



PARISH CHURCH OF
ST LUKE
HOLMES CHAPEL

Come to Christ, love to learn, learn to love!

Annual Parochial Church Meeting – 25th Oct 2020 Report for 2019

INTRODUCTION

Under the Church Representation Rules (2020), every parish must hold an Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) before the 31st May each year. However, in view of the pandemic and the consequent restrictions on public meeting, our APCM and the Annual Meeting to elect Churchwardens were delayed until 25th October under a special provision made by the Bishop of Chester on 8th Sep 2020. For the APCM, the PCC must provide a report which has to include information about the Church Electoral Roll, details of proceedings of the Parochial Church Council (PCC) and parish activities generally, information about Church fabric, goods and ornaments, details of proceedings of the Deanery Synod, and a statement about compliance with Safeguarding. This document forms the required Annual Report for the past calendar year: 2019. Some individual sections may also include information about activities since the last APCM. Advance copies of the Annual Report have been available on our website (<https://stlukesholmeschapel.uk>) and in the church porch from 18th Oct 2020.

The PCC also must provide for the APCM independently examined financial statements for the calendar year 2019. Copies of a summary of these financial statements have also been available on our website and in the church porch from 18th Oct 2020.

CHURCH ELECTORAL ROLL 2020

A new Church Electoral Roll for 2019-2025 was established for the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) in April 2019. The required annual revision of the Roll by the Parochial Church Council began as notified on Sunday 22nd March in readiness for the 2020 APCM. This meeting was delayed until 4.15pm on Sunday 25th October and will be held using Zoom telecommunications because of the COVID-19 emergency. Holding Annual Church Meetings in person is not possible this year.

The period for additions and changes to the Electoral Roll ended on Friday 9th October (16 days before the APCM) and the revised Roll was published on the Church external noticeboards from Sunday 11th October. No address or email details are permitted to appear in the published Roll.

There are now 189 members on the Church Electoral Roll after the 2020 revision, there having been 10 additions and 8 deletions.

Wendy Bond - Electoral Roll Officer

FABRIC GOODS AND ORNAMENTS

Our Grade I listed church building and the church goods and ornaments are in reasonable condition, given their general age. The church inventory has been reviewed and all items were accounted for. The required annual maintenance has been carried out to the organ, church clock, fire extinguishers, lightning conductors and the two church boilers. This revealed further deterioration of the Church Organ and, on the advice of the Diocesan Organ Advisor, repair is uneconomic and a replacement organ will be required in the near future. All portable electrical appliances in Church and in the Church Hall have again been tested for electrical safety and either approved for use or replaced with new appliances.

Church Lighting. Our proposed project to install a replacement LED solution for lighting inside the church has been submitted to the Diocesan Advisory Committee for faculty approval but progress on this project was paused during the Interregnum. As a reminder, this project will improve lighting control, significantly reduce energy consumption and, importantly, also eliminate the need for frequent replacement of high-level halogen bulbs requiring unsafe working from a long ladder. We expect to revisit this project later in 2020 or early 2021.

Land maintenance. Clive Nash Landscapes continue to maintain the main churchyard, the border outside the church hall and the Knutsford Road churchyard to a high standard. A group of volunteers has regularly weeded and tidied the area around the memorials for cremated remains which is difficult to maintain with machines. Their assistance is greatly appreciated.

Knutsford Road Churchyard. The newly consecrated extension land is now in full use for both burials and the interment of cremated remains.

Redundant Pews. Following the changes to our Chancel area a few years ago, we have now sold the nine redundant pews that were being stored in the Chapel of Rest. These pews were offered locally and we received donations to the value of £571 which has been allocated to the Organ fund.

Church West End Big Project. The PCC submitted their ideas on how to develop the church building to make it more accessible for the future. Throughout 2019, our architects, Bench Architects, have been working on some high-level concept designs for us to consider. Progress on this subject has been limited in 2019 as it was necessary to ensure we had the involvement of our new Incumbent. Whichever plan we choose, will require extensive fund raising to enable the project to proceed.

Alastair Cragg, Jayne Weaver – Churchwardens

Val Cragg, Stephen Haigh, Peter Cotton – Assistant Churchwardens

CHURCHWARDENS REPORT ON GENERAL PARISH MATTERS

The Interregnum. The parish was in Interregnum for the majority of 2019. We were fortunate to be regularly supported by several different Clergy who enabled us to continue all our weekly commitments of services/funerals/baptisms and weddings throughout the Interregnum. The Churchwardens would like to thank the PCC and all church members for their support and encouragement during the Interregnum.

