

**Aims and purposes**

St. Cuthbert's Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent, the Revd. Nick Sharp, in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish, the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. The PCC is also specifically responsible for the maintenance of the Church Building, Hall and Youth Centre, Whitley Road, Rye Park, Hoddesdon.

**Objectives and Activities**

The PCC is committed to enabling as many people as possible to worship at our church and to become part of our parish community at St. Cuthbert's. The PCC maintains an overview of worship throughout the parish, and makes suggestions on how our services can involve the many groups that live within our parish. To assist with this we have a Worship Planning Team who together with the Vicar, meet regularly to discern our worship service patterns and content, reporting back to the PCC for discussion and decisions. In particular we try to enable people to live out their faith as part of our parish community through:

- Worship and prayer; getting to know God, responding in worship and prayer and proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ.
- Provision of pastoral care for people living in the parish
- Missionary and outreach work

The PCC brought to our Annual Meeting our 'Mission Action Plan', to enable the whole congregation to be aware of, and review our goals and how we are doing with our priorities for the next five years, including our goals for the next 1-2 years. We also looked at whether we should spend our money on a Family Missioner; to build up our relationships with children and families, through contacts at Schools, Nursery, Messy Church etc. Can we raise enough money to keep it going; Can we carry on by ourselves after 3 years; Is there something else that we should consider using our money for. The PCC later looked at what would be our strategy to bring young people to our church. We recognise that we need to focus on what God wants us to do via prayer, and we need the power of God first, then we will succeed – God's empowerment via prayer. Some members of the PCC attended a Reaching New People Day, which emphasised that we want to meet people's needs in Rye Park. God told us to do this, because we are loved and so are they. We must not judge others, as they will judge us. We also considered our strengths and weaknesses.

We have formed a Communications Group to look at our Internal, External and Online ways of how we communicate to all, who we are, and what we do. Some changes have been made to the Internal and External appearance of the building, and we are currently looking at what online methods can work best for us and our targeted audience. The PCC also discussed St. Cuthbert's Identity; How we see ourselves, and how others see us. This is ongoing work and at an early stage.

Our work with our children and young people continues, although with a smaller number of children in Special Branch, and 'Soul' Youth Group. The Church has continued to run the Dots and Tots Toddler Group. The number of toddlers attending averages 25 with their parents/carers averaging 20. Since September we have been running a weekly Tots Church during term time, with some of the Dots and Tots families attending. This has had an average attendance of 7 adults and 4 toddlers.

Messy Church has continued to grow at its monthly events, with attendances between 20 and 33 adults and 17 and 35 children, drawing people to other events such as the Christingle Service and Family Carols and Big Tea in December.

All new volunteers for positions in church now have to complete an application form, accompanied by giving two references. Lone workers were reminded to take reasonable precautions to keep themselves safe. PCC Members were asked to complete an Eligibility to serve as a Trustee form, complete Safeguarding Training still outstanding and have an in date DBS check.

The PCC undertook the annual review of our Health and Safety/Fire Policy, Child Protection Policy of Intent, Approved the Annual Acceptance of Youth Activities Consent Form, and the Parish Statement on Domestic Abuse Policy. We also reviewed the Copyright Licences we hold for Church Services. A Serious Incident Reporting Policy was approved for reporting Safeguarding and Non-Safeguarding Incidents to the Charities Commission. Safeguarding continues to be a priority and we have adopted the C of E, House of Bishops, Promoting a Safer Church, Safeguarding Policy for children, young people and vulnerable adults. Anne Dunning continues as our Safeguarding Officer, and she also attended a Safer Recruitment Training session in May. Risk Assessments were also undertaken for all our activities including worship.

We have a good relationship with our local schools. Rye Park Nursery School came into church for their Harvest and Christmas Services. Forres School came into church for their Christmas Services, and their Choir sang at our Christingle Service. Our Vicar, Revd. Nick Sharp also takes Assemblies at Forres and runs a fortnightly Lunch Club with the Methodist Minister Revd. Debbie Hodgson, for years 5 and 6. A JAM (Jesus and Me) After School Club was discussed to begin in 2020. Cranbourne School also came into church during the year as part of their teaching curriculum, and our Vicar, takes RE Lessons at the school. At John Warner School, our Vicar and Revd. Rachel Pennant, Vicar of Hoddesdon, held 6<sup>th</sup> Form discussions on questions around Faith and Religion.

