

**St Bartholomew's, Thurstaston  
with St Chad's Irby**



**MISSION AND ACTIVITIES IN 2018**



### Members of the PCC 2018-2019

Following the Annual Parochial Church Meeting in 2018, the Parochial Church Council comprised the Rector, the Licensed Readers, the Churchwardens and the elected representatives to the Deanery Synod, all as *ex-officio* members. Up to fifteen members represent the congregations for three years, five retiring each year but eligible for re-election. The names of members following the Annual Meeting in 2018 are shown below.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Membership</b>	<b>Date Appointed</b>	<b>Until</b>
Revd J Turner	Rector	Ex Officio	-
Mrs E Whitehead	Warden	Ex Officio (since Apr 2017)	
Vacancy	Warden		
Mr M Studholme	Deanery Synod	2017	2020
Mr C Smale	Deanery Synod	2017	2020
Mrs J Parmenter	Deanery Synod	2018	2020
Mr A Harford	Elected	2016	2019
Mr G Barley	Elected	2017	2020
Mrs J Trigg	Elected	2017	2020
Mrs J Deboorder	Elected	2017	2020
Mrs E Kavanagh	Elected	2017	Resigned 2018
Mrs P Neil	Elected	2018	2020
Mr J Oliver	Elected	2018	2021
Mr C Williams	Elected	2018	2021
Mr R Jackson	Elected	2018	2021
Mr C Perry	Elected	2018	2021
Mr B R Dennison	Elected	2018	2021
Mrs J Hodgson	Co-opted	2018	2019

At the end of the year 2018-19, there were ten elected members, one co-opted member and four vacancies. The change in the number of people on the electoral roll at that time will mean that the number of elected members will be reduced from 15 to 12.

The names of sidespersons can be seen on the rotas for the two churches.

## **A Word from the Rector**

For me personally, this year has been one of reflection for a variety of reasons. April 2018 saw the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of my induction as your Rector. September saw me on my Annual Retreat and God giving me words from 1 Peter 5 as an echo of the words of the induction service and encouragement in my role as your priest. November and December 2018 saw me off work and struggling with calcified tendinitis in my right shoulder.

### **1 Peter 5 New Living Translation (NLT)**

*And now, a word to you who are elders in the churches. I, too, am an elder and a witness to the sufferings of Christ. And I, too, will share in his glory when he is revealed to the whole world. As a fellow elder, I appeal to you Care for the flock that God has entrusted to you. Watch over it willingly, not grudgingly - not for what you will get out of it, but because you are eager to serve God. Don't lord it over the people assigned to your care, but lead them by your own good example. And when the Great Shepherd appears, you will receive a crown of never-ending glory and honour.*

*In the same way, you who are younger must accept the authority of the elders. And all of you, dress yourselves in humility as you relate to one another, for*

*"God opposes the proud  
but gives grace to the humble".*

*So humble yourselves under the mighty power of God, and at the right time he will lift you up in honour. Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares about you.*

I have done my best to be "a shepherd" for you and to lead by example for the past 10 years. And yes, sometimes that has been a pleasure and a privilege, and sometimes I have not lived up to your expectations. But together, we have been serving God in this place. My period of illness was a stark reminder of how much we need each other, of how much we need to work as a team. So many of you worked hard to ensure that church services continued, that all the extra Christmas related activities were organised and ran smoothly, and most touching of all – that you showed your love for me in ensuring that all of my practical needs were met. Thank you for playing your part in our team. I hope that we can build on this experience and that our church community will grow both in strength and in number as we continue to seek to serve God together.

In 2018, I felt that God was encouraging us to look at our own discipleship and so our focal events and teaching were:-

Lent Group and various activities linked to Prayer

Summer Study Group looking at the book of James and the theme of discipleship

Autumn Book Group reading together Rowan Williams book "Being Disciples".

Towards the end of the year, the PCC began to take part in a pilot project called "Setting God's People Free" which aims to help us to look at where we are when we are not together in church on a Sunday and how each individual member of our congregation can be enabled to know God working in them and through them wherever they spend the majority of their week – whether that's in a work environment, at the school gate, in our leisure activities, in a volunteering role - anywhere you spend time with a group of other people. We hope to build on this through next year, so watch out for "Fruitfulness on the Frontline" and get involved.

My aim as we head into the new year is to stop trying so hard and doing things because we ought to, and instead to look for where God is at work in our community and ask how can we join in with what God is doing?

*Rerd Jane*

# REPORT ON THE BUSINESS OF THE PCC AND OTHER CHURCH MATTERS



During 2018 the PCC met five times and the Standing Committee met twice. The Standing Committee also discussed some relatively uncontentious topics by email to reach a collective view.

## **St Bartholomew's**

A considerable amount of time at PCC meetings is spent considering the maintenance and improvement of St Bartholomew's church and the churchyard. In 2018, we were fortunate, as some of the work required fell within the conditions attached to a legacy. Other work, to make the church more comfortable and welcoming, was undertaken as part of one of the projects within the Open Door developments.

The safety of the electrical appliances is checked annually on behalf of the PCC, and in 2018 several improvements to the electrical installations were required, including new cabling, a new isolator and the replacement of sockets. Part of Mrs Tudor's legacy was used to cover the costs, after the PCC had verified with one of her relatives that it, along with work on the gutters and the churchyard, was an appropriate use of part of the legacy.

