

Westleigh United Reformed Church Report for Burlescombe Parish Council

Annual General Meeting 20th^t May, 2026

The Church and Hall this year have been as busy as ever and our little band of helpers are kept “on our toes.”

The Hall continues to be well used by groups and individuals like the History Group, Creative Activities, Youth Club and the Parish Council. The Church runs a coffee morning every Wednesday morning which is open to all – sometimes well attended sometimes not. We were sponsored for 2 months earlier in the year to provide free hot drinks, but this did not make any difference to numbers.

The Church congregation has increased which is heartwarming. We meet only once a month on the second Sunday at 3pm for Holy Communion with the main service starting at 3.30pm. There is no obligation to attend Communion which happens in the Hall deliberately to enable anyone who does not want to partake in this to go into the Church for 3.30 and be joined by the folk from the Hall. We no longer have an organist - we would be prepared to pay for someone to play for us if there was anyone out there who could give up a couple hours of their time on the 2nd Sunday of the month. Please contact us if that could be you! The service is followed by a cup of tea and informal get together.

The Church were very lucky to host Creative Activities amazing, knitted poppy displays to celebrate VE Day and on Remembrance Sunday. The Church was decorated inside and out with displays on the railings and poppies dotted around the graveyard and on graves whose occupants had served in the war. The Remembrance Sunday service was poignant and attended by folk who do not normally come to Church including a Forces veteran who was overcome by the display.

We have held fundraising events over the year to help with our ever-increasing expenses. We hold an annual Cream Tea which is coming up again on 27th June 2026. There is an afternoon high tea occasionally too. We also hold events for charities donating the proceeds to them. Our overheads are high which means that despite our best efforts we are consistently making a loss.

We are grateful to the Parish Council for paying for the defibrillator insurance and also in previous years giving a grant for grass cutting. Thank you also for giving us the opportunity to compile this report.