

**The Parish of Ponteland
St. Mary the Virgin and Holy Saviour**

2021 Annual Report

1.0 Introduction

St Mary's Parochial Church Council has the responsibility together with the incumbent for the running of the parish church and serving the population of Ponteland (some 14000 souls); developing the whole mission of the church on matters pastoral, evangelical, social and ecumenical. It is also responsible for the fabric of the ancient church in Ponteland, Holy Saviour Milbourne, 2 Grange Road and the Parish Centre.

2.0 Mission Statement

"We are a parish proclaiming the good news of the risen Christ, and supplying the spiritual, moral and social needs of all who seek assistance, particularly those living in the parish of Ponteland."

3.0 The Parochial Church Council

Members of the PCC are either ex-officio or elected by the Annual Parochial Church Meeting in accordance with the Church Representation Rules.

During the year, the following served as members of the PCC: -

The Incumbent: Revd Captain Paul Allinson

Curate: Revd Rosemary Harrison from July 8th

Associate Priest: Revd Canon Christine Brown

Churchwarden: Mr David Butler

Representatives of Deanery Synod (ex officio): Dr Janet Welsh; Mrs Michelle Smith; Mrs June Atkinson

Elected Members:

Elected 2019: Mrs Rosy Doherty, Mr John Doherty, Mrs Julie Bell,

Elected 2020 Mrs Jaqui Buffham, Mr David Comeskey, Mrs June Atkinson, Mr Peter Hopley

Re-elected 2021: Mrs Carole Butler (PCC Secretary), Mr Clive Jordan (Treasurer), Mrs Angie Jordan, Mrs Georgina Matthews

Co-opted as Accountant: Mr Clive Ringrose

Co-opted as Parish Centre Manager: Mr Ted Henderson

Invited to attend all meetings as Electoral Roll Officer: Mr Alan Barron

Holy Saviour Milbourne

Deputy Wardens: Mr Brian Henderson, Mrs Gwenneth Nicholson

PCC Representative: Mr Duncan Wheeler

The total membership of the PCC for 2021 was 24, which includes Deanery Synod reps, Holy Saviour reps, and Clergy. The PCC met 6 times during 2021 with an average attendance of 17.

The PCC is registered with the Charity Commission, (Registered No. 1134771), and the members of the PCC act as Trustees to the Charity.

4.0 Committees and Working Groups.

The PCC operates through the Standing Committee and several subgroups that have specific roles as designated by the PCC.

Standing Committee – this is the only committee required by law. It has power to transact the business of the PCC between meetings subject to any directions given by the PCC. The committee comprises of the Incumbent, the Church Warden, the PCC secretary, and the Treasurer. The standing committee did not meet in 2021.

Sub groups:

- Financial and Charitable Giving - coordinated by Mr Clive Ringrose
- Property/Maintenance - coordinated by Mr David Butler
- Safeguarding - coordinated by Mrs Rosemary Rhodes
- Milbourne - coordinated by Mr Duncan Wheeler
- Music - coordinated by Mrs Jean Fellowes-Pryne
- Hall Management - coordinated by Mr Ted Henderson

