



ST MARY'S
PARISH
CHURCH
BIDEFORD

SUPPORTING OUR AMBITIONS & EQUIPPING ST MARY'S FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

Would you like to help and support this vital work to remodel and equip our church to better serve the needs of the community it serves? We have already made a great start and raised significant sums from within the church family, but now we need your help.

To learn more, contact:

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Appeal Chairman
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Church Walk
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Tel: 07521 956006
Email: chrishall2013@hotmail.co.uk

To Make a donation:

Please make cheques payable to St Mary's PCC

Our bank details are;

A/C Name: St Mary's Bideford PCC

Sort Code: 51-70-16

A/C Number: 79093205



ST MARY'S
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EQUIPPING ST. MARY'S FOR THE 21ST CENTURY



A LETTER FROM OUR RECTOR

Dear friend.

Following an exhaustive consultation with the community of this designated deprived area in January 2017, we launched a bold and exciting appeal. The plan was to raise £475,000 to make St Mary's relevant and suitable for the current Bideford community, as well as those who are to follow us.

The community needed us to create a more flexible & comfortable space, which can be used by more people within the church family and the wider community. Our vision for the church is for people to come to Christ and this project will allow us to continue that work.

We asked the Church Family to consider prayerfully their response to this appeal and to be the first to give. They responded, raising over £100,000.

We are now approaching bodies such as yourselves to help us raise the balance of the funds which we need to carry out transformative work to an historic, civic centric building. With your generosity, St Mary's will be better equipped to serve the people and community of Bideford.

Thank you for your consideration and God bless.

Rev'd Claire Rose-Casemore

Team Rector
March 2018

ST MARY'S CHURCH

BRIEF HISTORY OF ST MARY'S – CHURCH AND BUILDING

The people of Bideford have been worshipping on the site of the current church for over 1,000 years, with the present church having celebrated its 150th anniversary in 2015. It had been built to replace a Norman church in 1260 which itself replaced the earlier Saxon church.

The church is filled with interesting and important artefacts, from the font which is thought to date from 1080, to more modern items such as the 1982 glass screen by the All Saints' Chapel.

ST MARY'S AND ITS PART IN THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

Ours is a really busy church, with over 500 people passing through St Mary's each week. As well as the regular services which attract a congregation of 150, St Mary's continues to reach out into the surrounding area and play a vital and pivotal role in the community. It hosts the annual Mayor's service as well as the well-attended Service of Remembrance. The Church offers a reflective and prayerful setting for nearly 100 baptisms, weddings and funerals each year.

St Mary's itself is used widely for the community, hosting a regular Free Friday Diner for those who are lonely or socially disadvantaged. Its weekly Music Makers session is now so popular that there are two sessions on a Wednesday to accommodate the 100 pre-school children and their carers. Messy Church appeals to the 5-11s and as the name suggests is messy and in church! There is a weekly Youth Club in the crypt for 9-11s. Other activities include Tea with Friends, a Tuesday morning communion service, Men's Breakfast, and also Reflections to help those of any faith come to terms with bereavement. It also provides a venue for local schools and community events.

THE CHALLENGE AND THE OPPORTUNITY

St Mary's is a heritage building in, and at the heart of, the surrounding community. St Mary's wouldn't be the same without Bideford, and Bideford wouldn't be the same without St Mary's.

However the needs of the community have evolved in the past 150 years and now is an opportune time to reflect on how we can best conserve and remodel the church for current and future generations.

The PCC have identified four key areas which, if addressed, will secure the future of St Mary's and ensure that its role within the community can become even stronger.

CURRENT NUMBERS ATTENDING ST MARYS



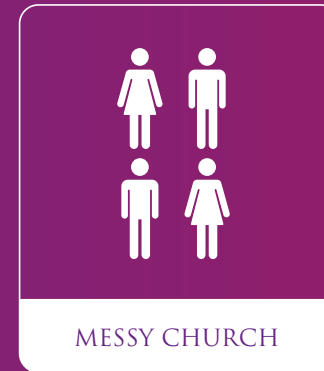
AVG ATTENDANCE

90



AVG ATTENDANCE

35



AVG ATTENDANCE

40



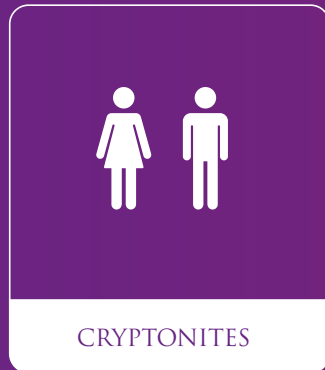
AVG ATTENDANCE

160



AVG ATTENDANCE

400
(800)



AVG ATTENDANCE

15



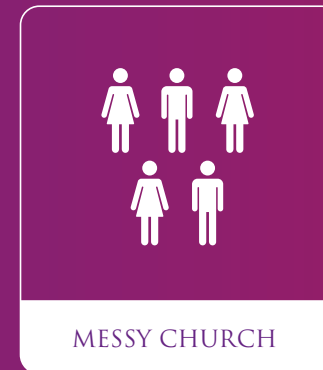
AVG ATTENDANCE

30



AVG ATTENDANCE

20



AVG ATTENDANCE

53

And in the run up to, and over the Christmas Period, we welcome over 3,500 through the doors of St Mary's.

