

THE PARISH OF BLACKWELL, ALL SAINTS' AND SALUTATION



THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE
PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL,
CHURCH GROUPS,
& RELATED ORGANISATIONS
FOR THE CHURCH YEAR
2017-2018

The Parish of All Saints and Salutation Blackwell

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1. INTRODUCTION

This is the twentieth annual report of the Parish of Blackwell, a parish that finally became a legal entity on All Saints' Day, 1998. The Annual Report is a collection of individual reports from the different people, committees and groups involved with this Parish Church, and they show, as in previous years, just how much goes in to the organising of worship, the extending of a pastoral and teaching ministry to the gathered congregations and wider parish, and the service of the community. This is a full expression of the ministry we are all involved in here – and you will find that the reports that are included range from those of the PCC (the Secretary's) and its committees, to those of groups and charities that we support as a parish. There are also those that give an insight into wider organisations and groupings of which this parish is a part or with which it is closely connected, such as the West Darlington Group of Parishes, the Deanery Synod and the Millennium Centre Trust Company. I hope that all the reports included will be read by regular worshippers and by a good number of parishioners and friends as well. I do hope that you will take the time to read all those that are here and to pray for those who are involved in all the different activities, groups and organisations.

Once again, the full report will be published on the parish website in an attempt to be wiser stewards of the world's resources and reduce the number of copies that need to be printed.

I am grateful to those people who have taken time and care to write reports and to those who have had a hand in producing this Annual Report.

David Railton, Vicar, March 2018

Vicar's Report

This is my third contribution to the Annual Report as Vicar of this parish – although it will be my fourth Annual Meeting, having arrived in 2015 in enough time to chair the meeting but not to contribute to the report! It has once again been a very busy and full year – in both the parish and in the deanery, with much to celebrate, much to give thanks for, but with many possibilities and challenges ahead. Outside of the usual cycle of celebrations and markings of church life, the Deanery welcomed Bishops from the Northern Province during the Talking Jesus events in Darlington, with the welcome service being hosted by All Saints' Church. On Easter Sunday we said goodbye to Jeremy Maritz, who left for pastures new after eight years as the Director of Music. We had a period of time where the musical accompaniment for services was provided by several different people before welcoming Andy Young in September as he began as Director of Music.

As always, much of what is written below will have been said in previous years – but that does not mean that the words of gratitude and thanks are not genuine and heartfelt. It is rather an indication of the continuing dedication of so many people in the building up of the All Saints' community.

Gratitude

This report presented to the Annual Parochial Church Meeting is an appropriate place to once again express my gratitude for the love and the support we receive as a family from the All Saints' and Salutation

community. I recognise that no church is perfect, but we are richly blessed by the love and support that is in evidence at All Saints' Church. I am aware that there are some who will not feel that this has been their experience, but hopefully this is the exception rather than the rule. And our welcome, hospitality and inclusivity should always be something we continue to work on as a gathered community, so that all who come to All Saints' will feel welcomed, loved, valued and supported as children of God.

The Ministry Group

As I say thank you to everyone for your support, there are people who I must single out. Inevitably, I cannot name everyone, but I must mention the Ministry Team – the Clergy and Readers associated with this Parish and Coniscliffe too. The Revd Sarah Jay, Associate Minister at All Saints' and the Revds. Brian Holmes and Robin Fletcher who continue to exercise their valuable ministry in the parish, even though retired. The Revd Deborah Robinson, the Associate Minister for Coniscliffe is an important member of the team, who does much good work in Coniscliffe. Both Deborah and Sarah do the majority of their ministry in their day to day employment – Deborah at St Teresa's hospice, and Sarah in the NHS. I continue to value both the personal and ministerial support of these colleagues.

The Readers are an invaluable part of parish life, and I am extremely grateful to them: Debby Gill, Susan Leatherbarrow, Keith Whiston, Kevin Winkworth and Sarah Cliff. The Readers are a blessing to me as Vicar and to our worshipping community and have been a great source of support this last year. Each Reader makes a distinctive and invaluable contribution to Church life, in addition to juggling many demands in their lives – and we can be grateful for their ministry. During the course of the year, Sarah Cliff began training for ordination, which meant that she is away from the parish for much of her time, training at Durham, and on placement around the diocese. We miss her in the parish and wish her well for her future. There will be an opportunity to say goodbye before her ordination in 2019.

The help and support of the ministry team remains important as some of my time is taken up with Area Dean duties during the year. The Deanery continues to be busy, with vacancies, appointments, Deanery Planning, Chapter, training and much more. We said farewell to Nick Barker as Archdeacon during the year and welcomed Rick Simpson as the new Archdeacon in February 2018.

