**Appendix 1**

**Two Rivers Mission Community Annual Report for the year**

**ended 31st December 2022**

2022 has been a year of consolidation and growth. On Sunday 9th January Bishop Jackie led a mission community service in Tawstock to launch our mission action plan, and commission our new joint council and focal ministers. As the year has progressed, we’ve worked hard on building the mission and ministry of the church in each parish, as well as strengthening our collective work as a mission community. The removal of the last covid restrictions and increased confidence of people to mix has helped tremendously.

Sundays are the main focus of our lives together as Christians. Seven churches have met weekly and two others twice per month. Sunday services give us chance to worship together, pray, grow as disciples, and plan outreach. Importantly they are also a time for fellowship as Christians and mutual support. We normally follow the lectionary readings from Advent to Trinity Sunday, to focus on life of Jesus and then take a more flexible approach for the remainder of the year. At the beginning of the year, we preached a series looking at our Mission Community values of love, faith, Word and Spirit, generosity and joy. During the season of Trinity, we preached sermon series on the biblical books of Colossians and Esther, and a short series on Psalms quoted by Jesus. Seven of our churches now hold a monthly family service, including a new café church service in Yarnscombe which makes use of the warmth and facilities of the village hall. Festivals and ‘special’ services are used as an opportunity to invite people to church and agricultural festivals are important in many parishes.

Opportunities for adults to grow as disciples have been provided by homegroups, with 6 running during the year. An Autumn weekend away at Lee Abbey proved inspiring for the 15 adults and 2 children who attended. In the Autumn two church members commenced the Diocesan Foundations in Christian ministry course.

Our commitment to helping children respond to the gospel and grow as disciples as part of the church has been worked out in a number of ways. The out of school club in High Bickington and youth group in Newton Tracey continued and a new youth group and kids club launched in Beaford in May and September respectively. We still have no provision for pre-school children, but our parish nurse is a regular visitor to most local toddler groups and a Christmas visit to church was enjoyed by the toddler group in Beaford and at Christmas and Easter to St Giles. There is scope for more work with this important group, especially as we baptise 10 – 15 babies or young children each year.

We are blessed with a good working relationship with our four local primary schools; with collective worship conducted weekly in High Bickington and approximately twice per half term in the others. Open the Book collective worship runs in High Bickington and has recently restarted in HNTPS. All the schools make use of the clergy and churches for RE lessons when appropriate topics allow.

Evangelism, sharing the good news of Jesus and inviting people to enter a relationship with God through him, remains a priority for us. We encourage church members to share the Gospel with friends and neighbours and to invite them to church services and events where they can learn more and experience Christian community. We ran two Alpha courses in the Autumn, one in Beaford and one in Tawstock, with around a dozen guests in total. We also ran a youth Alpha course during the Autumn in Beaford village hall.

Our churches have continued to help members care for each other, largely through informal relationships and through the pastoral care offered by ministers. Care for the wider community has been expressed through coffee mornings and other opportunities to gather, and increasingly as the cost of living has risen, the provision of free meals, food banks and warm spaces. St Giles church are operating a much-valued pastoral care team, which offers friendship to those who need it.

Julia, our parish nurse, and now deacon, provides more specialist pastoral care, visiting the sick and housebound, accompanying parishioners to medical appointments and offering support on medical issues. She visits toddler groups and offers baby weighing and general advice. Julia has begun to officiate at funerals for those she has been supporting through end of life care.

During the year we conducted 14 baptism, 15 weddings and 34 funerals/burial of ashes across the mission community. 22 weddings are booked so far for 2023. These pastoral offices are a wonderful opportunity to share God’s love and the good news of Jesus with people at both the high and low points of life.

During the year Rob Pearce was appointed as focal minister for Beaford and joined the Leadership team. As the church in Beaford has grown and church members stepped further into ministry, Rev Gary has been able to step back a little. He has begun to work with the parish of Huntshaw to see if progress can be made in re-establishing a regular worshipping community there.

We seek to play an active part in the life of the Diocese and wider church. Rev Tracey has served throughout the year as rural dean. She and Derek Birch have served as co-chairs of deanery synod and other church members have served as deanery synod officers. We have provided a placement for a licenced lay minister trainee, who in turn blessed us with her enthusiasm and ideas.

We are delighted that a new curate has been appointed to join us in July 2023. We failed to appoint a new team vicar during 2022 and this has put a certain amount of pressure on the clergy. We continue to pray that someone will join us in 2023.

All our churches have maintained their common fund payments throughout the year – a wonderful achievement. Our common fund request will increase in 2023 due to our increasing participant numbers. This is only fair, not least because we remain heavily subsidised by the Diocese. Church members giving regularly and generously (ideally by direct debit or the parish giving scheme) helps ensure that we can meet our bills. Churches have worked hard to maintain their buildings and to improve them to better serve the mission of the church and local community.

As a mission community we are blessed with many people who play their part in making the mission and ministry of our parishes possible. We thank our focal ministers, wardens, PCC members and all who contribute their gifts of time, talent and money to our churches. Retired clergy have been invaluable in ensuring that priestly ministry has been available in each parish. Janette has provided administrative support. We are what we are because of you all.

We do not know what will occur during the year ahead, but we look forward to joining in with God as he fulfils his promise to build his church and kingdom. “Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.”

Rev Gary (Rector)

**Appendix 2**

**Mission Action Plan**

A picture containing table

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