

Corralejo, St James & Cotillo, St James

Fuerteventura Chaplaincy

Diocese in Europe

## ANNUAL REPORT 2021

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[www.fuertechurch.org](http://www.fuertechurch.org)

At many levels, not much has changed – the world is still in the midst of a pandemic, we are still absorbed by the vaccination programmes of wherever we reside, and we are still adjusting to a whole range of losses in our lives. But, in the midst of it all, God is still faithful.

We are thankful that we were able to hold the 2021 **Chaplaincy Annual Meeting** on Monday 26 April via Zoom, thanks to special measures put in place across the Diocese. Twenty-one people were in attendance onscreen – five more than attended our split in person and on Zoom meeting last year. And this year everyone onscreen was able to vote! The pandemic has, indeed, brought us many unexpected blessings in terms of a whole new world of effective communication.

At the meeting, reports for 2020 were received and new officers elected. Reports and results in full can be found on the Chaplaincy website at [www.fuertechurch.org/stop-press/annual-chaplaincy-meeting-2021](http://www.fuertechurch.org/stop-press/annual-chaplaincy-meeting-2021)



*The Blessing of Teddy Bears for Children in Poverty*

with caring for church leaders and encouraging self-care), were taking it into account as they met throughout 2021.

The pace of Chaplaincy life, and the need constantly to be seeking God's guidance for the way ahead, continues unabated.

During May and June twenty-three people, divided into four groups, undertook the Church of England's '**Living in Love and Faith**' course. Over five weeks we explored issues of relationships and sexuality in depth. Then each course member had the opportunity to register their own thoughts and understanding on the topics covered by completing an online survey. The survey itself forms part of a research project that will help guide further decision-making in the wider church. Since the end of the course, one of our Sunday services focussed on 'Understanding the Bible', and one on unity in diversity – both important themes that have come up regularly throughout the course.

At the same point in time a small group was commissioned by the Chaplaincy Council to update and expand the [www.fuertechurch.org](http://www.fuertechurch.org) website information on prayer. Alongside information about various patterns of daily prayer, there is now a 'How can we pray for you today?' response form that directs requests for prayer to our **Virtual Prayer Group** – a group of people linked by WhatsApp or email who are committed to praying for anyone who asks for our prayers. There is also information about praying in church (intercessions during worship, and also praying for anyone seeking prayer), forming a prayer triplet, or becoming a prayer partner. All of this is now available online.

The second part of giving a higher profile to our commitment to prayer was a '**Focus on Prayer**' weekend on Saturday 16 and Sunday 17 October. On the Saturday, around 20 people attended workshops in various venues, where they explored various forms of prayer, and on the Sunday the whole service focussed on prayer.

The autumn months brought a slow return of both 'swallows' and tourists to our worship and fellowship groups – some new faces but many old familiar friends. Some of us were even able to welcome family members back to the island for the first time in many months. It's been a time of real blessing in many ways, even amidst the continuing uncertainties of the COVID pandemic. But with the emergence of the new Omicron variant borders are beginning to close again and travel restrictions to tighten so once more we have no idea what the next weeks and months might bring.

Our **trainee Reader Ruth Brough** completed her course in record time and will hopefully be licensed to our Chaplaincy as a Reader at Synod if in person or by other arrangements.

On Sunday 7 November we held an experimental morning service in Piedra Alta restaurant in El Cotillo. The experiment worked well – both for us and for the restaurant – so we returned on Sunday 19 December for a service of Carols and Communion, and, from Sunday 9 January, it will become the new home for the **Cotillo St James** congregation, meeting at 10am every Sunday. This is a wonderful answer to much prayer.



*New home for Cotillo St James - Carols and Communion*

Our **Alpha course** had to be postponed until January 2022. But we are excited about offering this opportunity for people to get together and discuss life's big questions. Alpha will also partly serve as our Confirmation preparation course.

On Sunday 12 December we welcomed representatives of the **Asociación Español Contra el Cáncer** (the Fuerteventuran branch of the Spanish Association Against Cancer) to our evening service, where we officially presented them with the Chaplaincy's 1.500€ donation to their work for 2021. Our faithful contribution to the work of the cancer charity has made a huge difference to them during these months – now years – when normal fund-raising activities have not been possible.

We have maintained our strong supportive links with the essential social outreach work of **Misión Cristiana Moderna**, based in Puerto del Rosario and working across the island. In 2021, the St James team delivered just under 250 bags of food and 750 bags of bedding and clothing to help feed and clothe those seeking refuge here and all those living in poverty on the island.

In addition, the Chaplaincy has continued to support **TEAR Fund's** work in international relief and development with a donation of £800 from our UK account.

We are grateful for those who continue to support us in prayer, in action, and in financial support. We have been able to remain financially solvent throughout the pandemic and indeed our income has increased through our online donate button and online services. As we look ahead to 2022 we ask you to join us in prayer for the provision of a new Chaplain and for the ongoing life of Corralejo St James and Cotillo St James.



*Corralejo St James lit up for Fiesta*

**Rev Bob Horrocks - Chaplain for Fuerteventura**