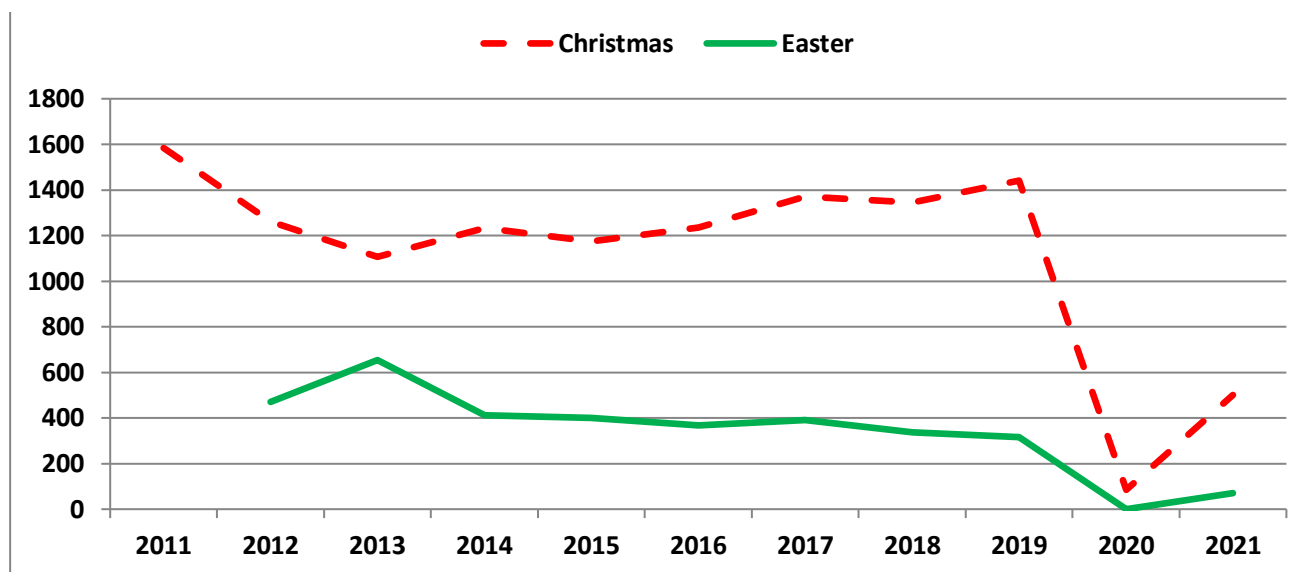
5.0 Church Attendance

A total of 191 parishioners were registered at March 2021 (currently 194 – March 2022).

When services were allowed to resume later in the year, government restrictions meant that numbers allowed in church were again limited. There were for example, much lower numbers in church over Easter, and only 500 people in church during Christmas. The October figures (the month used by the Church of England to assess numbers annually), were obviously up from 2020, but still lower than in the years before the pandemic.

The restrictions also had an effect on the occasional services, though with constraints easing, numbers rose – there were 21 baptisms and 8 marriages, plus 3 blessings. Funeral numbers were down – 20 during the year, possibly due to the precautions that people were taking.

Attendance trends at St Mary's – Christmas and Easter



Review of the year

6.0 The Year itself:

2021 proved to be another challenging year due to the Covid-19 pandemic, not just for the parish of Ponteland but for all places of worship throughout the country, as the country went into the third lockdown on January 4th.

Thanks are extended to all those who continued to make phone calls and collect shopping for the vulnerable during the time of the lockdown, to our administrator Ruth for being ever helpful, and to Alison who has made sure that there has been a copy of Grapevine for every month.

Starting in January, a weekly reflection by a member of the clergy was filmed and placed on YouTube and the church Facebook page each week, these have proved valuable to those who are unable or unwilling to come to church in person.

The year was again severely affected by the Covid 19 pandemic, in so much that the normal routine of services was curtailed until the end of March and the first two meetings of the PCC had to be held by virtual means. However, Holy Communion was able to be celebrated on the first three Sundays in March and the lockdown ended on 29th.

A Good Friday service took place in Church, however the ecumenical service to raise the cross on the green was cancelled, the cross was raised later in the day on the green by two members of the congregation. The Eucharist was celebrated in both churches on Easter Day.

A slightly different pattern of services commenced again at St Mary's, with a non communion service on the third Sunday of the month and Baptism services being held as private ceremonies. This is to be reviewed after 12months. The Parish Centre opened again for children's groups in April followed by other groups in May.

In May Rev Paul introduced the concept of the Mamre project, a long-term plan, to look at the parish church building with a view to renewal and repair. The Parish Centre and Holy Saviour would also be the focus of future consideration as part of the Mission Strategy.