We participated in Hoddesdon Loves Christmas, and Pop-up Carols in a local park, these events being open to the community.

To facilitate the work of the church it is important that we maintain the fabric of the Church of St. Cuthbert, the Church Hall and Youth Centre.

## **Achievements and performance**

### **Worship and Prayer**

The PCC is keen to offer a range of Services and Home Groups during the week. This includes a Thursday morning Holy Communion Service, a Youth Group called 'Soul', and 5 Home Groups. We held a Christingle Service to support the work of the Children's Society. Our Sunday worship consists of a Traditional Style Holy Communion Service at 9.00 a.m. plus a Service at 10.45 a.m led by a Worship Group, alternating between Communion and Word Services. The second Sunday 10.45 a.m. Service is now an All-Engage Family Service. A number of Joint Services were held during the year, including Easter Day. Prayer Ministry is available at each Service. On Easter Day we also held a Sunrise Service, followed by a cooked Breakfast, to which people from other churches also attended. We also have a dedicated Prayer Team, who meet weekly for prayer, where others are welcome to join.

In Lent we had a weekly podcast on different topics with discussions following, led by our Reader, John Griffiths.

For the period between Easter and Pentecost the youth centre was made into a prayer room open throughout the day for anyone to come in for private prayer.

In November we held a Memorial Service for those who had lost loved ones.

Baptisms take place at the 10.45 a.m. Service or later on a Sunday.

All are welcome to attend our regular Services. At present there are 98 people on the Church Electoral Roll, 31 of whom are not resident in the parish. 8 names were added during the year, and 17 were removed, either through moving out of the area, died, lapsed or moved to another church. The average weekly attendance, counted during October, was 78 Adults and 6 Children, but this number increases when Baptisms take place. We also had 36 Adults and 39 Children attending Messy Church, plus 9 Adults and 5 Children attending Tots Church in October. At Easter we had 142 people attending. In Advent 615 were at School Services and 267 at the Carol Service and Christingle. On Christmas Eve/Day 328 people attended..

As well as our regular services, we enable our community to celebrate and thank God at the milestones of the journey through life. Through Baptisms we thank God for the gift of life, in marriage public vows are exchanged with God's blessing and through Funeral Services friends and family express their grief and give thanks for the life which is now complete in this world and to commend the person into

God's keeping. We have celebrated 4 Baptisms, 1 Wedding and held 8 Funerals in our church this year, as well as 5 Funerals at Cemeteries/Crematoriums.

Our monthly Prayer Diary with prayers for each day for our church, community, and mission further afield has continued. This has been well received by the church.

### **Deanery Synod**

Three members of the PCC sit on the Deanery Synod. This provides the PCC with an important link between the parish and the wider structure of the church. We looked at the work of the Clewer Initiative to tackle Modern Day Slavery which highlighted that we have 136,000 potential victims in the UK. Our Rural Dean spoke about his visit to Chile, and the history of how the mission to South America started. We also learned about the developments on meetings that had taken place between Head Teachers and Clergy with the Director of Education in the Diocese to support the work with families and schools, particularly looking at worship, well-being (concern about children's mental health, safeguarding and poverty etc.) and welcome. We also learned about 'A Big Conversation' to be held in the Diocese in 2020, around the next phase of Living God's Love, centred around Growing Younger, i.e. how we can find ways to reduce the age profile of many of our congregations.

### **The Church, Hall and Youth Centre**

We want our church to be open more for private prayer, and this is happening on Tuesday and Thursday mornings. We are in a residential area which gives us some opportunities to engage with people who pass by.

The Church building is in reasonable repair, although serious problems with the church roof and brickwork have been identified. Discussions are ongoing, including gaining advice from the Diocese, due to the inaccessibility of the area concerned. We are fundraising for this project which may cost around £70,000. During our church heating service in March we found that one of our flues was leaking carbon monoxide and was shut down. This left only one blower working. We also needed a bigger gas feed pipe. While the pipe work was being done in November it was discovered that the other flue pipe to the church heating was also unsafe. We have therefore been without heat since then and holding Services in the Hall, apart from at Christmas. After discussions with the DAC it was decided we needed a new route for our flues, as gas regulations have changed since installing our current system. This is now with our Church Architect to agree plans for the new system.

