

2019 Report and Accounts for the Parochial Church Council

All Saints' Church, Hartford

Aims and Objectives

All Saints Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility of cooperating with the incumbent, the Reverend Geoffrey Boucher, in promoting the ecclesiastical parish, the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.

We are called to be a local church, learning and growing together, rooted in the love of God, and bound up in all sorts of everyday ways with the life of our community. Our mission is to reach open hearts with the love of Christ, and to help all the people of Hartford to find Christ, to be found by Him, and to respond to His love through the life and worship of their Parish Church.

The PCC is committed to enabling as many people as possible to worship at our church and to be part of the parish community at All Saints.

In addition to our normal Sunday services regular monthly Communion services are held, an evening service for healing in church and a morning service at Hunters Down. Home Communion is taken to those in need.

Reaching out to the wider community various activities are held in our Church Room some run by members of our church family and others through the hire of the room by external groups.

Worship and Prayer

As of December 2019 the total number on the Electoral Roll was 83 of which 45 were residents and 38 non-residents of the parish, a total of 3 less than last year.

The average Sunday 11am service attendance was 42 adults (19% down on last year) and 2 children. The average bimonthly 8.30am service was 8, the monthly 6pm service was 8 and the monthly healing service was 5.

Various special services were held during the year, attendances were Ash Wednesday – 12, Maundy Thursday – 12, Good Friday – 15, All Souls – 15 adults and 2 children, Christmas Carol service - 92 adults / 14 children, Nativity service - 68 adults / 28 children, Midnight service 48 adults and Christmas Day 11am 24 adults / 3 children. Two Christingle services were held for the local schools on the 16th December with a total of 102 adults and 96 children attending.

During the year 23 baptisms, 11 weddings, 15 funerals in church and 5 at the crematorium and 7 interments of ashes took place.

Rector's Report

We are blessed in our beautiful church and its riverside setting and we are so blessed in the fellowship that we share in the love of Christ. I am aware of that for myself and for so many of us as we meet the challenges that life brings, not least that of ageing and less good health, yet looking to live faithfully and hopefully. Thank you for the comfort and strength, joy and delight of the fellowship that we share.

Our regular pattern of services was sustained through 2019 and we experienced a variety of voices. Thank you to Elaine, Clifford, Michael, Trisha and Mary for leading our worship and to those who read and who lead the intercessions, for your prayerful and thoughtful preparation. One Saturday morning in November was fruitfully spent sharing thoughts and resources about the leading of intercessions. New and different voices are always welcome to the rota. Thank you too to Linda and the choir for the enrichment of our worship Sunday by Sunday in the choosing and singing of music and hymns to accompany the theme of the week.

Welcome and hospitality was offered in both the church and the church room. We receive regular enquiries about baptism and weddings through our website. Baptism enquiries are followed up with a preparation visit and weddings with three meetings leading up to the wedding day itself. In 2019 we welcomed 23 candidates for baptism and 11 couples to celebrate marriage along with family and friends. The PCC discussed how we might take ministry to those who come to be baptised further and we might fruitfully ask a similar question about marriage. Comfort, peace and meaning were present in the funerals which took place throughout the year and at the All Souls service.

The Monday lunches, Cream teas, Sunday lunches, Tea and chat, Art Group and Craft Group offered friendship, hospitality and creativity in the church room, which also saw the successful launch of the 'Silver Swans' dance classes in 2019.

Faith was shared in the meeting of the Lent Group through the spring, and this year in the Emmaus course which ran in the autumn. The monthly healing service continued to be a time of renewal and peace, as did Evensong on the first Sunday of the month.

A good mix of organisational and practical skills saw the building and churchyard well looked after. We celebrated the completion of the restoration of the bells and ropes with a special service in June. A new boiler was installed, the porch gates were beautifully restored, pointing around the floor tiles was painstakingly renewed, the roses carefully tended. We received three legacies during the year and these have been put into a 'Church Enhancement Fund'. The PCC is giving consideration to an appropriate use of the fund.

We are thankful for the organisation of so much social and fundraising activity and that this includes not just the church but the wider community. The Open Gardens were again blessed with good weather and the weekend was a great joy with lots to delight the eye and the taste buds too. A new committee will meet in 2020 to coordinate our fundraising activities and to introduce new ideas and possibilities.