The boiler, which heats the water for the central heating system, was in very poor condition and did not produce enough heat to bring the church to a reasonable temperature in the cold weather. PCC members were concerned that it might not last through the winter. There were lengthy discussions about how to meet the costs of installing a new boiler, and the Charity Commission informed the Treasurer that it could be done as part of the Open Door project. The new boiler should provide a much more comfortable environment in the church for the foreseeable future.

Mr Peter Whitehead placed posts with reflectors around the grass triangle nearest to the road to protect it from damage. Mr Chris Knight agreed to work to clear and improve the churchyard. The work is progressing well and when completed, maintaining the churchyard in an acceptable condition should be much easier. Mr Malcolm Studholme arranged for staff from a firm called Roofability to examine a long-standing leak in the roof of the vestry which had caused difficulties for several years. They found that soakers had never been fitted where the roof meets the vertical wall: fitting them seems to have corrected the leak. It became clear during the year that the oil tank had to be replaced and this was arranged by Mr Studholme, on behalf of the PCC.

When showing some visitors round the church, Mrs Whitehead noticed that the vestry windowsill had been damaged. It was not clear how that had happened, but Roofability offered to arrange and pay for its repair by a stonemason, who did a very good job.

The PCC agreed to a request from the Commonwealth War Graves Commission to place a green plaque on the churchyard wall, indicating that there are war graves in the churchyard. The donors of the gate to the churchyard from Church Lane offered to replace it at their expense. The bell ropes had to be replaced during the year and the charge for bell ringing at weddings was increased slightly.

## **St Chad's**

With increased use of the extension by external groups that enter by the door at the end near the road, some of the light switches were at the wrong end of the building and that

was corrected. A sycamore tree at the northern end of the main building had become dangerously entangled with telephone wires and Mr Derek Knight, a tree surgeon, was contracted to remove it. The heaters in the extension were not adequate in very cold weather and were replaced, as were the double doors in the main building, which were in very poor condition after 50 years of use. A fault in the floor was discussed but has not yet been resolved. Mr Peter Whitehead and Mr Chris Turnbull placed posts near the entrance to the car park, to protect the grass from cars, and the curtains were replaced. Many of the costs of this work were covered by the legacy left to the church by Mr Bernard Dann. Towards the end of the year, the PCC heard reports of uneven paving slabs, weeds and the use of the car park by other people at times when it was required for church use. These matters are awaiting attention.

The additional use of the extension by external groups meant that cleaning had to be done more fully, incurring a small extra cost. The PCC discussed redeveloping the sensory garden, but it would require regular attention and it is difficult to find volunteers for such work.

### **Financial Matters**

The PCC agreed to a proposal by the Honorary Treasurer, Mr Kevin Marley, that the accounts should be audited by Margaret A Walker, a chartered accountant based in Irby who specialises in the computerised accountancy system that we use and who was also willing to provide training in use of the system. Mr Marley's full account of our financial affairs appears later in this Annual Report.

### **Church services**

The Rector and PCC were approached by the head teacher of Dawpool School with a proposal that children should be responsible for arranging four services a year. This was approved, and the events have proved very popular. An initiative by the Worship Committee, called "Saturdays Together", worked satisfactorily but it gradually became a social event and no new people were drawn in. Thoughts had begun to focus on the possibility of a "Messy Church" event in the future, possibly in collaboration with the Methodists, but a leader was required. After discussion by the PCC, difficulties at the 2017 service on Remembrance Sunday were resolved in 2018 by the deployment of additional marshals. The PCC also decided to distribute lists of Christmas services and times, including those at the Methodist Church, throughout Irby in the weeks before Christmas, though it was not clear if they had any effect.

### **GDPR**

Discussions about our response to the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) occupied much of the time at our meetings before May, when the regulations came into force. The regulations are to protect personal data and to ensure that people whose personal data are held, even if just names and addresses, have more control and knowledge of how the data will be used. Nearly all of what the parish does with the data is a legal requirement or is classified as a "legitimate interest", but we have to ensure as far as we can that our legitimate interest does not outweigh the interests and rights of the people whose data we keep.

### **Setting God's People Free**

Setting God's People Free is a diocesan initiative to help people to bring their faith more strongly into their daily lives. Discussions with the Archdeacon should have begun in December, but the meeting was postponed. We will be seeing more of this during 2019.



## **Flowers**

Mrs Elaine Jones had been responsible for flower arrangements for weddings for more than 12 years, making good use of local suppliers. Unfortunately her suppliers had closed because of increased rental charged and the sale of a nursery for housing development. Mrs Jones proposed new arrangements with a more limited range of flowers, and also said she could advise couples who preferred to choose their own florist. The PCC discussed these matters and thanked Mrs Jones for what she had done and would continue to do. Members recognised that her contribution was a significant element in creating a wonderful and joyous atmosphere at weddings.

## **Other Matters**

The PCC agreed to contribute £750 to Dawpool School towards the costs of membership of the Diocesan Family of Schools. Mr Alan Jones was appointed Reader Emeritus and Mr Brian Jones was appointed as a server for Holy Communion. Mrs Kate Butler, the Parish Administrator, agreed to take over the management of the parish website from Mr Chris Perry. Mr John Roberts retired as Electoral Roll Officer and Mrs Helen Williams agreed to undertake that work.

## **Conclusion**

This report outlines some of the wide range of responsibilities of the PCC in managing the grounds, buildings and some of the activities of the church. If anyone would like to be involved more in supporting the parish with activities or as a member of the PCC, please speak to the Rector, the Honorary Secretary or any member of the PCC.