The advert for our new Vicar closed in April 2019 and interviews took place in May 2019. The interview panel consisted of the Rural Dean, Archdeacon of Macclesfield, our Patron (the Vicar of Sandbach) and the Churchwardens (representing the PCC). Following the interview, the vacancy was offered to Canon Rob McLaren, who accepted the offer. His Institution and Induction took place on Friday 22 November 2019 so that he could complete commitments in his existing parish of St George's, Poynton. We were pleased to welcome Bishop William Alaha Pwaisiho OBE to St Luke's to conduct Rob's institution in front of a packed church which included many invited guests,

fellow clergy and Rob's former parishioners. The memorable service was followed by light refreshments in the Church Hall.

The vicarage was prepared for Rob and Jean McLaren's arrival by a team of volunteer painters – many thanks to them and also to William and Judith Hall for all their efforts in this regard. The Diocese of Chester also submitted a planning application to build a new vicarage to be co-located on the same site as the existing vicarage which will be sold in due course. Planning approval was subsequently granted and work started in early 2020.

Assistant Churchwardens. We were pleased that all the Assistant Wardens continued in their posts for the year and we continued to meet each month (sometimes fortnightly) as the PCC Standing Committee to conduct church business. We could not fulfil our duties without their support and that which we each receive from so many people in the church and beyond.

Sidesmen. The team has provided a warm welcome and support through all our services. This was increasingly important through the Interregnum whilst we hosted many visiting clergy. Our men and women Sidesmen have assisted at our usual Sunday and Wednesday services, but also at funerals, baptisms, weddings, and at Christingle other special services through the year.

Church Hall. Our Church Hall is an important resource for Church activities and provides valuable income from external lettings. Val Cragg is our link to the PCC Church Hall sub-committee, which is chaired by John Murfin. John also continues to be responsible for the letting of the Hall. We are grateful to the Hall sub-committee and everyone who helps them keep the Hall clean and running smoothly and efficiently.

Parish Weekend 2020. This event was originally scheduled for September 2020 but sadly had to be cancelled for lack of support rather than for any COVID-19 reason. We were pleased when Peter and Brenda Shackleton had agreed to pick up the reins and organise the Weekend. Following the launch of publicity in January 2020 and a further big push to try to increase bookings, the level of interest was just too low for the event to be viable. We therefore took the difficult decision to cancel. If future Parish Weekends are contemplated, we will need to have a firmer idea of take-up before booking a venue and speakers. We would like to thank Peter and Brenda for their efforts picking this up, albeit briefly.

Covid-19 restrictions. The end of our Church Year (March 2020) coincided with the beginning of the pandemic in the UK and the start of lockdown and restriction on public meetings and worship. We have continued to follow Government regulations and the guidance from the Church of England to ensure St Luke's and our church activities remain safe for everyone. We are continuing to monitor the situation carefully.

Data Protection. The PCC is a registered charity and must operate within statutory controls such as the new General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) rules in force in the UK from May 2018. Our Data Privacy Notice was revised and is published on the church website and on the noticeboard in the church porch.

Thanks to Major Contributors. Thank you to everyone who provides their time and efforts to maintain the church to such a high standard – Jean Paton for the beautiful laundered linen; Michelle Carter, our church cleaner; our teams of brass-cleaners and flower-arrangers; Wendy Macdonald, our Music Director; our choir and musicians; and our Sacristan team. It was good that the PCC could formally recognise Mervyn Harrison's long service with our bellringers - we thank him and the whole team for their continued service getting St Luke's heard and noticed throughout the village.

Our grateful thanks also go to Mike and Barbara Street for continuing to arrange for the Harvest Sheaf and to Anne and Alan Lane for providing our Christmas tree each year. Thank you to Alan

Rickards who does a wonderful job as Editor of our excellent Church Magazine, which provides a valuable and enjoyable read every month. Thanks as well to Steve Smith for all his work as PCC Secretary and in co-ordinating the Parish Profile used to help advertise our vacancy.

We have been fortunate in the past in having sufficient people willing to serve in Church committees and groups, to carry out specific tasks and work in ecumenical groups like Churches Together and Christian Aid. However, the number of those able to continue doing so is diminishing and several groups are in urgent need of new volunteers e.g. the Church Hall sub-committee and the brass-cleaners. Please let one of us know if you can help out in any way.

Alastair Cragg, Jayne Weaver – Churchwardens

SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT

In the light of the recent independent report on the failure of policy and practices of the Church of England in relation to safeguarding issues, particularly those of child abuse, our continued vigilance at St Luke's in relation to these matters is vital.

We are reminded that the responsibility for providing a safe environment for parishioners is one that involves us all and not just those appointed to particular offices. The provision of care and safety for the community at St Luke's over time has been excellent as required checks are in place for those directly involved with our children, young people and the vulnerable and safe practices are in place and reviewed.

Reporting any concern is necessary and information about how to this is posted in the church porch, in the Church Hall and on our website at <https://stlukesholmeschapel.uk> .

While the current pandemic restricts the Church meeting as normal, it does not restrict the ways in which the internet may be used for sending messages and images for grooming the vulnerable and for bullying and intimidation. Social media sites which are used particularly by the younger generation may be a source of abuse in this way and we need to be aware of this possibility.

