

St Peter's Church, Great Asby

Annual Report of the Parochial Church Council

Year Ending 31st December 2018

Administrative Information

St Peter's Church is situated in the centre of Great Asby. It is part of the Benefice of the Heart of Eden in the Appleby Deanery of the Diocese of Carlisle within the Church of England. The correspondence address is Ms. K. Royle, Nethergill, Appleby, Cumbria, CA16 6EX. The Parochial Church Council (PCC) is a charity excepted from registration with the Charity Commission. The PCC members who have served from 1st January 2018 are as follows with their role on the Committee and dates of appointment in brackets where appropriate:-

Team Rector: The Rev. Sarah Lunn (Chairperson to 17th July 2018)

Associate Priest: Rev. Peter Boyles

Warden: Mrs Pat Bevan (Vice-Chairperson)

Warden: Mrs Denise Frisby

Representative on Deanery Synod: Mr John Bevan (Treasurer)

Elected Members: Mrs Helen Cooper
Mrs Pam Cowey
Mr Peter Miller (Safeguarding Co-ordinator)
Ms Karen Royle (Secretary)
Mrs Carol Smith
Mr John Smith
Mrs Susan Walker

Mrs Denise Frisby and Mr John Bevan have also represented the PCC on the team to find Rev. Sarah Lunn's replacement. By the end of the year the post had not been advertised.

Structure, governance and management

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. All Church attendants are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and stand for election to the PCC.

Objectives and activities

St Peter's PCC has the responsibility of cooperating with the responsible priest in promoting the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical in the ecclesiastical parish. It also has maintenance responsibilities for the Church building.

Church attendance

At 31st December 2018 there were 26 Parishioners on the Church Electoral Roll, 7 of whom live outside the Parish, The average weekly attendance at ordinary services was 14 adults and 1 young person under 16 years of age but the number increased significantly at festivals and special occasions. The Christmas Carol Service was once again attended by over 160 people including children.

Review of the year

The full PCC met 6 times during the year with an average of 80% attendance.

We have benefitted from and are also grateful for the support of the Reverend Sarah Lunn until July and the Reverend Peter Boyles, and a range of clergy from across the Benefice as well as our own lay ministers Mr and Mrs Bevan to maintain regular services at St Peter's. The pattern of parish services with the Chapels has continued. Fifth Sunday services were shared with Ormside. Parishioners also attended the Baptist 'Candlelight Carol' and Methodist and Baptist anniversary services.

The Remembrance Sunday service at the Lychgate was exceptionally well attended as this year we celebrated the centenary of the Armistice in 1918. A two-day exhibition in church commemorated this anniversary, and was well attended. The Commonwealth War Graves Commission has put a sign on the wall by the Lychgate indicating that there is a war grave in the church yard.

We celebrated Advent Sunday by holding the service in a barn again at High Plains, Drybeck. This was also well attended. We thank the Rev. Kristy Pattimore for leading the service, all who took part in the sketch and readings and our hosts, Louise and Steve Reeve who also provided refreshments. The retiring collection raised £149 for Sarcoma UK.

In 2018 there were 3 funerals, 2 weddings and no baptisms.

General expenses and running costs are met by a variety of activities and events, regular coffee mornings, sales of cards and calendars. A barbecue was run by a fresh team of volunteers, the proceeds from which came to St Peters, for which we are grateful.

Events through the year have included, a 'Celebrating Westmorland Dales' exhibition over the May Bank holiday, with many interesting talks and displays about the local area. In addition to involvement from people in the village, we were also privileged to have the support of the Yorkshire Dales National Park who provided a display and the Friends of the Lake District who organised a walk. The event was extremely well attended by both local parishioners and people who had travelled from further afield to see the display.

The Patronal Festival celebrations in June included cream teas in church, alongside a display of the 2019 calendar entries, and was also well attended.

