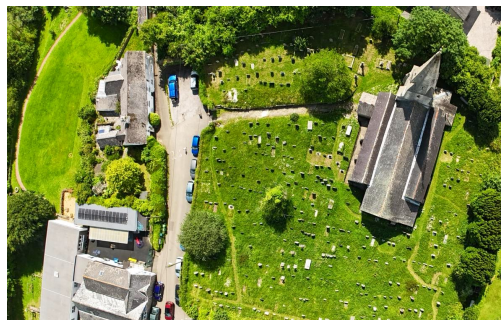


Diptford 800 Celebrations

We began June with the Village Open Gardens event, where the church was open and welcoming everyone from all over who came to explore the village and peek inside our 800-year-old church. The path was beautifully lined with boots, wellies and shoes planted with flowering plants, a lovely tribute to the thousands who have walked the church path over the past eight centuries.

As visitors and locals entered, they were given a brief history of the church, highlighting some key things to find and guiding them to the timeline that put the centuries into perspective, connecting them to other significant events in our country's history. Inside the church, there were also various brick builds on the theme of creation, created by our Brick Church members.



On 21st June, we welcomed over 90 people who came to support the church, living near and far but with some connection to the village and our parish church. It was a delight to be joined by Bishop Mike Harrison, Bishop of Exeter, and Revd Marisa Cockfield, our Rural Dean. The church looked splendid, thanks to our wonderful church flower ladies. The school had also worked hard on their artwork and sewing skills, creating pictures of the church and churchyard and bunting to celebrate the 800th anniversary.

School pupils and members of our Brick Church joined in our service with enthusiasm and joy for their church, which they all know well from their collective worship and festival services. Former pupils and teachers joined us, and the church was buzzing with excitement and awe at such a momentous anniversary of its history.

We were supported by our Benefice Choir with Jan Dietz, organist. Also the Bellringers from South Brent, who always kindly join us when they are able. The Diptford C of E School Music group were on top form, playing and singing so wonderfully. Thanks to Jo Zeiher, who encourages and conducts them. Thanks also to the acting Headteacher, Kate Wilson, who came and represented the School. Ugborough Youth Worship Band once again accompanied us on guitar to, "In Christ Alone" which was also really encouraging, thanks Tom, Sam and Beth. All this made our worship even more special. A huge thank you to everyone who...



came and helped make the day so wonderful, including our drone photographer, who took amazing pictures of the crowd from above.

Afterward, we celebrated with cake, beautifully made by Tommy, cream teas and a glass of sparkly to mark the occasion. Many people stayed to chat the Bishop and friends and family alongwith some of those who had been invited. It was a truly blessed day.

Then we enjoyed a wonderful concert by the Exeter Philharmonic Choir, which some members are part of or, have close ties to our congregation and community. The programme focused on Pilgrimage, featuring pieces over 800 years old. It was a delight to

hear so many voices singing together, interspersed with poems from all over the centuries.

This included a poem read at our Anniversary Service, written and read by Ruth Partridge. Overall, it has felt like the church and community have worked together to celebrate the value of rural village life for everyone.

Our Diptford 800 Celebrations continue in the autumn with a Parish Barn Dance on the 19th September, at Holsome Park - so **please put this date in your diary** and keep a look out for further details, coming soon.

Thank you to all who have contributed both visibly and also all those who quietly beaver behind the scenes; it has been noticed and it has definitely been appreciated by people from far and wide. May we all know the Lord's blessing on this community as we give thanks for all that has been and hope for all that will be.



In thankfulness,

David