

St Boniface Awards 2024 Biographies List for Order of Service

Norma Fry

St Matts Church, Plymouth

Norma set up Pop Up Church to help the homeless, those living in hostels or temporary accommodation and street workers in Plymouth. The idea came about after she volunteered with Plymouth Soup Kitchen, where she wanted to find a new way of coming alongside those who attended and offer not only food, but genuine support and listening ears. Pop Up Church meets twice a week, with hot chocolate, food, toiletries and clothing (all donated) are available. Christians who will chat, listen and offer prayer are on hand. Norma hopes that everyone who comes to Pop Up Church will find hope. Rev'd Sue Nicholas said: "Norma's driving mission is to show the love of Jesus to those who really are the most vulnerable in Plymouth."

Duncan Michie

St James Church, Jacobstowe

James Duncan Michie, known as Duncan by many, has served as a Churchwarden, Treasurer and PCC Chairman at St James Church, Jacobstowe, for a number of years. In 2014, the church was in a state of disrepair with very few amenities. Duncan was integral in restoring the church to where it is today, including helping to fit a new kitchen and toilet. He was the first to get stuck-in digging-up the church floor during the renovations. He has made valuable contributions towards creation care and addressing climate change, leading to the church becoming an Eco Church. Duncan is a dedicated and trustworthy person, who brings communities together and serves with joy. He is described as "a truly remarkable man, whose service has endured through good and tough times."

Sue Harvey

Haldon Mission Community

Sue has been the Parish Safeguarding Officer for the Haldon Team Mission Community for several years. She has been integral in ensuring good safeguarding happens in each church in the mission community. She encourages all those who require DBS checks and safeguarding training to undertake them, even assisting those who struggle with accessing training on the computer so they can complete it. Sue has been extremely supportive of the Parish Safeguarding Dashboard, and she worked with the diocesan communications team to produce a promotional video about the dashboard. St James' Church in Teignmouth has

recently expanded its children's and youth ministry and she has been a key member of the team, ensuring activities are set-up and run safely. The Mission Community leadership team said: "As churches, Sue's invaluable work gives us confidence, freeing us up to do the important work of mission."

Arthur Passey

Ottery St Mary Church

Arthur has attended and served at Ottery St Mary Church for 84 years! Arthur was the Chair of the Church Corporation for many years, only recently retiring from the role. During his time serving as Chair, Arthur led the maintenance of the church building faithfully and carefully, ensuring that the building was open and well-maintained for worshippers and the community. Arthur has been nominated for an award because of his dedication and commitment to the role, and the faithful length of his service.

Sue Spackman

Sue is a retired architect, and a member of the Diocesan Advisory Committee for the Care of Churches. As a volunteer, she has served worshipping communities for 24 years, visiting and advising 20-30 parish churches each year as part of her role. Her knowledge and her lifetime experience of working with churches has given her a full understanding of the needs of parishes. Sue uses her skills to support churches, helping them to meet all their requirements and deliver successful schemes. Dr Nigel Pratt, Senior Church Buildings Advisor, said, "Sue has made a significant difference to church life in Devon by enabling church communities to make the most of their church building assets and to help them adapt these to our changing times. Sue's contribution stands out as it goes above and well beyond what is expected of Committee members."

Denise Robinson

St Andrew's Church, Ashburton

Since arriving at St Andrew's Church in Ashburton three years ago, Denise has thrown herself wholeheartedly into volunteering in a number of areas of church and community life. Denise is very involved with music and worship; playing piano and the organ at church services, leading the church worship band and a community choir in Holne. She helped to run the diocese Mission and Growth-Funded Upbeat Music and Mission project, connecting with primary-age children through school workshops and a weekly after school club. Denise is creative and enthusiastic and is constantly looking outwards and coming up with ideas about how to connect with the wider community through music and all-age activities. She also runs Hedgehogs, the church's weekly parent and toddler group, and she is an Anna Friend, leading a weekly singalong in a local care home. Chloe Axford said, "Denise is a ray of light

and uses her considerable talents and gifts to glorify God and serve the people of Ashburton and beyond with joy.”

Karly Jackson-Wells

Ilfracombe Academy and Delta Youth Cafe

Karly has made a significant difference in Ilfracombe, one of the most deprived towns in Devon. As a busy mother of two, she still found time to volunteer at The Ilfracombe Academy, helping with the weekly Christian Union, mentoring as many as eight young people each year, and organising termly prayer walks at the school for members of Ilfracombe churches to pray for the young people and the work of ICE Ilfracombe, our ecumenical youth work charity. Four years ago, Karly came to the trustees with a proposal to open Delta, an after-school drop-in cafe in the High Street, so that teenagers had somewhere they could meet socially. Karly was appointed Delta manager, and the youth cafe opened in 2021. Every weekday up to 30 young people attend Delta - the aim is that each of them can experience 'life in all its fullness' and understand their worth to God. Karly has made a significant difference in many of their lives, with her quiet influence and interest in each person. The value of Delta in providing a safe space has been noted by many of the shops and businesses on the High Street, along with the police. All the churches in Ilfracombe support this venture and value Karly's leadership of the Delta youth cafe as part of ICE Ilfracombe.

