

Warborough Parish Council Annual Meeting St. Laurence Church Report 2024

Warborough Church is open every day, free to enter, and maybe - just maybe - you'll leave with something special! The Church is the largest Community space in Warborough and, together with St. Laurence Hall, is for the benefit of everyone in our community.

Our Regular Sunday Worship

Average Sunday attendance, 40; Average weekly attendance, 77: similar to pre-Covid.

- Holy Communion with Hymns (Parish Eucharist) at 11am on the 1st & 3rd Sundays;
- Holy Communion without Hymns at 6pm on the 2nd & 8am on the 4th Sunday;
- Morning Prayer with Hymns at 11am on the 2nd Sunday;
- Evensong with Hymns at 6pm on the 4th Sunday.

We also hold, throughout the year, a very wide range of other Services & Events

- Community Hub for Life-Events;
- St. Laurence CE Primary School-in-Church;
- Community Social Events in St. Laurence Church and St. Laurence Hall;
- Significant Religious Festivals.

Community Hub for Life-Events in 2023

- 6 Baptisms & 3 Marriages: a joy for all, with up to 52 & 156 attending, respectively;
- 8 [+4 in '24] Funerals & 5 Interment of Ashes: times to share the grief of the bereaved and to give thanks for the lives of the departed, whether 6 or 275 gather together;
- Special Commemorative Service of Holy Communion on Coronation Sunday, May (47);
- St. Laurence Feast on The Green in August: with Benson & Roke Band and the (relatively) new Rector of the Dorchester Team, the Rev'd Jane Willis (84);
- All Souls Service in October: to remember and give thanks for the departed (56);
- Remembrance Sunday Service: held at War Memorial, with Parish Council&RAF (163).

St. Laurence CE Primary School-in-Church in 2023

An Academy within the Oxford Diocesan Schools' Trust

- Celebration for Mothers: with 99 children + 71 adults, ahead of Mothering Sunday;
- Celebration for Fathers: with 98 children + 81 adults, ahead of Fathers' Day, in June;
- Harvest-in-School: ahead of Harvest Festival Sunday, in October;
- School Service of Remembrance: at the War Memorial, in November;
- School Carol Service: with 101 children + 91 adults, ahead of Christmas Day;
- Celebration for Mothers: with 103 children+79 adults, ahead of Mothering Sunday ['24].

Community Social Events in St. Laurence Church and St. Laurence Hall in 2023

- The "Oxford Gospel Choir": the most recent social event - organised by *The Friends of St. Laurence Church* - brought joy to a full Church, 140 adults+10 children [early 2024];
- St. Laurence Hall continued to welcome Lunch Club, Village Coffee, After-Church Coffee & Conversation, WI, Mowers & Growers, and many more;
- St. Laurence Church continued to welcome visiting groups: Bell-ringers, Walkers, University of the Third Age (u3a).

Significant Religious Festivals in Church during 2023

- Palm Sunday, with donkey-led procession from The Green;
- Holy Week: Compline (Monday-Wednesday), Maundy Thursday, Good Friday;
- Easter Sunday Family Eucharist: with 6 children + 65 adults [in March 2024];
- Pentecost (Whit Sunday);
- Harvest Festival, followed by lunch in St. Laurence Hall in October;
- Carols by Candlelight at Christmas: with 116; and at the Six Bells;
- Crib Service on Christmas Eve, bringing delight to 13 children + 40 adults;
- Christmas Day Family Eucharist: with 8 children + 46 adults.

These activities would not have been possible without the commitment of so many individuals, giving their time, talents and money, for the benefit of all in the Community:

- *Licensed Lay Minister* (with thanks to Edna Strange);
- *Verger* (with thanks to Bill Oscroft);
- *Sacristan* (with thanks to Meinie Newton & Ann Watkins);
- *Church Choir* (with thanks to Rachael Pedley, Organist and Choir Director);
- *Flower Arrangers* (with thanks to Pippa Lamb);
- *After-Church Coffee, Tea, Cake and Conversation* (With thanks to Anne Marsden);
- *Bellringers* (with thanks to Sue Dyke, Tower Captain, & Sally Feaver for Hand Bells);
- *Brass Cleaning* (with thanks to Ann Watkins);
- *Care of the Churchyard* (individuals + contractors), including the *War Graves* (with thanks to Jenny Hall);
- *Church Lay Duties: Deputy Churchwardens; Sidespersons; Readers; and Intercessors* (with thanks to Meinie Newton & Anne Marsden); and, of course,
- *Warborough Parochial Church Council Officers and Members*.

Neither would these activities have been possible without those whose interest lies in the preservation and improvement of the Church buildings and, in particular:

- *The Friends of St. Laurence Church* and *The Friends Committee* (Martyn Drury, Alan Lamb, Vicky Hart, Paul & Millie Duncan), for making *The Church Conservation Project* their own, raising significant funding and being interested in every detail of the work carried out;
- *St. Laurence Hall Management Group* (Ken Webb, Sue Dyke, Pat & Ken Arnold), for fundraising, major refurbishments and managing Hall usage;
- *Warborough Parish Council* - and all residents - for their support, past, present & future.

Finally, please do remember in your thoughts and prayers:

- *Rev'd Jane Willis*, the Rector of the Dorchester Team;
- *Rev'd Caroline*, for her return to full health, as she prepares for early retirement; and
- *Rev'd Myles*, for the additional energy, commitment and love he's given the Church and all in Warborough & Shillingford these past 18 months.

The Church is the heart of the village with the village at its heart!

Michael Watkins
Churchwarden, St. Laurence Church
3 April 2024 St. Laurence Church, Warborough