There have also been 3 more felt pew runners completed this year, with the aim to complete three more in the coming year, hopefully with input from children at the school.

Asby Churches Together Fellowship Group and Asby Mother's Union (see below) continue to meet on a regular basis. For several legitimate reasons Fellowship numbers have dwindled in the past year and those attending have consisted only of Anglicans. However, the ecumenical balance has been maintained by having Methodist and Baptist discussion leaders. We are particularly grateful to John Morton, Donald Marston, Sarah Lunn and Peter Boyles for giving precious time to join us to look at the Apostles Creed and some Psalms.

The well established coffee mornings and the occasional Saturday 'Coffee, Cake and Chat' sessions continue in Church. 'Diners', the monthly gathering for lunch at the Eden River Cafe, also continues with regular attenders. The PCC is grateful to Dave Sykes for hosting this each month. The 'Knit and Natter' group established in liaison with the Women's Institute (WI) has continued in the homes of participants. The theme for the Christmas Fair held in church this year was 'Christmas Around the World'. The windows were imaginatively decorated by several of the village organisations: the Book Club, Asby School, WI, Mothers Union and Cinema Group, as well as some families and individuals from the parish, not all of whom regularly attend St Peters.

Asby School have attended special events to celebrate Easter, St Peter's Day, Harvest and Christmas. These services were also well attended by parents and villagers. The children all received a Real Fairtrade Easter egg and took part in the Christmas Story Sack scheme. New this year was the staging of 'Experience Easter' which was visited by the whole school and, later in the day, by adults from the village. Harvest gifts were again gratefully received by the Food Bank in Appleby.

Other work with young people included four further Messy Church mornings held in the Easter and summer school holidays and during the spring and autumn half-terms. The events continue to be supported with enthusiasm even though numbers attending have reduced slightly from previous years. The PCC is grateful for the hard work of both Emma Greenshaw and Carol Marston who have led these children's activities over the year.

The Ways and Means team have the PCC's ongoing gratitude for their work to maintain the fabric of the church and to manage issues of water ingress.

Mothers' Union Report 2018

Two new members were enrolled into the Branch this year bringing the membership to eleven with other visitors welcomed on a regular basis. Members have been grateful to those continuing with official duties including Mrs Sheila Braithwaite our Chair and those involved in organising our programme. They have had a very challenging year but have creatively managed to maintain an interesting and varied programme for us in a celebration of our Diamond Jubilee despite several changes that had to be made, some at very short notice.

The January meeting was cancelled as so many of the membership were ill, the visit to Saltaire was postponed and then cancelled altogether because of a rail strike, and the Christmas meal exchanged for an “at home” Christmas get-together. However the Branch was lucky to welcome four ministers to its gatherings through the year. Rev. Peter Boyles led the annual service at St Peters, Rev. Kristy Pattimore talked to us about her journey in faith and her church career, Rev Sarah Lunn gave an illustrated talk on a church visit to Zululand and Rev. Carol Marsden entertained us by reading a number of her own poems. An evening to view and discuss the film “Victoria and Abdul” also took place. This was recommended by the Mothers' Union as Queen Victoria had been an early member.

For action and outreach the Branch provided refreshments for school services, for Mothering Sunday, and for some fund-raising events in church. Some members have knitted for seafarers and supported the shoebox appeal.

We give thanks to all our hostesses and speakers and those who have helped to keep the Branch alive over the last 60 years. Our aim is to continue growing and thriving!

Deanery Synod

John Bevan continued to represent the Parish on the Deanery Synod, which held its usual sequence of four meetings during the year. In addition to one or two interesting presentations, its work was largely concerned with the consideration of, and updating in respect of, the formation of the two Mission Communities in the Deanery (basically, North & South), and the process of filling vacancies in Benefices in the Deanery.

One vacancy (Kirkby Stephen and Brough) was filled during the year, and the first steps taken in respect of the filling of the vacancy in our own Benefice. The Diocese continues to handle these matters in its (now usual) dilatory fashion.