## **Graham Barley (Honorary Secretary)**



## **TREASURER'S REPORT**

We have had a fairly stable year financially thanks in part to a very generous legacy and the sale of part of the Tudor Trust. This provided extra income of £16,805. I will look at the income side of the accounts with this figure removed so that we have a true reflection of how we are performing. The money that we received has been spent on refurbishing and repairing St Chad's and also on much needed maintenance at St Bartholomew's which will hopefully reduce the ongoing costs. I will now look at the accounts with these items taken into account.

### **PARISH SHARE**

Because of the need to maintain our financial position and keep the three months' reserve that we prudently hold, we have again only been able to pay 60% of our Parish share, which once more rose by 2.5%,.

This again leaves us in the vulnerable position of possibly receiving only 60% of a replacement minister if the need arose.

## **COMPARISON OF PERFORMANCE BETWEEN 2018 AND 2017**

### **Income**

#### *Planned Giving*

Our main source of income was down 2.8% on last year and we again saw a drop in numbers with five leaving the Planned Giving Scheme and only two new members. It represented 49% of our total income, down from 51%, not including the gift aid due.

As attendance at church becomes more erratic due to whatever pressures families and members are experiencing, it becomes more important that more members are encouraged to join and that current members set up standing orders to eradicate any gaps in their financial support of the church.

#### *Donations*

The income from donations was down 56% this year mainly due to a very generous one-off donation by the bell tower members the previous year. As a lot of work was carried out with the extra funds received we didn't have the usual struggle to pay for vital repairs.

We need to champion the newer ways of donating including Easy Fundraising and Amazon. These are modern ways of donating and can be done when purchasing goods and services on line with no additional cost to the purchaser.

Everyone should be encouraged to read our legacy policy and think about including the church in their will.

#### *Gift Aid and GASDS*

This provides us with very valuable income and is vital to our accounts as it makes up nearly 15% of our total income. It is cost free to the contributor as long as they have paid enough tax throughout the year. With this in mind could everyone who is eligible sign a gift aid declaration and also can current members let the Planned Giving Officers know if you have moved or are no longer eligible or have changed your name.

At this juncture I must thank Chris Turnbull, Chris Smale and Roger Dennison for the amazing work they do on this area, which can be very time consuming and laborious.

#### *Fees Received*

Unfortunately, fees received were down again this year by 5%. Future bookings are at a similar level and are a concern for future income.

#### *Hall Hire*

Income was down by 15% this year, but it is still a very important area of income and with the improvements completed this year we would hope to see it climb back up to previous levels and beyond. My thanks to Jean Heath, Chris Rostock and Kate Butler for their tireless work on bookings, invoices, debt collection and QuickBooks entry.

#### **Investments and Reserves**

In 2018 we sold part of the Tudor Trust (see above) and our income from investments fell by 5%. The overall performance of the investments in this difficult financial climate was poor and the value fell by 4%. This will hopefully recover in the months to come.

We have been able to maintain our reserves at a decent level by not paying the full parish share but the nature of our situation means this needs to be maintained for the continued financial health of the PCC and to cover any unexpected expenditure which can occur at any time.

Although the cash position looks healthy at the moment there is still work being carried out which requires payment and after these payments, we will be back to having the desired amount of reserves.

The ongoing Open Door issues and roof grant applications will be looked at again during the coming year but it has been agreed to use the Open Door fund to replace the boiler at St Bartholomew's as that is part of one of the projects to be supported by that fund.

## **Expenditure**

### *St Bartholomew's Overheads*

Maintenance and costs at St Bartholomew's fell by 13% this year due in part to the extra work needed on the trees in 2017 and the timing of the oil replenishment. We have addressed some of the problems this year in terms of the vestry roof and the graveyard, but there is still work to be done. Many thanks to all who work so hard at keeping things in check.

### *St Chad's*

Maintenance and costs at St Chad's rose by 36% this year mainly owing to the refurbishment and repairs previously discussed. Otherwise costs were in line with last year's.

### *Assistant Clergy*

Our expenditure on Assistant Clergy fees rose by 49% over the year but is still well below previous figures. Our thanks continue to go to you all for your unwavering support and generosity.

### *Administration*

The administration costs incurred in running the parish were in line with last year's.

## **SUMMARY**

As we have been fortunate to deliver some much needed refurbishment and repair to both churches my hope is that the ongoing costs can be more tightly controlled. Together with the planned boiler replacement at St Bartholomew's we hope also to be able to make both churches more appealing for mission and revenue raising activities.

I would like to thank everyone for their support and in particular the other members of the finance team who have again been a great help.

The finance team comprises:

Accounts Partner	Chris Rostock
Parish Giving Officers	Chris Turnbull and Chris Smale
Banker	Roger Dennison
Parish Administrator	Kate Butler
Signatory and cashier	Roger Jackson
Hall Hire Officer	Jean Heath
Payroll Officer	Patsy Brady
Committee members	Chris Williams and Malcolm Studholme

**Kevin Marley (Honorary Treasurer)**





# SAFEGUARDING

## 1. Safeguarding Policy and Procedures

The government is continuously reviewing legislation and guidance to ensure children and adults at risk are kept safe as far as possible. It is our responsibility to ensure we do all we can to make the environments we work and worship in safer for vulnerable people.