Inspections were undertaken on the Church and Hall Heating, Fire Extinguishers checked, the Organ was tuned, a PAT test was undertaken and the Emergency Lighting in the Hall was tested. Extensive electrical work was carried out in the Church and Hall.

The Youth Centre is used once a month for a Youth (Soul) Home Group, and also occasionally by another Home Group. Soul also meet every Sunday evening in the hall for their 18:30 social gathering. Over the winter months the Friday prayer groups use the Youth Centre as well.

During the week the Hall is used by Dots and Tots Toddler Group, Rye Park Women's Club, Open Church Breakfast and Bible Study, Tots Church, the Brownies, SPACE Group to support parents of autistic and ADHD children, a Dementia Support Group, A Child Minders' Support Group, a Pilates Group, a Coffee Morning/Café for the local community, Knit, Stitch and Natter Group, monthly Mothers' Union and Pop-in Afternoon Teas, and other church activities. It is also hired out for regular Children's Parties.

A Church Office is situated at the back of the Hall, used by our Parish Administrator, who is employed for two mornings per week. There is also a Vestry, and two small meeting rooms.

### **Pastoral Care**

Some members of our parish are unable to attend church due to sickness or age. Revd. Nick Sharp has visited all church members who have requested it, and he celebrates communion with them, either at their homes or in hospital, with some lay support with this. We ensure that they receive a weekly church news sheet to keep them in touch with church life. The Pastoral Care Co-ordinators, ensure that the Team leaders are informed of prayer needs which they cascade to all in their group, and are also aware of anyone in their group missing from church who may need a visit.

### **Mission and Evangelism**

Helping those in need is a demonstration of our faith. Our Mission Team have been looking at our corporate response to Mission. As a result the Team supported a Sunday Sermon series on the Five Marks of Mission, with visiting speakers, to grow our heart for mission. As a church we at present support children in Togo, through Compassion, and a number of individuals also support children. Home Groups and other church members also support various Missions and individuals in need. This year our church has been able to support financially Young Life, Hoddesdon Christmas Parcels Scheme, Church Pastoral Aid Society, and Church Mission Society (our Mission Partner, Ann-Marie Wilson). Through special activities we have also supported the work of Christian Aid, Children's Society, the Bishop's Harvest for the Hungry Appeal, Poppy Appeal, Marylebone Project, Embrace, and Winter Night Shelter. We have also supported one of our former church members, who is actively seeking Ordination training. We also have a Mission Notice Board in church, to focus on a different mission support each month in prayer, and sometimes with financial support.

We had three Mission Speakers at our Sunday Services during the year one speaking on their future ministry in

Chad, one on the ministry of Compassion in Togo, and the other our Mission Partner with CMS, and her ministry to abolish FGM.

During the year we held an Alpha Course, and supported the Thy Kingdom Come National initiative of ten days of prayer between Ascension and Pentecost, for 5 people to come to faith,

As a PCC we looked at the Church of England approach to Mission. The two key areas to focus on in our parish are Family deprivation and loneliness. As a result of this we ran a Breakfast Club on weekdays during the school Summer holiday and October half term, to ensure that those who would miss out on free school dinners during that period, would have a good breakfast. We were supported with food by Morrisons and the Food Bank.

We always receive a good response in attendance at our Family Carol Service on Christmas Eve which is followed by a Big Tea.

We have also continued "A bit of what you fancy" encouraging discipleship in our church, by attending any of around fifteen different activities, to get to know each other better and have fun together.

### **Ecumenical relationships**

The church is a member of Churches Together in Hoddesdon, Broxbourne and Wormley. We have held joint services for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity and at other times during the year. Members of our congregation are also involved in Young Life youth ministry, and Street Pastors all organised through Churches Together. We also started a new Winter Nights Shelter together with the other churches in our area between January and early March. Seven Churches committed to be part of this, inviting guests one night a week each. Volunteers came from within the churches and wider community. Our church is a strong supporter of Broxbourne Foodbank both financially and materially. There has not been one week since 2011 when we did not donate food to the foodbank.

In July one of our members led the 0-3s children's ministry at New Wine Summer Conference. Revd. Nick Sharp, together with the churchwardens and one other attended the conference for a day.

Two of our members attended the National New Wine Leaders Conference.

### **Financial Review**

#### **Income**

Our first full year using the Parish Giving Scheme has seen a marked increase in take up with just a few remaining on standing orders. Our PGS income now stands at £40,480.48 which brings in an additional £9,879.73 in tax reclaimed.