Maintaining good relationships with each other provides the trust to report any concerns and should this be necessary any matter will be dealt with speedily and in confidence to effect a resolution.

Anne Smith – Safeguarding Officer

CHURCH COUNCIL

Council proceedings – In 2019 the Parochial Church Council (PCC) of Church Hulme met on eight occasions to conduct general business and financial matters in support of the churchwardens, Alastair Cragg and Jayne Weaver having charge of the parish during the interregnum. In the course of this business, the Council received and discussed reports from the Churchwardens, Treasurer, Deanery Synod representatives and other Church officials on a variety of issues, including those summarised in the Fabric Goods and Ornaments and Churchwardens' Reports above. The Standing Committee met at regular intervals between full Council meetings to ensure parish business and church services were maintained.

We were pleased to attend the installation of our new vicar, Canon Rob McLaren at a service in St Luke's church on Friday 22nd Nov 2019. The Institution was carried out by Bishop William Pwaisiho OBE and the Induction by the Archdeacon of Macclesfield.

The Council continues to be compliant with the House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults and follows the Diocesan Safeguarding Policy it adopted in September 2018. Anne Smith has continued as the Council's Safeguarding Officer.

At the end of 2019, the Council had 20 members (listed on the notice-board in the church porch). Council meetings were chaired by Alastair Cragg in the absence of an incumbent. Agendas and Minutes of meetings have been published on the PCC page of the church website (<https://stlukesholmeschapel.uk>) and a paper copy can be supplied on request to the Secretary.

Annual Parish Meetings – This year, as stated above in the introduction, because of the COVID-19 restrictions, the Annual Meeting to elect Churchwardens for 2020/21 and the Annual Parochial Church Meeting to elect parish representatives to the Deanery Synod and also to the PCC, and to conduct other business, are being held at 4pm and 4.15pm, respectively, on Sunday 25th October. *The Annual Meetings can be accessed through Zoom ID 856 031 5150 password 902272.*

Financial Statements (Annual Accounts) - A summary of the PCC's independently examined financial statements for the calendar year 2019, prepared by the Council's Treasurer, William Hall, is available for inspection on the church website from Sunday 18th October. Paper copies of the summary accounts are also available in the church porch from 18th October. A copy of the full Church Accounts will be supplied on request to the Treasurer (tel. HC 535497) or Secretary (secy@stlukesholmeschapel.uk).

Steve Smith - Secretary, Church Council

DEANERY SYNOD

Congleton Deanery Synod met three times in 2019.

During the February meeting at St Mary Magdalene, Alsager we welcomed Revd Sandi Fisher as vicar of St Oswald's, Brereton and Revd Michelle Goodrich as vicar of St Mary Magdalene. Revd Daran Ward would be inducted at Christ Church, Alsager the following month.

Members discussed the proposal, originating from St Mary's, Astbury, that faculty fees should not be levied on PCCs, but paid for by the Diocesan Board of Finance, as the current system was arbitrary, confusing and discouraged churches from pursuing a proper use of the faculty system. This would bring Chester Diocese in line with best practice in a number of other dioceses in the Church of England. Deanery Synod voted unanimously to submit the proposal to the Diocese.

Dr Timothy Stratford, Dean of Chester, addressed the next Deanery Synod meeting at St Bertoline's Church, Barthomley in June. He oversees the work of the parish churches in the Diocese. The Dean perceived his role as changing the culture of Chester Cathedral to make it a welcoming church for both regular worshippers and those seeking temporary solace. He planned to use the Cathedral's many antiquities and historical records in a series of themed walks around the building to encourage visitors to reflect on their spiritual journeys from birth to eternity. The number of visitors to the cathedral has risen dramatically over the past few years since the abolition of admission charges. Interestingly, donations have been at a similar level to the funds raised by charging visitors.

Former Bishop of Chester, Peter Forster, had sent a discussion document, 'Supporting and Developing Missional Communities' to deaneries for their response. Diocesan Synod concluded that the parish was the bedrock of the church in the diocese and that deaneries provided invaluable

support for clergy. Former Chair of Congleton Deanery Synod, Revd Dr David Page, has been appointed a canon. His upcoming sabbatical would focus on the role of the church in conducting funerals.

During the October Deanery Synod at St James the Great, Congleton, Revds Michelle Goodrich and Daran Ward shared inspiring testimonies on how they had been called by God to leave their jobs in retail and IT respectively to train for ordained ministry. Lay Chair, Bill Ball, confirmed that the proposal regarding faculty fees would be considered at the November meeting of Diocesan Synod. Discussion on this important motion was subsequently deferred to the next Diocesan Synod meeting.