In the absence of a paid youth worker, we continue to depend on volunteers to help with the Junior Church and youth work. As Vicar, I have oversight of the Junior Church – but the running of the children's activities on a Sunday is done by the team of volunteers who do a wonderful job keeping this ministry to children going. I continue to run the Toddler Group on a Friday morning, with healthy numbers of children and their carers on the books. In what is a difficult climate for all churches working with young people and families and with so many pressures on young people's time, our groups will only grow and flourish if parents are committed to taking advantage of all that the church offers and by encouraging their children to flourish in a supportive Christian community. But, the need is for commitment – to regularly being at church and taking part in the various groups, activities and services on offer.

The Church Officers

I am very grateful to our four wardens for the fantastic job each has done over the last year, not least in each chairing or being part of an important PCC committee: Nick Auty, Community Connection Committee; Andy Hopkins and Dee Wastnedge, Social Committee; Sally Johnson, Buildings and Grounds Committee. The wardens exercise their office with diligence and enthusiasm, and we can all be grateful for the role they play. This is an important role and as a church, we are fortunate in being able to appoint a new warden each year. This gives a variety of people an opportunity to be a warden and means that no one must do it for many years, as happens in some smaller church communities.

I am grateful to our two treasurers for their continued excellent service to the church. Being treasurer of a Church like All Saints' is a very demanding role, which should not be taken for granted, and we are enormously blessed to have someone as accomplished as Peter Davison in this role. Peter is admirably supported by the Planned Giving Treasurer, Ellis Leatherbarrow. In a difficult year, Ellis has had to be both determined and creative, and has continued to work towards increasing the number of members of the planned giving scheme, and how much each member gives.

As you will know, the PCC Treasurer has to work very closely with the Millennium Trust Finance Director. The Trust is a separate legal entity from the Church, but because of the integrated nature of the buildings, the accounting arrangement can sometimes be complicated and involved. It is a happy coincidence that Pam Davison (Peter's wife) is the Millennium Trust Finance Director, and I'm sure that this contributes to the good working relationship between Trust and PCC.

The last person I would like to thank in this section is Kirsten Bertram, the PCC Secretary. The PCC simply cannot function without efficient and able secretarial support and I am grateful to Kirsten for her help in this role.

The Parish Secretary

Nicky Waller, the Parish Secretary, makes a huge – often unseen – contribution to parish life, and is also very often the first point of contact. She has a vast knowledge of what happens and needs to happen in the ongoing life of All Saints' and Salutation, and her support and help have been invaluable to me.

Caretaker

During the last year, the Millennium Centre caretaker - Krzysztof Hartman – resigned. We were very fortunate to be able to appoint Scott Marshall, a member of the church community, to replace him, which meant that we didn't have a gap in cover. I am grateful to both Scott and Krzysztof for their work in looking after the locking up and cleaning of the hall during the year. It is also appropriate at his point, to thank all those who look after the gardens and church, and all those who clean the church. With so many people using the building throughout the week, it is vital that the grounds and building are kept looking as good as possible.

“Saying Goodbye”

During the last 12 months, we have said goodbye to several members of the church community who have died, and among them we remember with gratitude: Helen Thompson, Eric Roberts, Margaret Grainger, Ken Young, Hazel Keep, Dorothy Lynch, Sharon Lucas and Arnold Hird.

Discipleship and service

This is probably said every year, but it still holds true and bears repeating, that regular church attendance by all electoral roll members continues to be a great challenge for All Saints' and indeed all churches. It is recognised that many people lead busy and demanding lives and the church needs to provide opportunities for discipleship development in ways that are not impossible even for the busiest of souls to access. It is generally acknowledged that churches do not grow if their members are not growing in faith, taking regular worship, prayer and bible study seriously, so we need to rise to this challenge.

Commitment to regular worship is fundamental if we are serious about growing in discipleship. The Worship Committee and the Ministry Group have continued to provide a wide variety of worship styles and times to enable the largest possible number of people to participate frequently in worship. The church does need to seriously consider how we encourage discipleship amongst the younger members of the church and community, and how we encourage people of all ages in faithful regular attendance. We can be grateful to our Musical Director and Organists - Jeremey Maritz until his departure and Andy Young since - and the choir and Music Group, for their ministry of music throughout the year.

Growing as a disciple involves considering one's vocation - how God is calling a person to live and what he is asking him or her to do, and we need as a church to consider how to encourage people in their sense of vocation.

