

**Christ Church Biddulph Moor**  
**Trustees Annual Report**  
**of the**  
**Parochial Church Council**  
**for the**  
**Year Ended 31st December 2016**



**Jesus saves all.**  
**Christ Church welcomes all to follow Him.**

## 1. Aims and Purposes

Christ Church Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility of cooperating with the incumbent, the Reverend Darren Fraser, 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, church hall and school house in the Ecclesiastical Parish of Biddulph Moor.

## 2. 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 Christ Church. The PCC maintains an overview of worship and makes suggestions on how the services can involve the many groups that live within the parish. Our services and worship put faith into practice through prayer, scripture, music and sacrament.

When planning our activities for the year, we considered the Commission's guidance on the Advancement of Religion for the Public Benefit and the supplementary guidance on charities for the advancement of religion. In particular, we try to enable ordinary people to live out their faith as part of the parish community through:

- Worship and Prayer; learning about the gospel and developing their knowledge and trust in Jesus
- Provision of pastoral care for people living in the parish
- Missionary and outreach work

To facilitate this work it is important that the trustees maintain the fabric of Christ Church and its associated buildings.

### Reverend Darren Fraser; 'Thought for the day'

#### **2 Chronicles 15:7**

**'But as for you, be strong and do not give up, for your work will be rewarded.'**

I want to briefly look at the different parts of this verse.

**'But as for you'**, each of us can read this verse and realise there is an individual responsibility as part of our corporate responsibility. We know within God's plan and purpose for His people, each person plays a crucial part. As we read this report, and reflect on our life together, let us be reminded of our individual responsibility.

**'Be strong and do not give up,'** There is always a place that we can get to when we say, 'I can't do this anymore'. When we are working to see God's kingdom grow, we know that it will not be easy. We need to ask God for strength on a daily basis, to keep on keeping on, and to never give up.

**'For your work will be rewarded.'** It would be wonderful to think that, we will see the full fruit of what we have sown in this life for the kingdom. We do hope in this life that we will see some of, or all the fruit. However, if we don't we can be assured that God will reward us for our faithfulness as we seek to grow His kingdom. It may be in this life or the next life, but the promise of God is that it will be rewarded.

**'But as for you, be strong and do not give up, for your work will be rewarded'.** I want to say thank you to everybody, who gives their time, energy, money, and effort into keeping Christ Church, going and more importantly growing. Let us keep on keeping on!

God Bless, Darren

### **3. Achievements and Performance**

#### Worship and Prayer

The PCC is keen to offer a range of services during the week and over the course of the year that our community find both beneficial and spiritually fulfilling. For example; Thursday Prayers provide a quiet intimate and reflective environment for worship and the Monday Fellowship enables folks to meet in fellowship, sometimes with those from other churches. On the Sunday mornings we offer different styles of worship; Morning Worship, Book of Common Prayer and Holy Communion and these appear to be well received by all. Throughout the year we also hold special services to celebrate the church festivals.

One of the big celebrations in 2016 was that four new people joined Christ Church and have become part of the Worshipping Community. Our main objective is to see the Kingdom of God grow, and to see people come to faith in Jesus Christ. Darren, our minister, says that God has continued to remind him of the importance of preaching faithfully from the Scriptures week by week. Darren also says it is important to acknowledge why we are here. We are a Worshipping Christian community and our main objective is to see that community grow, with people worshipping Christ and to that end all are welcome to attend our services.

As well as the regular services, we enable our community to celebrate and thank God at the milestones of the journey through life. Through Baptism 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 thanks for life which is now complete in this world and to commend the person into God's keeping. This year we celebrated one baptism, one marriage and held ten funerals either at the church or at the crematorium.

At present there are 38 parishioners on the Church Electoral Roll. The average weekly attendance, counted during October, was 20, but this number increased at the various special services held during the year with over 80 joining us at the Christmas Carol Service.

#### Deanery Synod

Three members of the PCC sit on the deanery synod they are Reverend Darren Fraser, Caron Hall and Hilary Williams. This synod provides the PCC with an important link between the parish and the wider structures of the church. This year the subjects considered were; Creating Dementia Friendly churches, Diocesan Environmental Awareness and the Diocesan On-line Pastor.

#### Church buildings

In August the church had its five yearly (Quinquennial) inspection carried out by Mr. Andrew Capper on behalf of Wood, Goldstraw, Yorath Architects. In his summary he wrote *'The church is maintained in excellent condition by the parish ... and the churchyard is very well maintained*

*and clearly well used by the village.*' The report recommended immediate work on the guttering, downspouts and roof flashing on the vestry roof and the north side of the church. Since receiving the report this work has been attended to however constant monitoring is needed on these specific aspects for the roof and all the walls. Insulation of the pipe work in the old boiler house, the rebedding of loose floor blocks inside the church and decoration, including improvements to the plaster finish in the clergy vestry, are also required.