Communication is a vital part of church life and we are fortunate to have an excellent website and weekly newssheets as well as the Hartfordian. New contributors of articles are always welcome.

We are enriched by each other's presence and I am conscious that there are faithful members of our congregation who are not able to be physically present on a Sunday morning yet remain, as much as ever, at the heart of our fellowship and our unity in the love and strength of Christ – this too is blessing to us all.

There is continuity in our congregation and there is change. It was good to welcome some new faces in 2019 and we also said goodbye.

Adam Green who has attended All Saints nearly all of his life and sung in the choir moved with his family to Staffordshire. It was a joy to hear Adam read in church and know the reality of his faith, a faith which was very evident as we prayed God's blessing for him on his final Sunday before moving.

Richard Barrett was strength and inspiration to us in so many ways – in his interest, awareness and attentiveness, his provocative questions and encouragement, his deep and real faith and his love. Richard and Kathy met the challenge of Richard's illness over several years with honesty and selflessness. Richard's death in early 2020 was a great loss to us, yet even in his dying he shared with us the confidence of the resurrection life.

Thank you to you all for being the church and thank you particularly to our reader, Elaine Levitt, our churchwardens, Sue Craven and Pam Clark and to our treasurer Paul Fearon for their prayerful dedication, initiative, encouragement and love.

Thanks be to God for the blessings we have shared in 2019.

Choir – Linda Davies

We are very fortunate at Hartford to have a choir of dedicated members who come to church for 10.00am every Sunday to rehearse before the service. They all enjoy singing and I hope they help you to worship and feel confident to join us in praising God. We sing a wide variety of music and are always open to learning new hymns and songs.

Adam first joined the choir at 9 years of age. Since then he became a very regular member. As he grew his voice also developed and his strong male voice was very welcome in a female choir. For many years he also helped Pauline, when required, with her roles as crucifer and bell ringer. After 29 years in the choir unfortunately his whole family has moved a real loss to us. We pray he may find a new church hopefully with a choir that would welcome him.

Alex and Arianna have also joined us. It is great to hear them singing the harmonies.

My thanks go to Helen for taking on playing for services when I am unable to attend. She is becoming very proficient. Helen regularly plays the organ on a Thursday morning when she opens the church. Hunters Down appreciates Helen's playing at their service once a month. David has taken on playing for Evensong on the first Sunday of the month. David also goes in during the week and can be heard playing a wide variety of music.

Elaine and I meet to choose hymns quarterly. Also if you would like a particular piece of music before the service please just give me a CD.

Hunters Down – Elaine Levitt

A small group from Hartford take a Communion service to Hunters Down on the first Wednesday of every month.

We always have at least 15 residents, and sometimes more attend. Sometimes relatives come and we enjoy it a great deal, as do they. Thanks to Helen, we always have music for our hymns and thanks to Claire from the Home who works hard to gather everyone together. Do come and join us, it is always a joy

Deanery Synod – Elaine Levitt

The Synod met three times in 2019, in different parts of the Deanery. In February we met at Fenstanton in their refurbished church rooms. In his last meeting as Rural Dean Rev Atling gave updates on various matters, including the process for choosing the next Bishop of Huntingdon. This was not expected to be a long process and it was hoped to have someone in place in the summer.

We were informed more are coming forward for vocations, either as ordinands or LLMS. it was expected the Diocese would have a small surplus which would be put into the growth fund for 2025 work. In May we met in Brampton Church and heard of work going on in Wisbech and also from Geoffrey Hunter on using our buildings, with a presentation of how we can bring our beautiful buildings to work for communities.

In October we met in Easton Church, which is a lovely example of adapting use for the community while still being a place of worship. The new rural Dean, Rev Ian Brennan was licensed by the Archdeacon. The Archdeacon spoke about the resources available and reminded us that rural parishes have the same access to training and help and are valued. There were also talks from Katie Hucklesby from Fenstanton on working with children and a speaker from “Torch” which offers material for those with poor or no sight.