Growing in discipleship also includes taking the full breadth of Christian Stewardship seriously. This inevitably includes financial support of the church. Whilst we had to reduce our Parish Share pledge for 2017, we paid the full amount of £90,000, a considerable sum that goes to help fund ministry not only in our parish, but across the diocese where this would otherwise be impossible – a part of our mission in the wider church. The principle of mutuality is essential to the spirituality and ministry of the Church of England: The Church is here for everyone because some use their God-given resources to provide it for others.

The Millennium Centre (managed through a separate trust company) and Salutation Hall continue to be an important way in which this Christian community serves the needs of the wider community in which it is set. We can be grateful to the caretaker and all the volunteers from the church who make the offering of these facilities possible. We are very grateful to Dee Wastnedge for her work as booking secretary for both halls, and to Alison Barker for her sterling work as Trust Secretary. Both the Centre and the Hall are well used and provide invaluable service to the community. The efforts of the Building's and Ground's Committee to care for these buildings as well as the church and its grounds is appreciated hugely by the PCC.

It is important to note that service to others is offered by regular worshippers in countless ways each day through paid and voluntary work, through untold acts of charity, and through care for family and friends.

Amongst many examples of this church's service are: pastoral visiting (supported by a Pastoral Assistant and a team of dedicated parish visitors); the Pre-School Group (which continues to go from strength to strength, thanks to the hard work of the staff and management committee); the Toddler Group; and the Parish Lunch. There are many charities supported through the work of individual members of the congregation, and it is important to acknowledge all that people do, and to support them, not least through our prayers.

Our care of God's Creation has been promoted more effectively in recent years by the Green Action Group. Having achieved the Bronze award as an Eco-Congregation, the Group continues to work towards achieving the silver award for the church. A part of their role includes keeping the issue of our stewardship of the created world in the forefront of church life.

The Parish Vision

To Grow God's Kingdom through All Saints' and Salutation, Blackwell.