Out in the church yard it was once again a rather wet year for ground work and the going was tough not only for the workers but also for the equipment, as a result two of the mowers required repairs, carried out by Andrew Pickin who was also deployed to catch the moles. However the team carried on despite the challenging conditions! All the other machines were cleaned and maintained, at a financial cost early on in the season, along with a good tidy out of the church hall shed.

The Japanese Knot weed in the church grounds, church house grounds & glebe grounds continued to need further attention. The knot weed in the church grounds is being dealt with by Pointon's Nursery courtesy of the owners of the Old Rectory, to whom we give our grateful thanks. The other knot weed problems were dealt with in May by Pointon's Nursery and then followed up by the ground work team; this will still further treatment during 2017 at the church's own cost.

Many thanks should go to Anne Walker, Michael Ward and Kevin Dunn for their sterling work in helping with the upkeep of the church grounds. Thanks must also go to Lesley Goodier who took over from James Hall for the upkeep of the north section of the church grounds; we should also thank James for the hedging, tree and bush pruning/cutting which was done in August. Grave mounds and marker stones were laid and tidied by the groundwork team, along with maintenance of the glebe land.

Unfortunately the church cellar flooded again due to blocked drains in Church Lane, finally after many phone calls the road drains were cleared, in January 2017, and the cellar is now drying out. Thanks must go to Kevin Dunn, Councillor Lawson, Ewart Nixon and Margaret Ridgway for their persistence.

The grounds always require much work throughout the year, removing Christmas wreaths, mowing, maintaining graves in need of attention, hedge and tree pruning. The church is always pleased to receive donations or offers of help towards the maintenance of our church grounds. If any church or village members would like to be part of the groundwork team this would be most welcome. The team usually meets on Tuesday or Saturday mornings during the season, March to November.

The team also continued to hand out prayer cards to relatives who visited their loved ones' graves, these were always accepted with grateful thanks and this procedure will be continued. For offers of support or further information please contact Kevin Dunn on 515491.

At the end of July Margaret Ridgway retired from the position of Church Hall Manager. The PCC would like to pass on their grateful thanks to Margaret for her dogged determination to maintain, improve and care for the church hall and increase the number of lettings. Mrs Heather Shutt is now the Hall Manager and has taken on the responsibility of opening up the building

and setting the heating for the lettings. The bookings are made on-line and invoices and payments are organised by Pam Murray. Sheila Hulme continues her excellent work of cleaning the premises for one hour per week.

The hall continues to be used by the Brownies on Mondays, the Rainbows and Guides on Tuesdays and the Rangers on alternate Wednesdays during term-time. Other lettings included PCC Meetings, the Fellowship Group, Biddulph Moor Community Association (BMCA) meetings, Visually Impaired luncheons, a Mediation meeting, a rehearsal, several funeral teas and a children's party. During the summer, a group of local children and their leaders met on several cold Sunday afternoons to practise maypole dancing in the Church Hall. The local Well-Dressing ladies had a marquee erected at the back of the hall yard, where they enjoyed making their petal pictures, and they were most grateful for the use of the Church Hall facilities – for the use of which they gave us a generous donation was received from the BMCA. Thank you.

Throughout the year there was the general maintenance programme and Health and Safety checks such as replacing and repairing door locks, the cleaning out of the wooden shed and the checking of portable appliances & fire extinguishers.

As part of the improvement programme two new double glazed units have been fitted to the store room. The small kitchen off the main hall has been re-plastered by Mr John Stonier at no cost and the materials kindly donated by church members. David Shutt treated the walls with a tar solution, again at no cost to the church.

There is still much work to do; such as repairs to the tile slippage on the roof, replacement of ceiling tiles due to water damage, the ingress of water causing damp patches on the walls in both the main hall and the Parish Room, the need for non slip flooring and the repair of damaged tiles, a more efficient heating system which would include replacing the boiler and the radiators, the bund around the oil tank, improvements to the downspouts and grids, the painting of both sets of gates, the treatment of the exterior walls and finally the replacement of the Disabled Parking sign. Unfortunately the gross income of the Church Hall was £1,366.06 resulting in a net loss of £619.66. We ask for your thoughts and prayers as to how we can make this a viable concern.

The school house continues to bring in a monthly rental income, and we have much to thank Margaret for as she has worked with the tenants and the PCC to improve the property over a number of years. As with 2015-16 we plan on continuing to improve the property. There is still much work to do, but there are plans for each room in the house to be improved over the next five years.