William Hall and Barbara Smith - Deanery Synod Representatives

CHURCH HALL

Annual Accounts: In overall financial terms, the proceeds arising from Church Hall activities in 2019 was ~£2500 (increased from £1300). Bookings were at a similar level to 2018 but we have had fewer equipment failures/replacements this year. Non-recurring costs of £2134 were incurred resulting in a nett surplus for 2019 of £377. The additional cost was mainly for the improved lighting following serious faults with the original fluorescent lights.

Bookings: Bookings remained at a similar level to 2018 and there are opportunities for other groups to use the hall subject to availability.

The Thursday coffee mornings continue to run very successfully. For 2020 It was proposed to involve children in the Coffee Mornings as part of the 'Bridge the Gap' initiative but this has not materialised due to the Covid-19 situation. The car scheme run by Christian Communicare provided transport to the Church Hall on Thursday mornings for those who needed it.

Maintenance: There were no major maintenance items in 2019. However, at the committee meeting early in 2020 it was agreed that we should have the old ceiling tiles replaced. As high-level access equipment would be needed for this, we will also investigate overall redecoration of the hall at the same time. Committee member Mike Street kindly agreed to obtain quotations for these items.

General: I would like to thank all the committee members for their help during the year, and record my thanks also to our caretaker, Mrs Broderick.

Covid-19: The hall was closed in March 2020 due to the Covid-19 restrictions and remains closed until further notice.

John Murfin - Chairman, Church Hall Committee

THURSDAY MORNING COFFEE

The weekly coffee mornings in the Church Hall on Thursdays were well attended until the Covid-19 lock-down. We held a second-hand bookstall and music was provided some weeks by the village guitar group and Bob Monks on the keyboard.

We would like to thank all the volunteers for their help and look forward to reopening in the future.

Anne Lane and Sue Shorrock

CHURCH GROUPS

SMALL GROUPS FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH

A note from our Vicar, Canon Rob McLaren

For several years St Luke's has had a good House Group (see report below). In the first two months of 2020, we were able to launch two more groups. This was part of our strategy to follow through our Church strap line: *'Come to Christ, love to learn, learn to love'*. By offering a chance to learn in a small group setting, there is also a likelihood of closer friendship and a chance to engage with the Bible on a level we can grasp and apply in our lives. We have more groups with people loving to learn more from Jesus.

At the special Christmas services, we advertised a new Christianity Explored group. Six people joined a weekly gathering at the vicarage, going through Mark's Gospel, asking all sorts of questions, and finding great encouragement in the fellowship of understanding the Bible. When the course finished, all the group members wished to continue to meet, and we started a new course called the Essential Jesus 100.

In January 2020 we put a choice to the members of the Sunday congregations: "Would you like to have a February teaching series on the Book of Ruth or Mark chapter 4?" Ruth won the vote by a 2 to 1 proportion.

In February/March, I preached Ruth and a new daytime group was formed of people who wished to study the passages preached on the Sunday. This Growth Group met in the church building on Thursday mornings, led by me & Yvonne Janvier, happily involving six people.

BELL RINGING

This year has been largely uneventful, at least up until February 2020.

We were delighted to ring a quarter peal of Grandsire Doubles on the evening of Rob's induction on Friday 22 November - my how long ago that seems. We had a little problem at one point which meant we had to have a restart, which caused a bit of panic when we thought we would not finish in time for the Service, but all worked out in the end.

As we all know the world changed at the end of February 2020, and for us it meant the bells fell silent, here and all over the country. This will probably be the longest period of silence since WW2.

If you have missed the sound of the bells remember that it only happens when there is a band of dedicated ringers and, to repeat appeals from many previous reports, we need new blood. This silence could so easily be a foretaste of the future without it.

If anyone wants to find out more about this ancient and rewarding art then please come along to one of our Friday practice nights, when they start up again. We would be delighted to see you.

Mervyn Harrison - Tower Captain

FAIRTRADE

The last time this report was submitted we thought Traidcraft - the company that supplies our Fairtrade goods - was going to cease trading. It can now be reported that Traidcraft is still going

strong. The organisation has a more streamlined structure and an updated philosophy, but one still very much focused on Fairtrade. As a result, we were able to maintain our activities right up to lockdown with orders for the year being roughly equivalent to 2018/19 at around £,2250. So far, we have not been able to find a way to sell from our stock during the pandemic but we encourage everyone to continue supporting Fairtrade and Traidcraft by ordering directly from the company's website.

As always, our success is due to the dedication and hard work of Jan Rayner, Ann Jack, Angela Gilmore, Pauline Whitehurst, Linda Race and Abigail Rayner. Between them they place orders and set up and run stands at St Luke's Holmes Chapel, St Luke's Goostrey, Goostrey Methodist Church and elsewhere.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their support and generosity, especially our loyal regular customers.

Gareth Griffin – Fairtrade Co-ordinator

FLORISTRY – ALTAR FLOWERS

The altar flowers continue to be provided and arranged every two weeks by a group of volunteers. We also have the help of some professional flower arrangers for the main Festivals. We are grateful for everyone's help.