***Our policy at St Chad's and St Bartholomew's is based on the policy and procedures as those outlined in the House of Bishops' 'Safeguarding Policies & Practice Guidance' and reference the House of Bishops' Handbook 'Promoting a Safer Church'.***

***The current Safeguarding policy, its procedures and documentation templates will be amended in line with any recommendations or good practice guidance from the House of Bishops and will be reviewed annually. These procedures may be adapted specifically to meet the needs and practices of St Chad's Irby and St Bartholomew's Thurstaston as required.***

Within the adopted procedures there are a number of forms for general use within the Parish, covering:

Comments and Complaints	Approval of Activities and Events
Incident Reporting	Consent Forms in relation to the display of Photographs
Parental Consent for Activities / Events	Images Consent Forms for the use of photographs and videos
Risk Assessment Forms for Activities	Hire Arrangements for Church Premises
Volunteer Declaration in relation to their duties	Application Form for Volunteer Roles
Guidance Notes for the role of Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator	Recommended Good Practice Guidance for the Leaders of Children/Youth Groups

## 2. Parish Safeguarding Co-ordinator

The current Safeguarding Co-ordinator appointed is Mrs Kathryn Timmins. Kathryn has no pastoral responsibility for the children or vulnerable adults within the Parish. Kathryn is responsible for the administration of all DBS correspondence, references and online checks through CCPAS.

## 3. Children's Advocate

Currently the Parish has decided not to appoint a separate person to act as 'vulnerable person's advocate' whom children or vulnerable adults could talk to about any safeguarding concerns they might have.

## 4. Safeguarding Co-ordinator Contact Details

Details are currently displayed on Church notice boards along with contact details of local authority safeguarding boards.

## 5. Safer Recruitment and DBS (Disclosure & Barring) Vetting

All volunteers expressing an interest in working independently with children and/or vulnerable adults must be referred for either basic or enhanced DBS checks. The level of check will depend on the nature of the role within the parish.

In accordance with recommended guidance, references from two referees are requested along with suitable level 1 and level 2 identification checks prior to DBS certificates being issued. New volunteer applicants are asked to complete a pre-appointment questionnaire and declaration in relation to any previous offences.

DBS checks are managed and information retained by Thirty One Eight (CCPAS). This is an on-line service which works well for these purposes and renewal of DBS certificates will be requested at regular intervals.

#### **6. Appropriate Insurance Cover**

The Parish is responsible for ensuring adequate annual insurance cover for its Church activities.

People requesting hall hire are asked to ensure that they have also made appropriate insurance arrangements and advised that they need to ensure risk management strategies are in place for the activities they wish to engage in and that it is their responsibility to provide adequate supervision for children and young people taking part in these activities.

#### **7. Local Ecumenical Partnerships (LEPs) and Joint Safeguarding Policy Arrangements**

St Chad's Irby with St Bartholomew's Thurstaston do not currently have any such joint partnership arrangements in place.

#### **8. Safeguarding Concerns**

In the event of a safeguarding concern or referral being made, any such referrals should under the current arrangements be directed to the Safeguarding Co-ordinator Kathryn Timmins or Reverend Jane Turner who will liaise with the Diocese Safeguarding Officer and the relevant local safeguarding authority.

**Currently no safeguarding referrals or concerns have been raised with the Safeguarding Officer.**

#### **9. Safeguarding Training**

Safeguarding Training for volunteers is arranged by the Diocese. The Safeguarding Officer and all new volunteers have attended this training. Dates of any new safeguarding training events will be circulated.

#### **10. Safe Working Practice**

Risk Assessments forms are in place and should be carried out and recorded for all new activities and should be assessed at least annually.

#### **11. Agreements with Offenders**

Offenders who become known to the Church and who pose a risk to children or vulnerable adults and who wish to take part in activities or Church worship, should enter into an agreement with the Parish and the Diocesan Parish Safeguarding Officer at Churches House, Daresbury, Cheshire. All such agreements should be reviewed on a regular basis.

**The Safeguarding Officer has not been informed of any new or recent offenders who require such Agreements**

#### **12. Confidentiality**

Safeguarding referrals and all relevant sensitive information should remain confidential and should only be shared with local authority safeguarding boards and the Safeguarding Officer for the Diocese as required.

All personal information in relation to volunteers and sensitive information in relation to safeguarding referrals must be stored and locked away in a safe place, inaccessible to anyone other than authorised personnel.

New volunteer applicants should sign a consent form in relation to the sharing of their personal information under the Data Protection Act 1998. All personal information will held in confidence and in line with current GDPR regulations (General Data Protection Regulation EU 2016/679)

### **13.Current DBS Registrations**

Nine people are currently in receipt of up to date DBS Certificates undertaking roles within the parish.

Another two people require renewal to remain compliant with their volunteer roles. These are in the process of being contacted with re-registration instructions

Not all roles require enhanced DBS certificates, for example administration or visiting individuals to administer communion alone. However where volunteers are working independently with children or vulnerable adults or delivering some sort of personal support service, a DBS certificate is likely to be required.

There are currently no new DBS applications to be processed.

The Parish commits itself to promoting safe practice by those in positions of trust. The current policies and procedures have been adopted and are in place in order to ensure that the Parish is compliant and has robust safeguarding protocols in place.

Provided the current policies and safeguarding procedures are followed and adhered to, the Parish will remain compliant.

**Kathryn Timmins (Safeguarding Co-ordinator)**

## **CHURCHWARDEN'S REPORT**

Two church services have taken place nearly every Sunday throughout the year at St. Bartholomew's while at St. Chad's services have taken place nearly every Sunday and Wednesday.

