further training in different areas of this ministry. If you are aware of anyone who is in need of help or visiting please speak with Selina or Jill in the first instance. There is a Pastoral Care Fund so please speak to Selina or Jill if you are aware of a need that the church may be able to support.

Jill Purser

Schools ministry

Uffculme Primary School

St Mary's continue to help pupils with reading, with volunteers, Revd Michael Boyes, Eric Dunsford, and Ann Salter. Services for Harvest and Christingle were again hosted by St Mary's. St Mary's also welcomed pupils for lessons as part of their RE curriculum. Jacquie has started a regular story club and is helping to develop stronger links with the school on our behalf.

Uffculme Secondary School

Through CREATE Youth and Children's Ministry and my Pioneer Youth role we have been able to continue to develop our ministry to Uffculme School. Myself and Claire have offered regular lunch time duties, lunch clubs including a Christian Union, community links, RE lessons about the Christian faith, assemblies, help with special events and activities and occasional pastoral care. We had eight students with us for a week of community development based at Square Corner in July, and continue to develop links with students involved in the Duke of Edinburgh Award. St Mary's Church Uffculme welcomed the whole school (800 students!) over two carol services at Christmas. I was asked to join the Governing body in July and agreed to do this to support the coming together of the primary and secondary schools as a Multi Academy Trust.

Selina Garner

Safeguarding Report

During the year, Kelly Williams stood down as Safeguarding Officer and Martin Rock-Evans stepped into this role. Jacquie, Selina and Martin have been reviewing and completely overhauling the safeguarding policy and more rigorous policy documents and processes have been put in place. The storage of information we hold as part of the safeguarding process has been reviewed and a filing cabinet for safeguarding has been installed so as to better manage this information. Beyond process review and improvement, there has been very little new recruitment of new volunteers and so the safeguarding workload has been light.

Martin Rock-Evans

Square Corner Report

Square Corner is a vital ministry that we offer to the community of Uffculme. Many organisations have benefited from being able to fundraise at coffee mornings on Saturdays and the midweek coffee mornings are a great meeting place. We have an incredibly loyal and hardworking group of volunteers from all the Uffculme churches and the wider community. The Parish Council and the Craft Group continue to be regular bookings. Karen Green now coordinates bookings. The middle floor offers office space and small group space. There is a Bible study and prayer group every Tuesday morning and on Thursday afternoons. Soup lunches were enjoyed during Lent in 2013 and various prayer breakfasts have been hosted. The after school café on Mondays continues and is open to primary age children and supported by students doing their Duke of Edinburgh Award. Sue Kidd helps Selina and Jacquie to run this group. The building is used for children and youth ministry on Sunday mornings and Squarefish on Sunday evenings.

Selina Garner

Square Corner Development

The development project included a comprehensive community consultation exercise last April and May 2013 which included a number of events in Square Corner, in the church and also at The Uffculme Show. The process showed broad support for the project, albeit with concerns about the scale and costs involved. The PCC felt that we should continue to hold out for the 'big vision' of making the most of the space available and ensuring it is fit for purpose for many years to come; so we went to tender with the full project in September. This gave us more accurate costings for the project which were somewhat lower than the original estimates – which was really helpful!

As of March 2014 we are now putting together funding applications to trusts and funders. Please pray for the project team that we will be able to maintain momentum and hold out for the 'big vision' for the role Square Corner could play in the lives of people in Uffculme in the future.

Julian Garner

So there is lots to give thanks to God for!

And may we continue to pray together for the future...

Lord Jesus, Pour resurrection joy into your church and heal us where we turn from you.

May our stories reveal the heights and depths of your unending love.

Help us offer your gift of love to the people we meet. Fill your people with a growing awareness that you walk with us, to guide and equip, weep and listen, laugh and play.

Equip us and unite us through your Holy Spirit, as we work together in Jesus' name.

Amen