But why not consider joining our team of volunteers helping add to the visual beauty of St Luke's? You really don't need to be an expert or use the most expensive flowers – novices are made very welcome. We enjoy our time together making simple arrangements. Suitable vases, containers etc are available in our cupboard on the south side of church. Anyone can have a try with guaranteed, great results, very much appreciated by the congregation and visitors. Just ask one of us if you are unsure what is involved.

Anne Lane and Ann Stafford

GENESIS – Sunday School

'Genesis' continues to be a place for young people, 2-11 years, to explore faith through craft, music, drama and friendship. Our numbers remain around fifteen children in attendance and three teachers.

Our aims at Genesis remain the same:

to provide a regular pattern of worship and teaching to the children in our congregation; and to reach out to families in the wider community.

Our support of Church events and ecumenical activities include:

- **Within Church services** - we have contributed to Family services providing music, prayer and Bible readings. Additionally, we have enjoyed taking part in other services such as Mothering Sunday, Harvest, a Christian Aid network of prayer service, Genesis nativity and our Christingle and Crib Services.
- **Outside Church services** - Genesis led the Operation Christmas Child and Mary's Meals campaign, hosted an Open Church at the Christmas market evening and has supported the work of Barnabus homeless charity in Manchester through collections and donations.
- **Pastoral Networking** - Genesis continues to support the pastoral networking system. We network the children in Genesis and their families as well as each other.

Our success and mission within Genesis are dependent on faith, cooperation, and encouragement. Thank you to the team of teachers, children and parents that inspire us and the Church congregation and leaders for their encouragement. Let's now continue to look forward to the year ahead and embrace our Church mission to bring people closer to Christ. Thank you.

Fiona Pullé - on behalf of Genesis

MONDAY HOUSE GROUP

We have enjoyed an enriching year of fellowship and, until the start of lock-down, have been made very welcome at Stephen, Steph and Katie's home. We have enjoyed sharing our lives, praying, singing, studying God's word and growing as disciples under the leading of the Holy Spirit.

We were thrilled that both Rob and Jean McLaren came to join us on the first Monday after their arrival in the Vicarage and, whilst Rob has gone on to start up several other groups, Jean has become a very important part of our fellowship together. I have personally found it a joy to share God's Word growing out of the themes that Rob has introduced through the Sunday Services. We have studied the book of Acts, Ruth and are embarking on Paul's letter to the Philippians.

Our meeting pattern was to join together on a Monday evening on the first and third Sunday of each month. This was all before we experienced 'lockdown'.

It would have been easy to say that, due to the constraints of Covid-19, we would wait until better times to carry on. Thanks to a desire to maintain fellowship, the wonders of the internet and, in particular, Zoom, we have been able to join together for 40 minutes and even increased the frequency to every Monday. For those that live alone it has been a welcome opportunity to see each other and find encouragement in our shared walk with God.

We have grown from eight to twelve during the last year and Zoom has allowed several folk to join us who would find travel at night difficult.

I thank all who are part of this House Group and for Rob's prayerful support. Hopefully, in the not too distant future, we will be able to enjoy Steph and Stephen's home-made cake once again!

Tim Fryer

MOTHERS' UNION

The Mothers' Union is a worldwide Christian organisation of 4 million members whose aim is helping families around the world. At St Luke's, we are successfully run by a committee and have 34 members who meet on either the 2nd Tuesday evening or the 3rd Wednesday of each month.

Some of our members are no longer able to join us through advancing age or infirmity, but still need our prayers and thoughts and are remembered in our prayers at every meeting. We have a Prayer Circle so that if any members are ill or need our prayers the Committee is able to contact all members to let them know. We all also have prayer Partners who we pray for throughout the year, and at Christmas we buy a card and present for them. We are also partnered with St Mary's, Wistaston.

We aim to help families in our own diocese in as many ways as possible. Some members help in the baby changing tent at the Cheshire Show. Some take 'Virtual babies' round to secondary schools to demonstrate to teenagers the problems of looking after babies. Others knit trauma teddies and items for premature babies at Leighton and other hospitals. We also raise money for our National and Overseas MU charities through collection boxes and our annual Strawberry Supper in June. We sell books and have cake stalls to raise money for Away From It All holidays for families who cannot afford a holiday.