There have also been many special services and other church related or community activities. They included:

- 6<sup>th</sup> January Epiphany Breakfast
- 19<sup>th</sup> January Film Night – War Room
- February–March Lent Course on Prayer
- 16<sup>th</sup> February and 16<sup>th</sup> March Board Game Nights
- 17<sup>th</sup> February Drop in Lent Crafts
- 2<sup>nd</sup> March Women's World Day of Prayer Service
- 10<sup>th</sup> March Drop in "Dad's n Kids" crafts for Mothering Sunday
- 17<sup>th</sup> March Parish Prayer Walk
- 17<sup>th</sup> March. Vox Collective Choir Concert
- 16<sup>th</sup> April APCM
- 22<sup>nd</sup> April 10 Year Anniversary of Revd Jane's Induction
- May –June The Book of James - Determined Discipleship Study Group

- 16<sup>th</sup> June EMU Anniversary Coffee Morning
- 2<sup>nd</sup> July Open PCC – Setting God’s People Free
- August Open House events at the Rectory
- 18<sup>th</sup> August Parish Walk
- 25<sup>th</sup> August St Beartholomew’s Day
- September – October Being Disciples Book Group
- 5<sup>th</sup> October Harvest Supper
- 27<sup>th</sup> October OT Live
- 10<sup>th</sup> November Afternoon Tea to Remember
- 11<sup>th</sup> November Remembrance Sunday
- 1<sup>st</sup> December Christmas Fair
- 2<sup>nd</sup> December Christingle

At St. Bartholomew’s, we noticed in January that the grass in front of church, outside the wall, was becoming seriously damaged by cars driving over it. This was being made worse by the exceptional wet weather, leaving the ground soft and water logged. It was decided to place fence posts along the perimeter of most of the area, leaving access for funeral and wedding cars, in order to reduce the damage. The posts have two reflectors near the top to make them visible at night and they are in keeping with other posts in the immediate area. The grass has recovered and is now in a much better condition.

The boiler at St. Bartholomew’s has become a constant source of concern throughout the year. It tripped out on numerous occasions resulting in many services being held in very cold conditions. After many consultations and meetings with suppliers and contractors a new boiler and oil tank were ordered in December.

Other repairs have been to the roof above the vestry to prevent water ingress in the chancel and all the electrical sockets have been changed to RCDs.

I have taken two groups on guided tours of St Bartholomew’s, both of which have raised donations for the church.

Work has started on Churchyard maintenance, to tidy the graves and make the paths safer.

My thanks go to Mr Malcolm Studholme who has continued to assist in many aspects of the day to day running of the church and especially for his tireless work with the boiler, to Mr Jon Oliver who has continued to maintain and repair the lighting and to Mr Peter Whitehead who has been a continual support in many ways.

St Chad’s has been used regularly by the Evening Mothers’ Union, Irby Artists, Baby Sensory, Tots and Tinies, Bats and Balls, Weight Watchers, Diddi Dance, Rainbows, Brownies and Guides.

Several private functions have taken place throughout the year.

At St. Chad’s there was a similar problem to the one at St. Bartholomew’s with the grass at the main car park entrance. Seven posts were put in place. Again, the condition of the grass has improved.

There have been a number of improvements to the fabric of the building made possible by the legacy gift from Mr Anthony Bernard Dann. These have included replacement of fire doors (main double doors and the one by the organ), an upgrade of the extension heating, new curtains for the main hall and new vertical blinds for the extension.

The activities in both churches, including services, have involved a large number of our parishioners, and I am thankful for everyone's contributions. Finally, but most importantly, we as a parish thank our Rector, Revd Jane Turner, for her hard work and devotion in supporting us in many different ways throughout the year.

Now we pray that our Lord gives us his blessing as we go forward into 2019.

**Liz Whitehead (Churchwarden)**

## **DEANERY SYNOD REPORT**

The Rural Deanery of North Wirral has members from each of 14 parishes. Thurstaston parish has three representatives: Julie Parmenter, Chris Smale and Malcolm Studholme. Representatives are appointed on a three year cycle (casual vacancies can be filled during the three years) which comes to an end in 2019, so there is an opportunity for people to offer to serve the church in this role.

The group meets four times a year under the chairmanship of Revd Peter Froggatt of Christ Church Barnston, who is the Rural Dean, while the lay chair is Lesley Young. The secretary is Alan McGraa. It has a Mission and Standing Committee which discusses and manages deanery synod finance and discusses and plans the deanery meetings.

This year's meetings were held as follows:-

**February** – this meeting was held at St John's, Meols and the speaker was Archdeacon Mike Gilbertson, who addressed us about the report "Setting All God's People free" (SGPF), which focuses on whole life discipleship and is part of the Renewal and Reform programme.

Archdeacon Mike began his presentation by reading from Ephesians 4 v 4 – 6 and went on to make the following key points:

- SGPF is trying to achieve the goal of encouraging every member to be a whole life disciple every day and trying to rebalance the relationship between Clergy and Lay.
- SGPF is to enable the people of God to live out the Good News of Jesus confidently in all of life, Monday to Saturday as well as on Sunday.
- 98% of the people in the Church of England (C of E) are not ordained and spend 95% of their lives in society.
- Church exists in "gathered mode" (Sundays) and "scattered mode" (Monday to Saturday).
- Our whole life discipleship is to make an impact when not in church. ("Not setting up church activities but getting outside during the week.")
- Our discipleship is to be disciples in our locality and in the world, called by Jesus.

