

ANNUAL REPORT 2019-2020

There were 21 members of the PCC excluding Jane, our vicar until July 2019. The PCC thanks Keith Philips and Rodney Fowler for their constant dedication and hard work as Churchwardens. Pam Adlington has again been an invaluable help to Keith and Rodney as assistant warden. Our treasurer, Colin Gidman, has been very diligent in keeping our finances in good order and has provided us with bi-monthly financial reports at PCC meetings.

Over the past few years, it has been noticed that expenditure has exceeded income and this was becoming a concerning trend so an extra finance meeting was held in October where a very fruitful and amicable discussion was held and several good ideas of increasing our income were discussed.

Our chosen charities this year were Heart Start at Wythenshawe, the Christie hospital in Macclesfield and the local branch of Mind. These charities share around £3,000 between them, which is supplemented by fundraising.

Keith Phillips runs the 100 Club run but would welcome more partakers. The fortnightly whist drive is now held at Toft. The PCC is also grateful for the continuing support from the three Parish Councils towards the cost of maintaining the Churchyard.

There was a celebration of flowers in the first weekend of July which was the same weekend as the church fete. A concert was held in the church on Friday 5th July with Linda Richardson and a male voice choir. The festival of flowers was very successful. £5,934 was raised at the flower festival and just over £4,200 at the fete. This was a magnificent weekend and the Knutsford flower ladies did a wonderful job with decorating the church. It was very well organised by Ged Coates and his team including lots of volunteers, especially with catering and serving teas. The fete was also extremely well run by Joan Drye and the committee and was a good afternoon, despite the wet weather! A special service was held on Sunday 7th July with a guest preacher Reverend Canon Christopher Burkett including special readings and hymns chosen from congregation favourites. This was Jane's leaving service and a signed card and healthy cheque was presented to her by Rodney on behalf of the parish.

From July onwards we were in the period of interregnum. Officially, the vacancy started in September but as Jane was now on a sabbatical, our interregnum had begun! Ged Coates was elected as vice chair at the May meeting which was the special meeting with the rural dean-, Ian Blay. At this meeting the rural dean explained the process of finding a new vicar for the benefice. –George Dutton and Keith Phillips from Lower Peover were elected as parish reps. Their main task was to write the parish profile along with a working party who talked to various groups in

the parish for their input. In order to write the benefice summary and discuss our hopes for the future, it was vital to have conversations with Over Peover church and their parish reps, Bill Moss and Vicki Irlam. It was suggested that we have joint PCC meetings with Over Peover, maybe twice a year, to further develop better connections. Invitations were cordially given and received to all Christmas events in both parishes; joint PCCs were held, one with the rural dean in October and one in January to discuss an update on the interregnum and joint collaborations with fund raising events.

The parish profile, parish fact sheet, benefice summary, accounts and annual report were sent to Chester and appropriate parties for consideration. There were also conversations with the archdeacon, Ian Bishop and other parishes in interregnum. These were about possible reorganisations of benefices in the arch deanery of Macclesfield. The Archdeacon's idea was that we may have another parish joining us in the future with the reshuffle of parish boundaries.

During the interregnum we were able to cover all Holy Communion services with retired clergy and Ann was able to cover all the regular non Eucharistic services. We are very fortunate in having such a dedicated and hardworking Lay Reader in Ann Barlow and thank her for her constant support and commitment to the parish. Bible study groups have continued to be held for all in the parish up until lockdown in March this year.

Children's church began on October 27th. This 30 minute service on the 4th Sunday of the month took the form of songs, a story, an activity and prayer. Ann led this service and Felicity helped. Several young families attended with parents and joined in with all parts of the service. Ann continued to visit lower Peover School and the Little House and celebrated Christingle and nativity services with these children.

Refreshments after services were well supported and gave all a good opportunity to get together with members of the parish, both new and old. We have celebrated several special services over this year. The Harvest Festival morning service was followed by a ploughman's lunch with apple pie in the school hall. The Christmas services including the Nine Lessons and Carols were all well supported.

We are well supported with three organists who play on a rota system, namely David Tredwell, Barry Dodgson and Felicity Wilshaw. A choir was brought together to sing at the celebration service in July and the festival of Nine Lessons and Carols in December. We have a dedicated team of bell ringers and a faithful and helpful team of sides persons.

Fund raising this year was in the form of a walk between the two parishes followed by a barbecue and several of us attending evensong afterwards. There was also a pudding and quiz night in February, very well attended and extremely tasty. November included the service of Remembrance and the fantastic knitted bible exhibition which was in church for that weekend. Ged Coates, Ann Barlow and volunteers set it up and served refreshments.

In December we hosted a carol service for the Cheshire County Federation of Young Farmers Clubs. Members of Cheshire Young Farmers also took part in the Plough Service in January when Sharon Mayer, lead Chaplain of the Cheshire Agricultural Chaplaincy, was guest preacher.

Of course, March this year saw the coronavirus pandemic and the inevitable lockdown. The last church services were held on Sunday 15th March and the March PCC meeting had to be cancelled. A WhatsApp group was set up to keep pack members connected and a covid support group was set up in Lower Peover and info sent out to all PCC members, information was put on the church website re the cancelling of services. The AGM was also postponed until the end of October. During the time of lockdown from Palm Sunday onwards, Ann, our reader, put a weekly reflection on one of the lectionary readings for the Sunday on the website with resources for prayer and links to lists of parishes who were live streaming services. These were also sent to members who expressed an interest worksheets were circulated to families.

I would like to thank Lynda Boag-Munroe for editing the parish magazine, Ann Barlow for keeping our website up to date especially as we entered lockdown and we could not meet each other.

Thanks also to all who serve the church voluntarily in many different ways such as the delivery and stapling of magazines, cleaning the Church, maintaining the grounds, catering, souvenir selling, arranging the altar frontals and flower arranging –all these contributions to church life are invaluable.

I would like to finish this report on an optimistic and happy note. Interviews were held for our new incumbent on 18th March, just days before the national lockdown. The PCC were informed by email of our new incumbent, Father Murray Aldridge Collins and we were all absolutely delighted with the news.

I would like to take this opportunity of welcoming Father Murray officially to the parish and our PCC.

Welcome Father Murray! Thankyou