January always starts with our Epiphany party, and because this year we were in interregnum, we devised our own services using a Taizé guide. In February, we invited Ann Peach from Brereton to tell us about the 'Virtual Babies' which are mentioned above. We now hold our AGMs in March either with wine and nibbles in the evening, or afternoon tea for the afternoon group. In April Margaret Hardwick, one of our members, led the evening meeting with the 'Joys of Gardening' and the afternoon members brought their Easter Thoughts to bring and share. The International Guides came in May to tell us about their trips abroad, and the afternoon group held a self-led discussion as the speaker was unable to come due to illness. In June we always have a Strawberry Supper which raises money for the Overseas Funds. For July the evening group booked to go to the theatre to see 'The Strange Undoing of Prudencia Hart' and the Afternoon group had an afternoon tea provided by Cobbles. September brought really interesting discussions on 'Friendship' by the evening group and 'Loneliness' by the afternoon group, with the local MP Fiona Bruce joining us. In October the evening group welcomed Revd George Lane, Chaplain at Manchester airport whilst the afternoon meeting was entitled 'Making Music with Handbells' and Susan Hawkes brought the Middlewich Handbell group along for us to have a go. For November we managed to get the Hearing Dogs for the Deaf group to come and talk at both meetings, with a meal out for December evening group and the Christmas Meeting Readings and Carols for the afternoon group.

We are a charitable organisation and have had many interesting visiting speakers and demonstrations as well as good social gatherings. Our meetings are open to anyone, male or female, mother or not.

Carole Elliott and Dorothy Wood – Branch Secretary and Treasurer

MUSIC

The church choir has eleven regular members and rehearsed weekly until the pandemic restrictions prevented this in March 2020. Additional singers joined for services needing a larger choir. The music group of five instrumentalists played at the 10am service on each third Sunday.

Peter Cotton and Stephen Haigh continued to assist me with playing the organ. Unfortunately, this is now in poor condition and uneconomic to repair. Replacement with a redundant but good quality organ from elsewhere in the Diocese is being explored.

The St Luke's Community Choir met weekly with about 25 people, singing a variety of light music. The Community Choir sang for the 'Tunes and Teas' and Lent recitals, and at Capesthorpe Hall and the Westbourne Care Home.

Our Music Festival weekend in April included a Young Musicians' concert, Festival Concert, Songs of Praise and Afternoon Tea, with musical performances from local school pupils, soloists, the Slipper Band and Community Choir. Support with refreshments was provided by the Social Committee, local Guides and Scouts. The weekend involved a large number of people and was very successful.

In the Autumn, three 'Tunes and Teas' events provided a musical performance followed by cream tea. Performances were by Stephen Haigh, the Community Choir and Glebe String Quartet. The teas were provided by the Church Social Committee and additional volunteers. These events raised £500 in donations to the church organ fund.

A programme of music recitals was planned for after each of the six Lent Lunches in 2020. Performances from the Slipper Band, Peter Cotton and Community Choir brought in donations to Christian Aid. Unfortunately, the remaining recitals had to be cancelled due to the pandemic restrictions.

I should like to thank all those who contribute to and support the music at St Luke's.

Wendy Macdonald - Director of Music

NETWORKING

In May 2019 our Prayer Networking Scheme achieved its tenth anniversary. We continue to embrace around 200 people connected to St Luke's Church family. Success depends on the commitment of individual networkers. Each networker prays daily for a small group of people/families, supplementing pastoral work provided during interregnum by visiting clergy and our own ministers. GENESIS staff complete the networking by praying for the children in their groups and for their families.

Our prayers encourage us to look out for those we network. In normal circumstances we find our people in church. During current restrictions we may find them in church, Zoom church, around the village or at home near the phone. Steadily we have improved our communication through use of email and mobile technologies. Once Lockdown came, we were able to contact people more efficiently, whilst still keeping the phone for everyone.

During the past year we have been most grateful for the active support and involvement of Tim Fryer, Anne Smith, all Churchwardens and Church Officials, PCC members and sidesmen. Our visiting clergy have always been willing to lend a confidential listening ear to those in need. In November we welcomed our new vicar Canon Rob McLaren and his wife Jean who very quickly became a tower of strength to our whole team.

Since Lockdown began Networkers have redoubled their efforts to keep in touch with large numbers of housebound people and give safe practical care as necessary. GENESIS members deliver Lockdown Ministry on the Drive, enabling safe surprise visits to isolated people. Other Networkers work a strong telephone ministry to help our friends living alone. Friends shielding have generously offered telephone support to others. Lockdown: love in action!

Judith Hall and Jean Paton - Network Leader and Co-ordinator

SOCIAL COMMITTEE

The Social Committee consists of five members who serve the membership of the whole congregation.

In February 2019 we held a successful afternoon tea for 45 people raising £267.61 for Church funds. We also provided refreshments and Hot Cross buns for the whole congregation from the three village Churches who attended the Ecumenical Service on Good Friday. In April, we served wine and provided soft drinks and sandwiches after the Music Festival event in church.

The Harvest Quiz had to be cancelled in 2019 due to lack of ticket sales, perhaps because we were going to serve a cold supper (Ploughman's and apple pie) and do a short quiz. Towards the end of the year, we provided scones and cakes after the church recitals in the 'Tunes and Teas' events. These proved very successful. We also served mulled wine and mince pies after the Christmas Carol Service in December which was very well-attended.