PROJECT ELEMENTS

PHASE 1 – COMPLETED JANUARY 2018 - RESTORING THE ORGAN

Our fine 1868 'Father Willis' three-manual instrument required repair work to restore it to good condition.

PHASE 2 - IMPROVING ACCESS - FRONT ENTRANCE

At present disabled access is dreadful. Those in wheelchairs are unable to enter the church through the main entrance due to the steps. Instead they are forced to be wheeled around the outside of the building and enter via the South Entrance, via a difficult, narrow and dark path. And it's not just those in wheelchairs, those with impaired mobility find the steps challenging and precarious as well as the countless pushchair users attending St Mary's each and every week.

The proposal is to remodel the entrance with new steps and a ramp outside. Inside, the five side pews will be removed to relieve the congestion around a pair of new automated glass doors.



IMPROVED ACCESS - FRONT ENTRANCE

PHASE 3 - CREATING A FLEXIBLE, ADAPTABLE SPACE - THE CHANCEL STEPS

Church attendance is increasing and our worship needs are evolving.

Part of developing the current building, to offer a more flexible space for the Church Family and the community it serves, requires a more adaptable area at the front of the church.

Removing the front four pews and extending the chancel steps will create a more open, usable space, whilst also reducing congestion and improving access for those with limited mobility. Regular Sunday worship, town services as well as weddings and funerals will all benefit. Singing groups and orchestras will all enjoy improved space.

PHASE 4 - PROVIDING FOR THE COMMUNITY - THE KITCHEN

The present kitchen is up four steps into the base of the Norman Tower. It isn't up to current food hygiene standards so food has to be prepared and cooked off site. It is therefore limited to serving teas and coffees after services and events, as well as a serving area for the Friday Diner. Coupled with that, the steps in and out of the kitchen are an ongoing safety concern.

The plan is to build a new kitchen at the back of the church in which we could prepare, cook and serve up to one hundred hot meals at a time. Having such a facility would greatly increase the ability of the church to host community events and groups.

The old kitchen area would be converted into much needed storage space, and the children's area would be relocated.



WHAT IT WILL COST?

£475,000

Whilst ambitious, our appeal is designed to raise a significant one-off fund which will see St Mary's restored and repaired for many years to come. The completion of the work will significantly reduce our ongoing maintenance costs, leaving the giving of the Church Family to be used for the work of the church.



THE TEAM

APPEAL CHAIRMAN: CHRIS HALL

Chris and wife Mary have been part of St Mary's church family since 2014 after moving to the area to take over the running of a holiday village at neighbouring Westward Ho!. The Holiday Village itself has undergone a significant physical transformation, all managed, planned and overseen by Chris. Given his experience at managing large scale constructions and renovations, Chris was the ideal man to lead the Appeal for St Mary's.

Chris says looking after the fabric of the Church dovetails perfectly with looking after all the properties and overseeing the wonderful team at Golden Bay.

APPEAL CO-ORDINATOR: ELLIE DOE

Ellie has thrown herself into whatever needs doing at St Mary's, not only driving the Appeal forward with her immense experience from former days as churchwarden, but assisting the A.V team, forging links with Business's of Bideford, Treasurer for the local W.I group and so much more.

Having run her own firm of accountants in central London for a number of years, she has a wealth of experience in staff management and all areas of finance but more importantly, has that special something that helps things happen when most would simply give up!

THE OPEN UNIVERSITY

We're delighted that the Open University has recognised our project as a suitable church project. This recognition endorses the conclusions and recommendations of the PCC as well as the ambitions of the whole church family. The endorsement secures St Mary's free advice as we plan, consult and deliver the project.

WHAT DIFFERENCE WILL IT MAKE?

"We love Music Makers and we've been coming for almost 5yrs. We always get a really great welcome and the sessions are fantastic. It would be really amazing if the access to the church (with a pram!) could be improved – a ramp would be a big help if possible. Thank you!"

Rachel Pirrie (and Theo)

"Music Makers is the highlight of our week and is the most accessible all-age worship for parents with pre-school aged children. It really is a unique and very special play group and here is nothing else like it in the North Devon area. It would be fantastic to have a more versatile space to expand the ministry further. Those parents with children who have additional needs would benefit from a ramp into the church as well as making life easier for those with pushchairs. This really is a fantastic group and should be invested in and expanded further with these modifications. Thank you!"

Rachel Hepburn

"I'm so excited about the flexibility we'll have moving forwards in terms of our styles of worship. As things stand you are forced to be pretty traditional from the front of the church, or more relaxed at the back of the church. The changes to the layout will open up so many more options for us, and not just on Sundays. Baptisms, weddings and funerals will all benefit from the changes."

Leigh Winsbury, Curate

"Currently we cater for 35 diners every week at the Friday Diner. However the food has to be prepared and cooked off site and brought in. As if that wasn't challenge enough, our band of keen helpers must then contend with carrying the food up and down the steps into what we call the kitchen. The prospect of being able to cook fresh food on site...and then have a flat walk to serve it will revolutionise the opportunity, as well as allowing us to increase the number we cater for."

Pam Hewlett, Friday Diner Volunteer

"St Mary's remains a central part of the Bideford community and the fact that we choose to have an annual Mayors Service as well as the Remembrance Day Service at the church shows the high regard in which we hold the building and church family. The changes which the PCC are working to deliver will make the church even more suitable for civic functions and secure St Mary's place and standing within the town it has served for hundreds of years."

John Riley, St Mary's PCC Vice Chair