Diocesan Synod- Elaine Levitt

The Synod met in Over Community Centre in March and was considering how to raise the spiritual temperature of the Diocese. This led to a lively discussion around tables and writing of ideas on post its! These will be considered by the senior management. There was an update on progress in Market towns, contactless giving and card readers.

In June Synod met in Ely College and was mainly updates on different matters as well as discussion around “Growing Faith”

In October we met at the Hayward Theatre in Ely and this was an interesting one on the work in Kigali .we had a wonderful greeting from the Kigali choir which is visiting with the Bishop of Kigali. It was good to hear the positive work in Rwanda now. An update on Safeguarding was a good reminder of the need to always keep this at the forefront. I am proud of the Diocese’s commitment to keep ahead of things and the training all ministers and workers are expected to do.

Janet Perrett reminded the Synod that the General Synod term finishes next year so there will be new elections.

Churches Together – Janet Boston

The following is a short overview of the events of Churches Together in Huntingdon and Godmanchester during the last year. Monthly prayer meetings were held. The week of Prayer for Christian Unity included both a pulpit and a congregation exchange, whilst weekday prayers were offered that week in some churches. The Good Friday walk of Witness and the Beach Party on the market square, both of which were well attended, brought a testimony of faith to the local community. Thought for the Day continues on HCR. Books were provided to Junior Schools and work continues to support Year 6 leavers on their transition to Secondary School. The Men's and Ladies' breakfasts are well supported. All Saints Hartford continues to provide the largest contingent for the Ladies' Breakfast. There is a continuing breakfast scheme which is held at Huntingdon Methodist Church. A visit by Bishop Nathan in May was very well received.

Presentations to the Standing Committee have been made by Arise Ministries and also by Compassion UK. The Constitution and Safeguarding Policies have been examined and updated. Church Together organised a Hustings for the General Election in November.

Achievements and Activities

During the year many social and fund raising events have taken place and been enjoyed by members of the congregation and the wider community. These have included a Spring lunch, Lent lunch, May lunch, Harvest lunch, two cream tea afternoons, Spring Quiz, Open Gardens weekend and a Christmas Fayre. Details of our fundraising and charitable giving are detailed in the Financial Report.

In addition there are several events which take place on a regular basis throughout the year.

Monthly Lunches – Sue Craven

The lunches, held on the first Monday of each month including bank holidays, continue to flourish catering for a variable number of people, ranging from 15 – 28. We always plan for maximum numbers and adapt accordingly, our priority being to make everyone welcome and to facilitate any particular needs. There is a charge of £3 per person, and whilst it was never intended to be money making, by careful purchasing and creative menu planning, we do cover all costs and donate money to church funds.

Cuppa Club – Sue Craven

On the second Monday of each month and again meeting in all bank holidays, the club is simply what the title says – we meet, chat, lend a listening ear and enjoy a cup of tea and cake without any charge whilst the scrabble group enjoy their games at the other side of the room. This is a much smaller group grown from the needs of people who attend the lunch, but nevertheless is open to anyone who wishes to while away two hours in pleasant company, hosted by 2 or 3 church members.

Monday Scrabble Group – Helen Dowzall

Our Scrabble Group meets at 2pm on the second Monday of the month. A small group of people (from Hartford and neighbouring villages) continue to meet in the Church Room to enjoy a friendly game (usually two games are managed) of Scrabble. Although some of our regulars have been unable to attend recently due to health issues, we have had a couple of new people joining us this past year. The afternoons – which include a cuppa and chat - have been enjoyed by those attending.

Anyone interested is welcome, whatever your level of Scrabble expertise. We are more than happy to teach non-players. If you don't want to play Scrabble, a game of chess can usually be arranged instead. If you fancy neither, you can always join the folk that just meet for a cuppa and a chat - and think about trying a game of Scrabble at a later date. Whatever you decide, you will be made most welcome. Come along and give us a try.

If you require any more information, ask Helen Dowzall.

Crafty Saints – Mary Adlam and Carol King

Crafty Saints continued to flourish during 2019 with numbers slowly increasing.

We have been especially pleased to welcome members of the community as well as members of our own congregation.

In April we celebrated the Bridge Arts Festival by holding a coffee morning and decorating the church room with knitted bunting.

The church was decorated with knitted flowers for Easter and a small sale was held of knitted items to raise funds for the church.