**May** – this meeting was held at St Mark the Evangelist's, New Ferry. Mr Chris Penn, the Diocesan Director of Education, gave a presentation which focused on the Church of England Vision for Education (Deeply Christian Serving the Common Good), but first explained briefly how he came to faith, became a teacher, a headteacher and then to his diocesan post in September 2017.

In the C of E Vision there are four elements:

1. Educating for Wisdom, Knowledge and Skills
  - Summarised as: Enabling discipline, confidence and delight in seeking wisdom and knowledge and developing talents in all areas of life.

- Bible links - Wisdom seeking is one of the greatest themes of The Bible, with several books described as "Wisdom Literature". Jesus was described as "growing in wisdom" (Like 2 v52)
2. Educating for Hope and Aspiration
- Summarised as: Enabling healing, repair and renewal coping wisely when things go wrong, opening horizons and guiding people into ways of fulfilling them.
  - Bible links - God's ongoing love and compassion for all people and for the whole of creation and in God's promise of life in all its fullness are the root of our dedication to educating for hope and aspiration.
3. Educating for Community and Living Well Together
- Summarised as: A core focus on relationships, participation in communities and the qualities of character that enable people to flourish together.
  - Bible links - The conviction that we are created and sustained by God for living together in families and communities is at the root of our dedication to educating for life together.
4. Educating for Dignity and Respect
- Summarised as: The basic principle of respect for the value of preciousness of each person treating each person as a unique individual of inherent worth.
  - Bible links - Our commitment to the dignity and ultimate worth of each person, is rooted in each being created in the image of God and loved by God and is shaped further by the person, teaching and example of Jesus.

The presentation was followed by discussion, with Mr David Burrows, Headteacher of Dawpool, acting as one of the facilitators.

**September** – this meeting was held at St Mary's, Upton, on the subject of "Mission Links". The speaker was the Revd Bob Toan, who had been an engineer, social worker, curate, Vicar at St Peter's, Rock Ferry for seven years and Vicar at Plas Newton (Chester) for seven years. He had been Rural Dean in both Birkenhead and Chester Deaneries, before feeling that he was led to serve in Cambodia. His presentation about his experiences in Cambodia led to some lively discussion about the benefits of establishing links with churches in other parts of the world, although there was also a reminder about the importance of mission work between different churches and parishes within our own diocese.

**November** – this was the lay forum and was held at St Michael's, Newton. The Revd Wes Sutton of the Acorn Listening Trust spoke about the skills that we need to develop, if we are to be good listeners. He focused particularly on our tendency to apply stereotypes to other people and to leap to judgements based on our own, often unquestioned, values. His presentation was interspersed with group discussion about the issues which he raised and was supported by a PowerPoint presentation.

As mentioned in our report last year, the Rural Dean is keen to promote cooperation between parishes and to ensure that meetings provide valuable opportunities for reflection, mutual support and sharing of good practice. To that end, the lay chair has said that Deanery Synod meetings are open to all parishioners, not just the elected representatives. Furthermore, we would be happy to make the minutes of meetings, which usually contain summaries of the presentations, available to any interested parishioners.

**Julie Parmenter, Chris Smale and Malcolm Studholme (Deanery Synod Representatives)**



# ELECTORAL ROLL REPORT

At the APCM in 2018 the electoral roll consisted of 214 members from 144 households.

Every 6th year the electoral roll has to be wiped clean and started again. That was this case this year. The new electoral roll has 148 members from 102 households.

**Helen Williams (Electoral Roll Officer)**

## CHARITIES SUPPORTED THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

### LEPROSY MISSION



On behalf of the Leprosy Mission may I thank those loyal members of the congregation for their continued support. After the annual box collection in October 2018, I was able to send a cheque for £191:30p.

Unfortunately this total is continuing to decrease each year, and I would like to stress again that a one off donation, at any time in the year, would be wonderful. Please remember that Leprosy is still a dreadful but curable disease.

**Pat Hulme**

### THE CHILDREN'S SOCIETY



*With children, for children, with you*

**Jean Heath** (648 6015), **Elaine Kavanagh** (648 1721) and **Barbara Kozer** (648 3512) co-ordinate fund raising for the Society in the Parish.

The annual 'Thank You' Coffee Morning was held in September, a month earlier than usual and at the request of the Society, to enable us to collect and pay in any old £1 coins before 16<sup>th</sup> October, the date upon which they ceased to be legal tender. The venue also changed to Jean's home, where she is happy to hold the event in future, and we raised £193.75, comprising £117.25 from Bring and Buy items and £76.50 in donations.

Our thanks go to our Box Holders and others who kindly attended and made the event so successful.

The total from House Boxes amounted to £981.98, a further increase on the previous year's total. The Society informs us that collection boxes are vital in helping towards their mission of supporting disadvantaged children and young people. They were able to work with over 18,000 vulnerable children and youngsters last year, bringing life-changing support through their services around the country, which included helping families trapped in poverty and debt, providing support to young carers and combating the evils of child sexual exploitation.

We would appeal to anyone who would like to keep a box in their home to get in touch and we will happily supply one.

The Christingle Service in early December at St Chad's raised a further £69.55.

**Jean Heath (648 6015)**

# CHURCH ACTIVITIES

## JUNIOR CHURCH

Junior Church meets during the morning service at St Chad's throughout term time, excluding family service days. There were two groups, Sparklers age 2½ to reception class and Starblazers for children in school years 1-6, but it has been necessary to merge these into one now as the older group was too small. Year 6 children now have the option to join seniors a year early.