John Patten

Paignton Parish Church

John has been nominated for a St Boniface award for his 'selfless dedication and unwavering commitment' in his role as churchwarden for two busy churches in the parish of Paignton. He has become the 'go-to' person for advice and assistance on how to deal with unexpected events and emergencies, going above and beyond to ensure people are given the help they need- day or night. John has also been working on church building repairs, helping arrange, co-ordinate and oversee contractors to ensure both churches can remain open for daily services, schools, and visitors. The Archdeacon of Totnes, the Venerable Douglas Dettmer said, 'I myself have experienced the quality of John's warm hospitality and generous welcome on every recent visit to St John's, not to mention his leadership and wisdom as churchwarden

Sheila Casely

Exeter Cathedral

Sheila is a Volunteer Sidesperson at Exeter Cathedral. Over thirty years ago, Sheila was one of two women to become the first female sidespeople. She has been the deputy and

assistant to the Head Sidesperson for many years. Sheila has welcomed visitors to worship in Exeter Cathedral from the city, the diocese and the county, both adults and children. Her volunteer commitments include the Sunday morning services, and she often returns to fulfil her duties for Choral Evensong and mid-week services. As a Sidesperson, Sheila welcomes those attending worship at the cathedral, providing visitors with orders of services, showing them to their seats and providing assistance to the disabled. She is nominated for this award for “the warmth of her smile indicative of her welcome.”

Lis Grandey

Lis Grandey is the Chair of the Governing Body at South Molton United Church of England Primary School. Lis has been nominated for her dedication to the school pupils, parents and staff. Lis leads governor meetings in a calming manor, ensuring that all participants have the opportunity to contribute. During COVID-19, Lis chaired governor meetings online and ensured those who weren't confident with technology were still able to participate. Lis begins all governor meetings with prayer. Lis has been nominated for a St Boniface award for leading and serving the school community with joy. At a time when the Diocesan Education team is planning to relaunch its Be A Governor campaign to encourage more people to consider becoming a school governor, Lis is a great example of the difference a dedicated and committed governor can make in the life of a school community.

Geoffrey Histed

St Andrew's, Ashburton

Geoffrey has made a significant difference to St Andrew's church and the wider community in Ashburton through his vision to transform the churchyard into an eco-friendly haven for the town. Geoffrey and his team of volunteers tackled the overgrown, inaccessible churchyard and created a space for people to reflect and enjoy God's creation. Their work also uncovered a number of hidden headstones. Under Geoffrey's leadership, people who had no connection to the church were encouraged to join the gardening team. Geoffrey also recognised the importance of greenspaces for well-being and a number of new benches were installed throughout the churchyard for the community to enjoy, as well as bug houses and bird boxes. This resulted in St Andrew's being awarded Devon's Best Churchyard in 2021. The Rt. Rev'd Mark Rylands said: “None of this would have happened without Geoffrey's commitment and enthusiasm. He has a gift for engaging with people and for gentle but effective evangelism. Geoffrey has made a huge difference to the way many view the church and has helped bring the community together. He serves the people of Devon with joy and is a great partner in God's Mission.”

Sophie Giles

St Matt's, Exeter

Sophie has been the Operations Director at St Matt's church since it began, leading and investing in the staff and volunteer teams at the church. Sophie has had a big impact on the community, and recently started a new initiative called the River Café which provides a space for vulnerable women on probation to receive support and meet with their probation workers. Rev'd Ed Hodges said: "Sophie truly models servant leadership; she is willing to do the jobs others would least like to do (including cleaning the toilets every Sunday morning!) She has incredible empathy and compassion for those on the margins and she doesn't overlook anyone. She is a gentle force consistently reminding our team and church of the call of Jesus to serve one another."

Anne Kay

St Mary's, Brixton

Anne has made a significant contribution to the life of St Mary's, serving as Churchwarden for 24 years alongside a variety of other roles including organising fundraising, leading worship, chairing the PCC, leading Messy Church and much more. Anne has also had a personal ministry as a Street Pastor in Plymouth and has completed 19 years for the United Christian Broadcasters (UCB) prayer line. Rev'd Trevor Filtness said: "Anne is tireless, continuously optimistic, and courageously faithful. She has made an outstanding contribution to ministry in our parish and has been instrumental in keeping us focussed on our mission. She joyfully serves, bringing together the church and wider community. Anne has sown the seeds for a joyous and Spirit-led future in Brixton."

David Smith

St Thomas, Exeter

(David is unable to be at the service today so he will be presented with his medal at St Thomas the Apostle Church on 2 July.)

David has faithfully served in the Diocese of Exeter for over 40 years as a Licensed Lay Minister (LLM), a PCC Secretary, a member of Diocesan Synod, and as Lay Chair for Christianity Deanery (the Exeter churches deanery), a post he held for over 20 years before retiring last year. David is an active member of the community, encouraging and enabling others alongside his wife Tina who is also an LLM. Fr. David Nixon said: "In all these roles, he displays kindness, generosity, a degree of patience, and beneath some seriousness, a sense of fun. David has served with an underlying joy, even through periods of ill-health, and especially while also looking after his wife who has long term health issues. I commend him warmly for this St Boniface Award."