During the year we contributed to the New Comrades Quilters project to provide bed covers for children in a Kenyan orphanage by knitting and crocheting blankets. These were all despatched in November and photographs of the children with their blankets and quilts have been sent to us.

For Remembrance Sunday knitted poppies were used to decorate the church.

The Crafty Saints' stall for the Christmas Fayre in November was a great success, we were well supported with created crafts made by several people who are unable to attend our weekly group but who wished to contribute. We raised a total of £460 for the church.

In 2020 we hope to grow in size and reach out to gain more members in the wider community. Plans are already in place for different craft projects.

Art Group – Pam Clark

The Art Group continues to give much pleasure and companionship to the small group of people that currently attend. It is hoped numbers will increase a little this year.

We didn't hold an exhibition in 2019 as we were involved in the bigger event in Huntingdon and Godmanchester in the Spring. We are holding this year's event in May so there is only an 18 month gap since the last one.

We still meet on alternate Fridays from 1.30 -3.30 and the charge remains £2.00 per session to cover costs. We are very grateful for the use of the Church room for the meetings which are important to the Hartford village community.

We welcome new members and if anyone wants to join please just contact me. No previous experience required.

The Hartfordian magazine ought to be an affiliated Time Lord since it underwent another regeneration in 2019!

East Cambridgeshire District Council Print Services now produce the paper magazine from print ready material and an e-magazine version produced 'in house'. The printing service requirements actually mean that only one version of the magazine has to be produced because the e-version can be created easily from the print copy version. Reducing the output to 6 (slightly larger on average) bi-monthly editions has significantly reduced the amount of editorial work which has been very welcome. An additional bonus is that the good quality print can be produced on a 2 day turn around and at a price (including bulk first class postage) which currently allows the magazine to break even.

The new magazine has been well received. There are currently 65 subscribers (51 print and 14 e-magazines including 5 complimentary electronic recipients) and the current subscription is £6 which covers 6 issues. If there are no significant increases in print costs then there is no reason to increase the subscription fee for 2020/2021.

I would like to thank all those who have made contributions to the magazine in 2019. It is pleasing to note that there has been a steady flow of welcome and interesting material about what happens at the church and I trust this will continue through 2020.

There is a small and very select band of people who deserve significant thanks and that is the Delivery Team; Jim Dalglish, Glenys Colbert and Elaine Levitt pound the Hartford pavements to hand deliver the paper editions.

I would commend the PCC to consider the following points in their deliberations during 2020;

- providing a means for people to pay their subscriptions electronically
- actively seeking local businesses, professionals and others to sponsor the complete magazine or simply one edition of the magazine
- considering succession planning for the day when the editor hangs up his keyboard.

Financial Review

Please see the Annual Accounts paperwork for details.

Structure, governance and management

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. At All Saints the membership of the PCC consists of the incumbent, associated clergy, elected and co-opted members drawn from members of the congregation who are on the electoral roll.

The full PCC meets six times a year to discuss and make decisions on all matters of general concern and importance to the parish including how church funds are spent. A smaller Standing Committee meets prior to the PCC meeting to collate and prepare information for PCC consideration but it has no powers to make decisions unless specifically instructed by the PCC at a prior meeting.

To facilitate the worship and outreach activities that take place at All Saints it is important that we maintain the fabric of our church and church room. We are very grateful to the small army of unsung heroes who regularly carry out cleaning and maintenance tasks in and around our church and those who look after the church contents and consumable supplies.

Churchwardens' Fabric Report for 2019 – Pam Clark and Sue Craven

January – shelves erected in robe cupboard; gate post and gate replaced; repairs to tiles in chancel

February – metal plaque removed from stone in churchyard;

March – repairs to mortar on floor in nave and around north door

April – fire extinguishers and alarms checked; Health and Safety inspection carried out; lower gutters cleared; lock on toilet door replaced; oven professionally cleaned

May – renovation work on bells and ropes carried out

June -

July – organ tuned; fire alarms and emergency lights checked; boiler replaced

August – netting removed from south door gate and gates repainted; repair to wooden ceiling bottom edge south east corner of nave

September –

October -

November –

December – spraying of self-seeded sycamore trees by south wall; replacement of rose bed back wooden edging along main church path

The Log Book and the Church Property Register are up to date, have been checked and signed off by the PCC as an accurate record.