At different times throughout the year, six church members have placed flowers in the church in memory of loved ones, the names of the loved ones being recorded on the flower rota/planner at the back of the church. There have also been six occasions throughout the year when members of the church have given donations towards the cost of flowers. Such support has been gratefully received. However the flower fund is not in the greatest of health and any donations would be really appreciated. The flower fund box can be found at the back of the church. Thanks must go to Pauline Dunn, Anne Gadsden, Sheila Hulme, Sybil Meehan, Anne Walker, Dulcie Worthington and Biddulph flower shop for their support.

As mentioned last year, Pauline would like to pass on the organisation of the church flowers to another church member, whilst still offering her support and help. If anyone is interested in taking on this task please contact Pauline Dunn on 515491 or speak to her in church.

### Pastoral Care

Our Lay Reader and others endeavour to contact those who are unable to attend for any reason to keep them in touch with church life. However Darren writes that he has often reflected on the importance of the verses in the letter that St Paul wrote to the Church in Ephesus. Ephesians 4 verses 11-12. *'So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up.'* In these few verses those responsible for leadership in Churches are reminded that part of their role is to equip God's people for works of service, for the building up of the body of Christ. In the next twelve plus months Darren will be praying and looking for people within the body to equip for works of service. Included in these works of service are Pastoral Care and the taking of Holy Communion to the sick, to those who are house bound and no longer able to attend Worship. His prayer is that the Church, meaning the people of God, would continue to care for the Church, the people of God, so that even if they are not able to attend Worship, they will continue to be built up and cared for.

### Mission and evangelism

The Stoke on Trent Foodbank operates from the Community Fire Station in Hanley and accepts deliveries there and also at Blurton Methodist Church, Wesley Hall Methodist Church in Sneyd Green and English Martyrs Church in Biddulph. The Stoke on Trent Foodbank now has 17 distribution centres open across the City. From May 2012 to February 2017 the Foodbank had fed 47,765 people. We thank Mike Ward for co-ordinating this part of our missionary work.

The church supports the work of many missions and charities. On an ongoing basis the church gives a percentage of the planned giving to the Church Society, Crosslinks, Church Pastoral Aid Society and GMI-UK. The congregation also under the leadership of Hilary Williams support The Gideons, the Leprosy Mission under the leadership of Anne Walker, who also collects postage stamps to support Guide Dogs for the Blind. For several years the Lenten Giving has been in aid of the Mildmay Mission.

Our newsletter is distributed about seven times a year; copies are available at the back of the church. The newsletter keeps our parishioners informed of the important matters and events affecting our church and the articles from Darren develop our knowledge and trust in Jesus. Additional contributions for the newsletter are always welcome.

### Ecumenical relationships

The church is a member of Churches Together both here on the Moor and in Biddulph. This year has seen the Biddulph Churches Together gain a number of new Church Leaders. Mark and Elizabeth Holdcroft have taken over as the pastors at Biddulph Pentecostal Church and now attend these meetings. Steve Dyson has been installed as the new Vicar at St Lawrence's and Nick Witham has joined the Methodist Circuit. These changes seem to have injected a new enthusiasm into the group and the churches have continued to work together to show a united Christian presence in Biddulph.

There was the regular Easter Service held in Sainsbury's on Good Friday and the usual street café on the Town Hall steps during August. As an offshoot, the Biddulph Moor Churches Together held a Good Friday service at the cross on the green in the village centre. Churches Together also produced a common leaflet advertising the timings for our various Christmas services. We have also worked together to provide refreshments at the Switching on of the Christmas Lights as well as a cake stall at the Well Dressing. For the future, new ideas are being mulled over for Easter in Biddulph Town Centre with the aim of making an even greater impact on the shoppers around the town. On behalf of the Churches 62 New Testaments and Psalms were distributed to members of the public and stallholders at the two Christmas switching on of the lights.

The annual Pulpit exchange took place again this year with Helen Foster from Hill Top coming to speak at Christ Church. Terry went to New Road Methodist Church to lead and speak at their evening service and Darren visited Well Spring Methodist Church in Congleton.

The meetings of Biddulph Town Council continue to be opened with prayers and the ministers of the various churches have a rota for leading these.

The Fellowship meetings, usually held the first Monday in the month, are now open to all church members and their friends and family. This year the speakers talked about such topics as journalism, a month in Mali, Sanctus and the importance of letters and cards.

#### **4. Financial Review**

Total receipts on unrestricted funds were **£27,215.82** of which **£19,941.81** was unrestricted voluntary donations and a further **£3,941.92** was from Gift Aid. Restricted donations of **£3,300.98** were also received and are detailed in the Financial Statement. The church house continues to be let which provided a gross income of **£5,292**. The gross income of the Church Hall was **£1,366.06** however this resulted in a net loss of **£619.66**.

The planned giving through envelopes and banker's orders increased by 6.2% and we were grateful for a legacy of £1000.

**£21,465.92** was spent from unrestricted funds to provide the Christian Ministry from Christ Church, including the contribution to the diocesan parish share of £18,984. This sum, that the churches have to find, is shared between all churches according to a formula that is based mainly on a head count of the congregations.