There was a substantial increase in our giving from £87,735 to £99,893 and this is attributable to donations for the roof fund and the heating work. Whilst we remain on course to complete those two projects, our general fund income remains a concern and we continue to spend more than we receive although this is hidden by the heating donations remaining in the general fund.

New this year was the introduction of our contactless payment machine. We don't record these as separate donations but the use of the machine has been light but we hope to get better in encouraging its use.

The drop in Gift Aid received just reflects a change in dates and the introduction of PGS. We have a Tax Claim for £8,802.99 outstanding and this will be split between the Roof fund and the general fund, a portion of which will pay for the remainder of the heating work.

Hall lettings were down this year and that was mainly due to the loss of Slimming World. For information, we stopped recording separate entries for hall hire in 2019.

### **Payments**

The parish share (Quota) increased by 11.5% to £53,583 and our administration costs (Administrator, Vicarage and Clergy expenses decreased by nearly 20% to £8,661.54 and this is mainly due to a drop in clergy expenses

Church running expenses increased to £13,433.38 from £8,308.13 due to electrical repairs and architect fees for the roof.

Upkeep of services has dropped significantly. This is mainly due to paying for the sound system in 2018.

Whilst there was a surplus in 2019 of £11,670.68 this was mainly due to donations received for heating, electrical and roof. Some of this money has remained in the general fund to support payments expected for the heating repairs. When we take into account the closure of certain funds the depletion of the Restoration and Repair Fund we actually had a deficit of around £5,000

### **Our individual Funds**

We have a number of individual funds which are designated for various causes. Our Children/Families Ministry fund (Youth Worker fund) is static at £48,541.03. Our Restoration and Repair fund has decreased to £2,234.80 having been used to pay for Electrical and boiler work. The Church Heating and Music Equipment fund were both closed as they were both spent. The Organ Fund (our only restricted fund) continues to wind down as we use the money to pay for the tuning. We have enough to cover us for a few years of tuning. Our Roof Repair fund now stands at £21,108.77 which was entirely raised in 2019

### **Reserves Policy**

It is PCC policy to try to maintain a balance on free reserves (net current assets) which equates to at least three months' unrestricted payments. This is equivalent to £21,000. It is

held to smooth out fluctuations in cash flow and to meet emergencies. The balance of the free reserves at the year end were £24,400.

It is our policy to invest additional General Funds, Designated and Restricted Funds in the CCLA Church of England Deposit Fund.

### **Volunteers**

We would like to thank all volunteers who work so hard to make our church the lively and vibrant community it is. In particular we want to mention our Churchwardens Tish Bloomfield and Fiona Brewster who have worked so tirelessly on our behalf especially this year with the problems we are facing with our building, and Stephen Brent, Michael Mackintosh and Valerie Hind, who have worked so hard in the absence of a full time Treasurer and have helped us all to understand the church's accounts and its finances. We also wish to thank our Verger Team who prepare for our Communion Services, and act as Verger for Occasional Services, and Dorothy Ayre for her hard work as PCC Secretary, her commitment to our choir, and other things she does that we don't all see, and all those who have worked hard to care for our church building and grounds.

### **Structure, governance and management**

The Parochial Church Council is a corporate body, established by the Church of England. The PCC operates under the Parochial Church Council Powers Measure. The PCC is a Registered Charity.

The method of appointment of PCC Members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. At St. Cuthbert's the membership of the PCC consists of the Incumbent (our Vicar), Churchwardens, The Reader, and members elected to Cheshunt Deanery Synod, and 12 others elected by those members of the congregation who are on the Electoral Roll of the church. All those who attend our Services/members of the congregation are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and stand for election to the PCC.

The PCC Members are responsible for making decisions on all matters of general concern and importance to the parish including deciding on how the funds of the PCC are to be spent. New members receive initial training into the workings of the PCC.

The full PCC met 10 times during the year, with an average level of attendance of 75%. Given its wide responsibilities the PCC has a number of committees and teams, each dealing with a particular aspect of parish life. These committees/teams which include Standing, Mission, Finance, Premises Maintenance, Worship Planning, Outreach, Mission Action Planning, Pastoral Care, Family Worker, Communications, are all responsible to the PCC and report back to it regularly with details of their decisions being received by the full PCC and discussed as necessary.