Church Flowers – Pam Clark

No major changes have taken place since last year and the flower arrangers continue to quietly do a sterling job in making the church look beautiful. We have had quite a few weddings and have taken on some requests for pedestals again as there are some very skilled arrangers on the team now. This helps the church finances as we rarely use the full £50 or £60 we charge.

Overall costs for flowers and Oasis have been minimal due to the generosity of all our ladies and we make the most of home grown seasonal flowers and foliage when available. Two new pedestals have been purchased as the old ones were getting very rickety and rusty.

Many thanks to everyone who give of their time and talent to this important job.

Health and Safety – Vaughan Clark

The annual Health and Safety inspection was carried out in April, regular informal checks carried out throughout the year and any issues promptly rectified.

Safeguarding – Alastair Hill

I am pleased to record that there have been no safeguarding issues in 2019.

The Church of England is reviewing all of its safeguarding policies and practices. Hartford Church needs to do so too and will be using a tool called "Parish dashboard". This is a tool that has been created to make clear what standards and rules the Church of England requires us to adhere to

where safeguarding is concerned. We will also, of course, continue to update individuals' DBS checks where necessary.

The aim is to ensure that everyone in the church community can be sure that anyone in a position of trust can indeed be trusted to look after any vulnerable children and adults in a reasonable manner. To quote from the Church of England guidance "Safer environment and activities", "Much of our safeguarding practice in church is built upon how we relate to each other, expressing and demonstrating the love of God in every aspect of our relationships and valuing the image of God in each person. In this regard, safeguarding is a core Christian activity".

Administrative information

All Saints Church is situated at The Hollow, Hartford, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire PE29 1YF. It is part of the Diocese of Ely within the Church of England.

The Rector, the Reverend Geoffrey Boucher, who is responsible for the benefices of All Saints Hartford and St Mary the Virgin Houghton with Wyton, resides at The Rectory, 3 Rectory Lane, Wyton PE28 2AQ.

PCC members who have served at any time during 2019 are listed below.

Ex-Officio Members:-

The Rector - Reverend Geoffrey Boucher

Associate Ministers – Reverend Clifford Owen, Reverend Catherine Wright (from 6th October 2019)

Licensed Lay Minister – Mrs Elaine Levitt

Churchwardens Mrs Pam Clark, Mrs Sue Craven

Deanery Synod Representatives – Mrs Elaine Levitt, Mrs Mary Hill (until 18th March 2019), Mrs Helen Dowzall (from 18th March 2019)

Elected Members:-

Mrs Mary Adlam

Mr Richard Barrett (until 23rd April 2019)

Mrs Janet Boston

Mrs Nanette Cleghorn (from 23rd April 2019)

Mr Derek Colbert (until 23rd April 2019)

Mrs Linda Davies

Mrs Helen Dowzall

Mr Nicholas Esders (until 18th November 2019)

Mr Paul Fearon

Mrs Carol King

Mr Peter King

Co-opted members:-

Appointed Positions:-

Treasurer –Mr Paul Fearon

PCC Secretary –Mrs Janet Boston (until 23rd April 2019), Mrs Nanette Cleghorn (from 23rd April 2019)

Verger – Mrs Elizabeth Cooper (until 30th July 2019)

Fabric Officer – Mr Derek Colbert (until 23rd April 2019), Mr Victor Phillips (from 23rd April 2019)

Organist and Choirmaster – Mrs Linda Davies

Health and Safety Officer – Mr Vaughan Clark

Gift Aid Co-ordinator – Mrs Helen Dowzall

Electoral Roll Officer – Mrs Helen Dowzall

Churches Together Representatives – Mrs Janet Boston

Safeguarding Officer - Mr Alastair Hill

Data Protection Officer – Mrs Nanette Cleghorn

Website – Mrs Haleema Hawkins

Flower Arranging Co-ordinator – Mrs Pam Clark

Independent Examiner - Mr David Ebdale

Authorised Worship Leader – Mary Adlam

Magazine Editor – Mr Peter Levitt