The 'Know Your Church, Know Your Neighbourhood' initiative which was spearheaded by Canon Christine, identified several needs and themes in the local community, including loneliness, and fostering wellbeing.

Mandatory restrictions for Covid ended on 24th July and there was a gradual move to a normal service atmosphere from August, but with everyone mindful of the need of others to feel secure.

The church path between North Road and the church was refurbished with money donated by the congregation and a donation of £3000 from the Town Council. The porch roof was repointed and is now watertight. A contactless card reader had been installed in St Mary's and this has proved useful for those wishing to donate to the church but who do not carry cash. This has proved particularly beneficial for families attending the occasional services.

The year ended with Christmas services taking a different format than usual to take into consideration the continuing pandemic and the need to socially distance wherever possible. Thanks go again to Tom and Joe of Wylam Nurseries for donating the Christmas tree.

7.0 Financial Summary

The effects of Covid-19 have continued to have a significant impact on the PCC's finances. There were signs of recovery with some areas of income up on their 2020 levels, but most remain below their pre-pandemic levels.

The PCC had agreed a reduced Parish Share with the diocese of £65,000. Despite the loss of income, the PCC managed to pay £66,000.

Unrestricted Income:

The main item of income is Planned Giving. In 2021 this dropped by 7% to £71,926. This drop is larger than in recent years. The drop in planned giving resulted in less gift aid being claimed. This is 14% down on pre-Covid levels.

Open plate collections at £8,632, were up significantly on the previous year, (£4,347), but down on 2019 (£10,999).

A new source of income was from the Contact-less giving machine. This generated £1,384 during the year. Most of its use was at baptisms, but there were regular contributions throughout the week from visitors.

The income from hiring out the Parish Centre was £10,644. This was an increase from £7,281 in 2020 but were still below 2019 when £19,178 was received.

Unrestricted Expenditure:

The largest item of expenditure is Parish Share. For 2021 the diocese set a figure of £97,884. After discussions with the diocese a figure of £65,000 was agreed. The PCC exceeded this by a small amount and paid £66,000. Expenditure on running and maintaining the churches was up from the previous year by £2,839, or 14%. The largest items were: St Mary's gas up £436, Church Internet £600, Boiler repairs £500, Contact-less giving machine £360, Electrical and sound repairs £450.

Restricted Income:

The restricted income in 2021 was £40,499. The largest items were £8,000 from 2 legacies and a donation of £4,000 that will be used to repair the windows. Collections from weddings and funerals towards refurbishment projects were a significant source of income.

A change to the accounting procedure has included fees paid to the diocese. In 2021 £8,632 was collected in fees and paid to the Diocese.

Restricted Expenditure:

Excluding fee money that the PCC forwarded to the diocese and others, £21,000 was spent on numerous projects. The largest being the installation of the toilet at Holy Saviour, which cost £7,870. Other large items were £3,200 on repointing the floor at St Mary's and £900 repairing the flagpole.

8.0 Reserves

Since 2013 the PCC has had a Reserves Policy based on Church of England guidance notes.

The policy of the PCC is to maintain its reserves equal to 3 months expenditure. At the end of 2021 the unrestricted reserves were £46,295. This was an increase in the year of £5,334.

£6,000 was added to the designated fund for the repair or replacement of the heating of St Mary's and £2,000 was added to the fund for the improvement of 2 Grange Road.

9.0 Risk Management

The PCC is under an obligation to consider major risks to which St Mary's may be exposed and systems are in place to minimize such risks. Our Safeguarding Policy is in line with the current procedures set out by the Diocese. The insurance policy for the churches provides cover for the buildings, contents, and third-party claims.

10.0 Legal and Administration Information

Parochial Name Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin

North Road

Ponteland

NE20 9NU

Tel 01661 824470

Bankers: Santander and Lloyds Bank PLC, Ponteland Branch

Auditor: Stephenson Coates

Carole Butler

PCC Secretary March 2022