Apart from the February afternoon tea which produced a profit donated to Church funds, the cost of other events was covered by the money raised.

We work very well as a committee, helped along the way by various members of the congregation. Last year was fairly active and we hoped to continue this into 2020 but for the pandemic restrictions on Church activities.

Carole Elliott - on behalf of the Social Committee

ECUMENICAL GROUPS

CHRISTIAN AID

The Christian Aid Committee had a full and busy year with the support of many other people. The committee is made up with members from all three village churches.

- **Lent Lunches** - These expanded again to include deliveries to residents of Lovell Court some weeks. The takeaway service to the village businesses ran for two weeks and continued to be popular, in themselves raising £425. This year our organist, Wendy Macdonald, arranged recitals in the church after lunch. These were well attended and enjoyable, raising a further £473 for the charity. The sale of homemade cards also contributed to a final total of £1,580. This could not be achieved without the help of all our soup makers, who provide a wide range of soups from which to choose, and also those who support us on the day.
- **Christian Aid Week** - The Sunday before Christian Aid Week, special services were held at the Methodist Church and St. Luke's. Again, over twenty volunteers helped to raise over £1,700 (including Gift-aid), collecting house-to-house. The total raised across the village was over £6,300 (including nearly £700 of Gift-aid).
- **October Coffee Morning** - This event includes the sale of many things, including fresh produce, homemade cards, Traid Craft Christmas cards and quiz sheets, all of which enabled us to forward just under £1,000 to the charity.
- **January 2020 Quiz Night** - The ticket price for this event was kept at £5 per person and raised £743.

Sue Wood, Margaret Thompson and Steph Haigh

CHURCHES TOGETHER

The group has continued to meet twice a year to organise the events, which are detailed below from April 2019 – February 2020.

- **Good Friday Walk of Witness** - Around 70 people attended this from all three congregations. We followed the usual route around the village centre, stopping five times for a reading, a prayer and a hymn. We had a sound system which made it much better for all to hear the readings.
- **Christmas Card** - We designed, printed and distributed the Christmas Card to 3,300 homes in the village and Cranage. The new developments have been coped with and many thanks go to those who helped to pack the cards and those who turned out at the beginning of December to deliver them.
- **Village Christmas Market** - We had a stall on the market. The Committee had agreed that it is important that the Churches are represented at this village event. We distributed a small booklet of the Christmas story to young children. There was also a game for the children to find the lost sheep.
- **Nativity Crib** - The crib and banner were erected on the north side of the Church during Advent and remained in place until the Epiphany.
- **Church Unity Week** - We started 2020 with Church Unity Week, when a prayer meeting was held at the Methodist Church on the Tuesday. Yvonne Pearson (Methodists) preached at St. Margaret's, Tony Ford (RC) at St. Luke's and Rob McLaren at the Methodists.

- **Churches Together Notice-board** - The board was refurbished and continues to be updated each week with a poster and weekly bulletins for each Church.
- **Village Prayers** - We continue to meet in the Methodist Church once a month to pray for those who live and work in the village.
- **Parish Weekend** – Booking for this was opened to the other Churches as well as St Luke's and was to be held in September 2020 at Willersley Castle. However, we were unable to get sufficient numbers to justify the event and it was cancelled.

Pete Shackleton - Co-ordinator for St. Luke's

FOCUS

The Focus ecumenical fellowship has been running for thirty-nine years. We thank God for His continued blessing on our group throughout this time. We thank all who have supported Focus by giving presentations, supplying refreshments, attending meetings in the Methodist Church Hall or joining events outside the village. We are particularly grateful to David Carr for his meticulous care of our finances and to Brian Donlon for his invaluable technical expertise.

This year has been unprecedented. Owing to the coronavirus pandemic our final three scheduled meetings: 'Blood Bikes, Manchester'; a visit to the People's History Museum and Science Museum in Manchester and a presentation on 'Amazing Morocco' have been rescheduled for 2021. Our meetings up to Christmas 2020 have been socially distanced outside or will take place via Zoom conferencing.

In September 2019, Peter and Judy de Bourcier described how Mission Aviation Fellowship has been working with multiple charities for the past 75 years to fly essential supplies, physical healing and spiritual hope to remote communities throughout the world. The following month, Lisa Collas of Ansa Environmental Services explained how Cheshire East's state-of-the-art recycling plant dealt with our waste, what we could recycle and how best to store edible items at home.

In November, we welcomed back Stephen and Judith Coyne. Their stunning photography encapsulated the unique flora, fauna and creatures inhabiting the volcanic landscape of the Galapagos Islands. Later in the month, John and Romila Newton shared their family holiday experiences in Kerala with its network of canals, houseboats on Lake Vembanad, Marari Beach and Periyar National Park. They also showed us some of the region's produce, including cashew nuts, tea and spice, but the tigers proved elusive!