Both Mission Communities move slowly but quite definitely ahead. Our Mission Community was officially ‘launched’ at a very successful function which included a “peoples vote” for its name – we are now in the Heart of Westmorland MC. We have a functioning Mission Community Council, albeit no proper constitution has yet been published or approved by Synod.

And a note for the future – our Deanery Synod is, of course, exclusively Anglican. It has few decision making powers, but is the ‘electoral college’ for the Diocesan Synod (and, indirectly, the General Synod). At the same time, our Methodist colleagues have a formal Circuit structure. If we are serious about Mission Communities, the separate operations of both should wither away, and be replaced by a single ecumenical body pretty much representing, and representative of, all the Christians in our area other than our Catholic congregations. John has identified this matter at Synod, but it is not yet being taken seriously.

Safeguarding

Our Parish Safeguarding Officer is Mr Peter Miller.

Church Policy and Guidance

All parishes are required to have agreed a formal statement of adoption of the House of Bishops 'Promoting a Safer Church: safeguarding policy statement', and of Church of England safeguarding policy and guidance.

Safeguarding has been on the agenda of all PCC meetings. The Safeguarding Officer has always reported to the PCC and would have brought to their attention any matters that were of concern. As a PCC it is noted that we also have an individual and collective responsibility to be mindful and aware of the well being of both children and vulnerable adults in the Parish.

St Peter's PCC has adopted the 'Promoting a Safer Church: safeguarding policy statement', and the Church of England safeguarding policy and guidance. However, discussions at the PCC acknowledge that standard, national, policies can never be a 'one size fits all' solution and it has therefore been suggested that there are statements within these policies that need adjustment to suit our own purposes at St Peter's.

Each PCC member is requested to complete the church's recommended on-line safeguard training module, and a number have already done so.

Safer Recruitment, and Training

Our parish supports the Messy Church activity which meets at school holiday times and is the only regular church activity that involves working with children, young people or adults who are vulnerable.

The PCC have been always mindful of their responsibilities in regard to any groups which involve leaders working with children and vulnerable adults. They have thought carefully about the quarterly Messy Church activity and concluded that because the meetings are infrequent and attended by children with their parents / caregiver, they are content that our policies and approaches do meet the necessary requirements.

We can confirm that the leaders and volunteers working with our groups have been safely recruited according to the Church's national guidance and we will continue to train all relevant people who are involved with these activities, as required by the Church.

Health and Safety

St Peter's has a policy statement, and maintains a Log Book & Accident Register. The PCC Members collectively and individually keep a watching brief and draw to the attention of the designated member (Peter Miller) any matters that require attention in order to avoid potential accidents. The fire fighting

apparatus is maintained and placed in strategic locations within the Church. During 2018 there were two recorded accidents both on the 13th February each involved a trip caused by a worn door mat. No injuries were sustained: and the mat has been removed.

Financial and Fabric (Ways & Means) review

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with SORP requirements. We paid our increased Parish Offer in full. Proceeds from carol singing around the village and the Christmas Eve and other collections were donated to charities, in particular the Air Ambulance, Sarcoma UK, and Hospice at Home. Further charitable donations were made to Fibrodysplasia Ossificans Progressive (FOP) Action and the British Heart Foundation. Our other commitments have been met in full. Full details are set out in the accompanying financial statements and attention is drawn to the notes on the accompanying accounts.

As is normal, income tax on gift aid donations is claimed and received following the calendar year in which the relevant donations were made. The Church furnishings and plate are included in the inventory and vested in the Church Wardens on special trust. Our insurance policy is maintained with Ecclesiastical Insurance. The Church assets and metal are marked (AlphaDot and SmartWater) as advised.