The leaders give an excellent service to our children. Quality not Quantity is the name of the game.

During the year the children and leaders create a display in the windows to follow the changing seasons. Paper daffodils, tulips, sunflowers, butterflies, birds and caterpillars etc have appeared at the appropriate moments.

In July the children and seniors presented the Book Giving Service entitled

"Enter God's Kingdom like a child"

All the children and seniors took part and brought to life the passage in Luke 18 v15-17 with a modern twist. The children and seniors all received their books and the seniors shield was awarded.

Afterwards we finished our summer term with a picnic at St Chad's in the back garden'. The sun shone and we played games and enjoyed our picnics.

During the summer holidays, St Bear-tholomew's Day was another success for the brave bears and their owners, with no bear casualties! Junior Church leaders, helpers and their friends and families all helped to set up/clear away and provide stalls and refreshments. The children's raffle and lucky dip were enjoyed and sweets in a cup went down well. Delicious cakes were donated by church members. Mike Rostock kept us all safe from floating/plunging teddies and Richard Turner judged the skill of our brave bears who launched off the tower to parachute down towards a marker. The three nearest to the marker received prizes. A great day was had by all.

The Christmas Nativity service idea fell out of my book shelf at a timely moment and with a bit of tweaking was a small miracle from a bit of tidying up of my shelf. The seniors read the limerick linked with narration perfectly, the children dressed up and acted out the scenes beautifully and the leaders and helpers kept it all running smoothly. Everyone did a fantastic job. It was a lovely service enjoyed by all.

Many thanks to the Junior Church leaders and helpers (and their friends and families) without whom nothing would get done and who have given their time so generously. Thanks to Reverend Jane for her enthusiasm, organising skills, advice and support and thanks to everyone who meets together with me whenever I have to plan anything, and who have supported me and shared the load.

God Bless,

**Julie De Boorder.**

## **SENIORS**

During 2017/18 the age range within this group was wide, with the eldest in the first year of sixth form compared with the youngest in year 6 at Dawpool. However, this only added to the breadth, interest and involvement of activities that were undertaken. Two of the eldest attendees had left the previous summer to attend university.

The Nativity Service was delivered by the Seniors reciting the nativity story told in limericks, with the younger Sunday School children enacting the roles as necessary. The Book Giving service was well attended by the Seniors who contributed to the majority of the service. Charlotte Crammond was the recipient of the Sunday School Shield which was a new one dedicated to St Chad's Sunday School as the previous one was complete.

The Ten Commandments, and translation into 21<sup>st</sup> Century understanding and behaviours was a continual theme throughout the year. A Seniors' Service was held early in 2018 to encourage more pupils from Dawpool School to attend. The theme of this service was the Church's Year which involved a number of practical activities.

## **Janet Trigg**



### **BELLRINGERS' REPORT**

We continue as a group to ring regularly throughout the year at 7pm on Wednesday evening practice, 10.45am Sunday service ringing and weddings.

We currently number 16 with three beginners who are progressing well, two of which now ring regularly with us on Sundays. We have been recently extending the Wednesday practice session to allow more time for teaching. The rest of the band members continue to improve and we now regularly ring more complex methods during these sessions.

Our Christmas meal was held at The Manor in Greasby and was enjoyed by all.

One quarter peal was rung last year by a visiting band from London on 12<sup>th</sup> August (5 Doubles methods).

Members of our band took part in the national 'Ringing Remembers' event held on the 11<sup>th</sup> November to commemorate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Armistice. Eight ringers rang the bells half-muffled before the service followed by 11 ringers ringing with the bells open (without muffles) at 12.30. We were one of over 3,000 towers that took part in this event in the UK.

Towards the end of the year a set of replacement ropes arrived at the tower. Our last set of ropes were from 2002 and despite many repairs and splices were now past their best and starting to deteriorate rapidly. I am pleased to report that the new ropes are performing well.

We always welcome new recruits or visitors who want to see what we do. Feel free to contact me or just turn up at one of the sessions.

## **Peter Robson**



## **MEN'S BREAKFAST**

The numbers attending this had gradually dropped and as such this has not taken place this year. As other events and commitments have taken over it has been decided to stop this event going forward.

**Matthew James**

## **CHURCH RELATED ORGANISATIONS**



**Mothers' UNION**  
Christian care for families

EMU January – December 2018

Our branch of EMU (Evening Mothers' Union) meets monthly during the school term at St Chad's, usually on the last Wednesday of the month at 8.00pm. We would love to welcome new members. Please come along and give it a try. We have a varied programme to suit all tastes.

During 2018 we enjoyed a New Year meal out at the Jug & Bottle. In February we had a Talk by Christian Mission organisation 'Operation Mobilisation'. March was a jewellery evening with our favourite 'Jane Young Jewellery'.

We had a really exciting evening with Peter Fearnhead who brought his adorable Labrador puppy, that he was training for Guide Dogs for the blind. On 16<sup>th</sup> June we held a coffee morning to celebrate 12 years of EMU (12<sup>th</sup> May). We raised £152.20 which was donated to AFIA (Away From It All holidays).

A visit from the RSPCA in June gave us all an insight to the valuable work done by this organisation.

The summer was rounded off with a meal at The Anchor.

In September Naomi Graham came along to talk about the Besom furniture project and in October Laurel Parkinson told us about her trips to Sierra Leone with the OAKS charity (Overseas Aid for the Kids of Sierra Leone).