Over the year the net result was an excess of receipts over payments of **£6,120.53** on unrestricted funds. Adding bank and deposit balances brought forward at the beginning of the year and carried forward at 31<sup>st</sup> December, the amount for unrestricted funds totalled **£7,279.71**

It is the policy of the PCC to invest some of the funds with the CBF Church of England Deposit fund. The balance in this high interest account is **£26,486.36**, (included in the above figures). Most of the designated funds for the house, the hall, the churchyard and the fabric of the building are held in this account.

To support the life and workings of the church there is an envelope scheme. However some members use monthly payments such as Direct Debit, Standing Order or Faster Payments. These secure a regular income and reduce the amount of time required by the church wardens and the treasurer in opening envelopes, counting and banking cash. The church is able to claim gift aid on any cash donation of up to £20 as well as those who gift aid. We thank all who give regular gifts of time and or money.

If you use the envelope scheme and are unable to attend church regularly please remember we still need your support, kindly fill in the envelopes for the Sundays missed and bring them the next time you attend church or ask someone to bring them for you or consider monthly payments. If you are not part of the envelope scheme or wish to give on a monthly basis please contact the Church Treasurer; Anne Gadsden 515023.

***'Freely ye have received, freely give.'***

## **5. Structure, Governance and Management**

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. At Christ Church the membership of the PCC consists of the incumbent (our vicar), churchwardens and members elected by those members of the congregation who are on the electoral roll of the church. All 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.

The PCC met five times during the year with an average level of attendance of 80%. We discussed such matters as worship, mission and outreach work, fabric and finance. A book of minutes is available for inspection. A copy of each of the PCC, Extraordinary General Meeting and Annual Parochial Meeting (APCM) minutes is posted on the church notice board, inside the porch, for the information of all members of the congregation.

Twice-yearly Health & Safety checks were carried out by the church wardens and others using an itemised check-list showing that all concerns were addressed where possible. As part of their duties the Churchwardens also checked the inventory and found everything in order.

We would like to thank all the volunteers who work so hard behind the scenes carrying out the many roles and responsibilities. In particular we want to mention our churchwardens Mrs Ridgway and Mrs Williams who have worked so tirelessly on our behalf for many years. Without the church wardens and the volunteers Christ Church would not present as such a well kept and welcoming church providing a very clear statement and witness of our faith.

## **6. Reference and Administration Information**

The Parish of Christ Church Biddulph Moor is in the Deanery of Leek, the Rural Dean is Brian Statham of Milton Parish Church. The Archdeacon is Matthew Parker, in the archdeaconry of Stoke-on-Trent. Michael Ipgrave is the Bishop of Lichfield. Geoff Annas is the Bishop of Stafford and Justin Welby is the Archbishop of Canterbury.

The PCC is a body corporate (PCC Powers Measure 1956, Church Representation Rules 2006) and a charity currently excepted from registration with the Charity Commission.

**Christ Church Biddulph Moor**

Church Lane  
Biddulph Moor  
ST8 7HU

**Rev. Darren Fraser**

Vicar  
The Vicarage  
62 Park Lane  
Knypersley  
ST8 7AU  
01782 512240

**Bank**

TSB  
King Street  
Biddulph  
ST8 6AZ

**Church Wardens**

Margaret Ridgway  
'David's Bank'  
Gun Battery lane  
Biddulph Moor  
ST8 7RR

Hilary Williams  
17 Farmside Lane  
Biddulph Moor  
ST8 7LY

**Independent Examiner**

Major CJ Waters  
Pilgrims End  
Ridgefields  
Biddulph Moor  
ST8 7JE

**Parochial Church Council members**

<b>Trustees' name</b>	<b>Office and other areas of responsibilities</b>
Dunn, Kevin	Church Yard team leader
Fraser, Darren	Vicar
Gadsden, Anne	Child Protection Officer/Gift Aid Secretary/ Parish Giving Officer/Treasurer
Haddock, Elaine	
Hall, Caron	Deanery Synod/ Deputy Hall Manager
Hawley, Jane	
Hulme, Sheila	Hall Cleaner and Verger
Nicholls, Nita	Deputy Church Warden/Electoral Roll Officer/Church Verger
Nixon, Ewart	
Meehan, Sybil	Secretary
Ridgway, Margaret	Church Warden/Health & Safety Officer/Hall Manager (part year)
Shutt, Heather	Hall Manager (part year)
Walker, Anne	
Williams, Hilary	Children's Advocate/Church Warden/Deanery Synod
Williams, Terry	Licensed Reader

**The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above**

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees.

Signature		
Full Name	Darren Fraser	Anne Gadsden
Position	Vicar	Treasurer
Date of the APCM	March 2017	March 2017