No major projects were undertaken in 2018, but following the expiry of the retention period in respect of the works undertaken in 2017, a ‘snagging’ inspection was carried out by the architect. Some remedial works were found to be required, and in conjunction with the contractor it was agreed that these would be undertaken fairly early in 2019 (but after the risk of frost had passed). Our Quinquennial Inspection was due in 2018, and was done by James Innerdale of Crosby Granger Architects.

The final draft of the report has recently been received: in summary it states:

‘Following the recent programme of works the church is in a good condition. The Lychgate is however in a poor condition and in need of repair’

{post year end note}

A meeting took place on site with the architect James Innerdale on Tuesday 26th February when a detailed review of the report’s findings took place. The meeting proved very useful confirming the programme of maintenance and repair required over the next few years.

One important consequence of these timings is that expenditure expected & planned for in 2018 will now fall in 2019 – and the 2018 year-end account balances are (for this reason) significantly higher than they were expected to be.

The quinquennial report highlights the need for significant work to be undertaken on the Church Lychgate (a separately Grade II listed building), and planning for this is likely to feature highly in the work of the PCC’s Ways & Means sub-Committee during the coming year.

Signed as correct: _____
(chairperson / vice chairperson)

Date: _____

Reflections on the Year from the Associate Priest

The associate priest does not, unlike the incumbent, have any formal leadership role, so I will make some general reflections and comments about the past year.

Whilst our normal expressions of being church, in Sunday and weekday worship continue as normal, the benefice is undergoing a very considerable period of transition and change. A good deal of this change is very positive and to be welcomed.

In the meantime, a quiet revolution has been ongoing in the way ministry is organised. Thanks to the work of the Mission Community, clergy are now relieved of the burden of admin for funerals and weddings, thanks to the appointment of our office manager. Many other routine tasks which had to be administered by clergy are also now being taken on by Joyce – things like the endless applications for memorials in churchyards are now processed by Joyce, although we still have to sign them. All this releases energy for us to work with parishioners in developing ministry.

Many laity throughout the benefice have been stepping forward to undertake tasks previously performed by the incumbent, this includes the leading of worship. Most significantly, Dr Andrew Brittlebank and Andrew Burrell are both in training for different types of ministry and the training involves them both leading our worship. It is also been extremely helpful and significant to have the support of retired clergy leading working, especially Roger, James Clarke and Roy McCulloch. We have been very sorry to lose the help Janet Cox and Bishop Peter Ramsden gave before they moved last year. We wish them every blessing in their new homes.

As part of the drive to make relationships between churches ever closer in our new Mission Community, we are trying to have more joint services where possible. Where this has happened, the improved singing and quality of worship, as well as the larger number of people from small churches worshipping together in one place has been an encouragement to all.

Another change has been an end to the practice of private baptism. All baptism families will now be welcomed in the context of the main Sunday service, using forms of service and music which they will find more easily digestible. In each area of the benefice, the baptism families will then be invited to join in family friendly events and services organised by the churches of the Mission Community. Each family will therefore have an opportunity not only to become members of the body of Christ but also find a practical expression of what this might mean locally.

We also had the great joy of confirming a young man into the church family at Temple Sowerby last November. Robin and his family have become active members of that congregation and it was the first confirmation from Temple Sowerby since 1994!

Since emails and phone calls were diverted to me last year, the nature of pastoral ministry has had to change by necessity. Due to the volume of calls and emails, most pastoral work done by me is now done over the phone. A lot of the time it is obscure or mundane, sometimes it is a very serious and complex matter. It is all very time consuming and the volume of calls increases week by week.

Whilst we rejoice that some of our churches in the benefice are growing, others struggle with support and finance. Let us look forward in hope and prayer to the leadership not only provided by a new incumbent, but in the leadership and vision the Mission Community in building a new generation of church goers.

It is my privilege to witness all the amazing hard work and commitment of parishioners who give so generously of their time and talents, enriching the church by the exercise of their gifts. Whatever you do, it is valued and appreciated and I am so thankful for it.