Finally for 2018, in November we made crafts for the Christmas Fair, but also sewed up a blanket that had been made by the children's knitting club at Dawpool School, to be raffled at Christmas.

We also coordinated the delivery of 22 gift bags to Forum Housing for the homeless and seven teddies were knitted for our baptism families.

Please visit [www.mothersunion.org/](http://www.mothersunion.org/) or [www.mothersunionchester.org.uk](http://www.mothersunionchester.org.uk) to find out more about the work of Mothers' Union

**Chris Rostock – Branch Secretary**

## 1<sup>ST</sup> THURSTASTON GUIDES ANNUAL REPORT 2018

We have enjoyed another year as joint leaders of 1st Thurstaston Guides and have enjoyed many interesting and varied activities through the year.



- **Challenge Badges:** We have completed the 'Clever Clogs' challenge badge which was based around promoting science and engineering to girls. We also completed the 'Plastic Planet' challenge badge which was all about raising awareness of how bad the situation is regarding plastic pollution, and how we can all play a part in helping to do something about it.

We are currently taking part in the 'No Place Like Home' challenge badge created by a leader from a Birkenhead Rainbow unit in aid of Wirral Ark.

- **Special Interest Nights:** We have had some fun special interest nights over the last year including:
  - Zumba class
  - Chippy coin walk
  - Trampolining including a trip to Jumpin' Josephs
  - Trip to the Yog Bar in Hoylake and games of rounders on the beach.
  - Litter picking on Thurstaston beach
  - An evening playing Netball at Pensby sports complex
  - Workshop from acrobatic/dance duo: Duo Distanza
  - A Self-defence evening run by a parent of a couple of the guides, who teaches Karate.
- **Community Events and Fundraising:** We have had some fun organising community and fund raising events
  - Taken part in a District Thinking Day event
  - Children in Need charity event
  - Helping out at St. Chad's Christmas fair
  - Taken part in a District summer trip to Greenwood Forest Park.

We also attended Church Parades during the year, including the Remembrance Day service at St Bartholomew's Church.

All in all, we have had another wonderful year and managed to involve the girls in a wide range of activities.

We have a challenging future ahead of us with our numbers due to be increasing to almost 30, and a complete change to the Girl Guiding programme and awards available. We shall be transitioning over to this new programme over the next nine months or so. Our last guides have now started their Baden Powell Challenge Award – as it won't be available soon. The Baden Powell Challenge award is the highest award a Guide can achieve under the old system but sadly this is no longer part of the new programme and so these are the last girls that we will be able to see through it.

As always, we wish all the guides who have now left us all the best for the future.

**Ellie Randall and Gaynor Vaughan, with Lily Foster, Caitlyn Pridgeon, Erin Moxham and the Guides!**

### **3<sup>rd</sup> IRBY BROWNIES**

We have had another fantastic year at St Chad's.

The Brownies have been very busy this year completing several guiding interest and challenge badges. This year marked one of the biggest changes to the whole Girl Guiding programme with a complete revamp of the programme, activities, badges and challenges. We have enjoyed trying some of the new activities and look forward to completing more of the new programme next year.

We have had various overnight and day trips including a sleepover at Hadlow, camping PGL at Waddow Hall, day to Chester Zoo and evening at Jumpin' Josep's. The Brownies have also attended church parade at St Chad's and Remembrance Sunday at St Bartholomew's.

We have also had three district events. These events are an opportunity for the Brownies to meet up with all other Brownies, Rainbows and Guides in Irby. We celebrated Thinking Day together at St Chad's, went to Greenwood Forest Park in the summer and had a Christmas disco.

As always we are looking for people who would be interested in offering regular help during our meetings which are held on a Monday evening between 6.45pm and 8pm. Also anyone who has a particular interest or service which they think the Brownies would be interested to learn about please feel free to get in touch as we are always looking for new ideas for our meetings.

**Gemma Willerton, Lynn McCoy, Mandi Fletcher**

### **TOTS & TINIES**

Each Thursday morning during Term Time, Tots & Tinies meet at St Chad's Hall, Irby from 9.30am-11.30am. The playgroup welcomes parents and carers with babies and children up to pre-school age. There is a charge of £1.50 per child and accompanying adult, with a supplement of 50p for each extra child.

Each week the children are provided with a snack of fresh fruit, toast and a drink. Adults are invited to help themselves to tea/coffee, biscuits & toast. This provision is funded from the cover charge.

Parents and carers are invited to supervise their own children in this friendly group environment. The children freely interact with one another whilst using a wide variety of activities. These include a reading corner, crafts, large/small play toys, jigsaws – all of which encourage fine and large motor skills and social skills.

The group is co-ordinated by Allison Youds, with help from a few mums who are regular attenders. Alan and Elaine Jones have been providing snacks. A sing song/music session follows snack time and a story finishes each session.

Parent volunteers help put equipment out and away and help with the dishes at the end of each session.



Tots & Tinies welcomes on average 40+ children plus their parents/carers each week. It should be noted the safety and supervision of each child is the sole responsibility of the child's attending parent/carer at all times.

Throughout the year there have been several events such as a Teddy Bear's picnic, a Macmillan Coffee Morning (raising £111.60), a visit to Tam O'Shanter urban farm and an Easter Egg hunt. Father Christmas visited and there was a Christmas party. Individual birthdays are celebrated each week.

Numbers continue to grow and it has been lovely to welcome baby brothers and sisters. Please contact Rev Jane Turner if you are interested in any aspect of Tots & Tinies.

**Allison Youds**