We celebrated the New Year with a delicious meal at the Old Vicarage. In February, Canon Rob McLaren described his involvement with the mission from his former church of St George's, Poynton to support Indian pastors in Madras and Kerala and churches in Chaco, Argentina. Prior to lockdown, Revd Stephen McKevitt shared his experiences in counselling female prisoners. He ended his talk by querying whether the women should be in a different facility as a large percentage of prisoners had suffered from abuse or were dependent on drugs.

Focus meets monthly on Fridays at 8:00pm, usually in the Methodist Church Hall, between September and June inclusive. Barbara Smith (537301) or David Carr (532412) will be happy to supply further details about our meetings, including Zoom links. You are welcome to share in any session - there is no formal membership.

Barbara Smith – Group Secretary

CHURCH PUBLICATIONS

FACEBOOK PAGE - www.facebook.com/holmeschapelchurch

Our Facebook page, which includes details of services and other events at St Lukes, continues to be widely viewed. Anyone wishing to publicise church events is welcome to let me know and I will gladly include them.

As I write this report, 301 people from the UK and around the world have “liked” the St Luke’s Facebook Page. Delving deeper into these statistics it’s interesting to note that some of those Facebook users come from as far away as the USA (7 people), Australia (2), Spain (2), and one each from the United Arab Emirates, South Korea, New Zealand and Pakistan.

Alan Rickards - Facebook page moderator

CHURCH MAGAZINE – report for 2019

The number of regular subscribers stands at over 320, with a number more being bought in church. If you do not already have your monthly copy delivered to your door (at no extra charge!), please consider taking out a subscription for £6 a year by contacting Sue Wood on 01477 534842. Magazines are also available to buy from The Print Room in Church Walk, thanks to the support of David and Marie Bennett. At 50p a copy, I hope you consider the magazine to be good value.

I have been very grateful for the services of Tom and Jos at Cranmore Instant Print in Macclesfield during 2019. They have continued to provide an excellent printing service - and always have the coffee pot on the boil when I call for my monthly visit!

Other key people I would like to thank include Lew Riches and Rod Pickles, who collect the finished magazines from Macclesfield each month, and Sue Wood who looks after the distribution. Sue sorts the monthly consignment of magazines into the delivery rounds for her willing team of 34 deliverers, without whom your copy of the magazine would not arrive in your letter box. Thank you everybody.

Thank you very much to all of you who regularly contribute items for inclusion in the magazine. When I speak to other editors from churches around the country, I feel privileged to have so many willing people at St Luke’s who provide me with reports, announcements and even jokes for inclusion in the magazine. Please keep up the good work!

Alan Rickards - Editor

SUNDAY LINK

During 2019, and until the restriction on holding public services in church came into force in March 2020, our Sunday Link was published weekly on behalf of the Church Council with details of Church notices, services and events, mainly for the week from the current Sunday. Most content has come from that supplied for the Church Magazine, by GENESIS, the MU, and the Social Committee. Ecumenical events, such as activities of FOCUS and Churches Together have also been included. “Looking Ahead” highlights major events further ahead in the Church calendar.

The information was printed on the reverse of weekly sheets from Redemptorist Publications, pre-printed to reflect the Church calendar and lectionary readings that Sunday. Everyone attending

church service on Sunday and Wednesday received a copy as did members of Genesis. Copies were posted on the notice boards in the church and Church Hall, and on the Churches Together notice board (near the Fire Station) and the content published on the Church website.

The general feedback is that the Link makes a valuable contribution to keeping all the Church family fully informed. The format and means of distribution may have to change given the continuing restrictions to control the pandemic but the need to inform remains. I have edited the Link for many years now and need to find others to help me in the task and provide some backup. If you are interested, please call me on HC 535 497 or email: judith.sh9@gmail.com .

Judith Hall - Editor

CHURCH WEBSITES

<https://www.stlukesholmedschapel.uk> ; <https://www.stlukesappeal.uk>

Our Church web presence started in September 2009, using the name holmeschapelchurch.com, aiming to give up to date on-line information about St Luke's and its mission, supplementing paper-based information in our Magazine and Sunday Link. The website has been regularly updated since then with notices, diary, register and rota information, as well as with reports of MU and other Church activities, especially during the major roof and tower works.

During 2019 the Church website was fully converted to the new WordPress software on the secure domain name <https://www.stlukesholmedschapel.uk> improving ease of editing and maintenance, and giving the site a more modern look and feel, adapted for access from mobile devices. The old holmeschapelchurch.com name is still current but points directly to the new secure website. The absence of printed Church publications during the pandemic restrictions in 2020 has meant that the Church website and Facebook pages have needed more frequent updating with notices etc. Consequently, addition of new features to the site has been delayed.

An additional secure website has been created for the new **Organ & Lighting Appeal**: <https://www.stlukesappeal.uk> allowing secure online donations to be made.

Steve Smith and Trevor Jenkins – web admin team