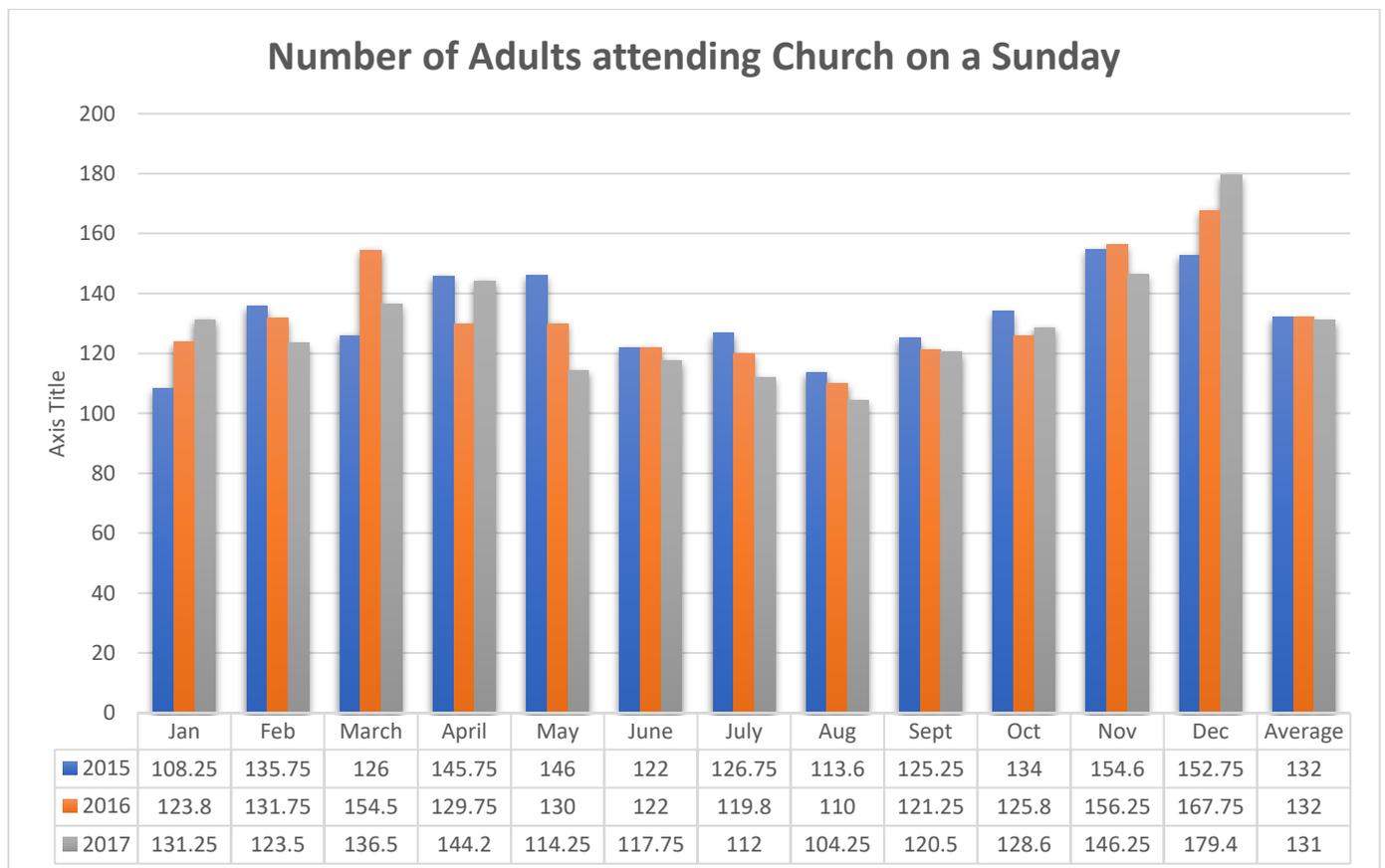
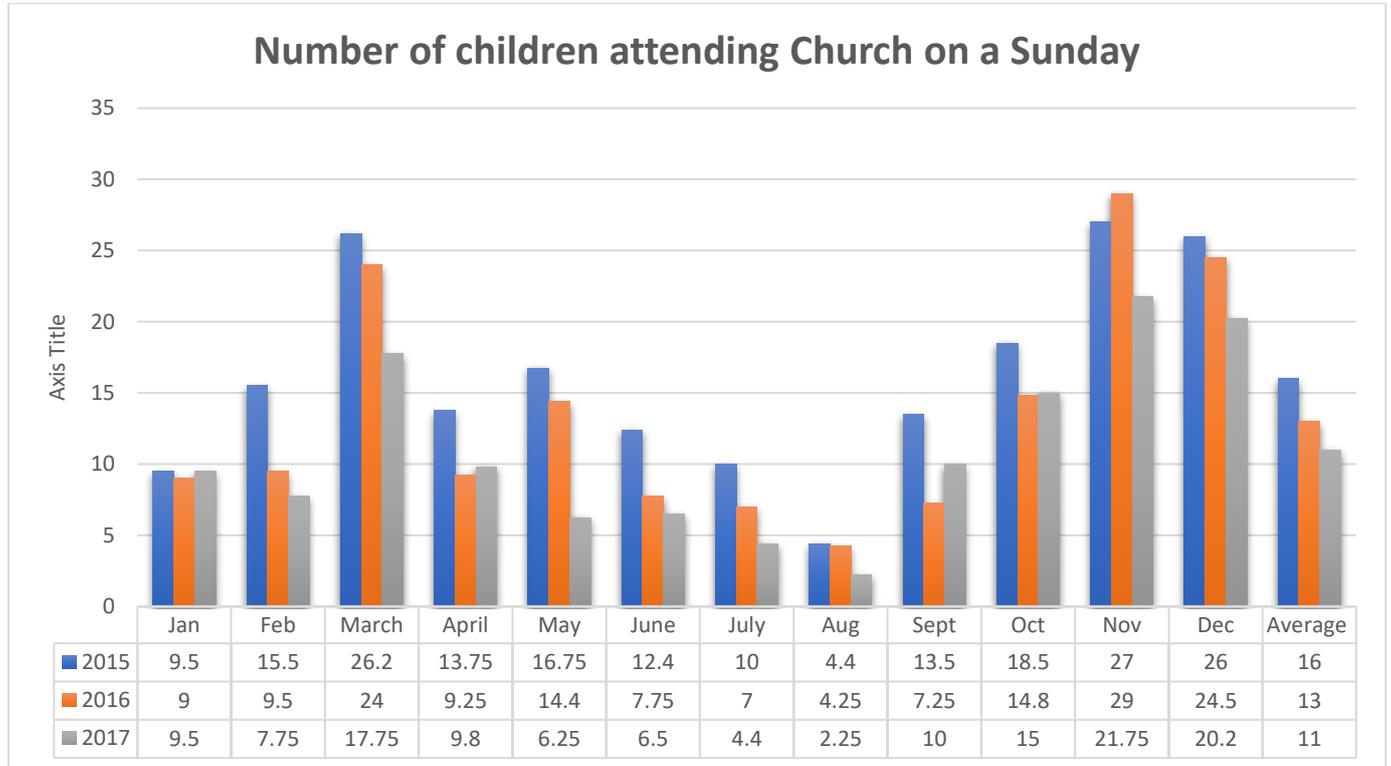
We believe God is calling us to do this by:

Growing the Church, growing as Disciples, growing in Service to the parish and beyond.

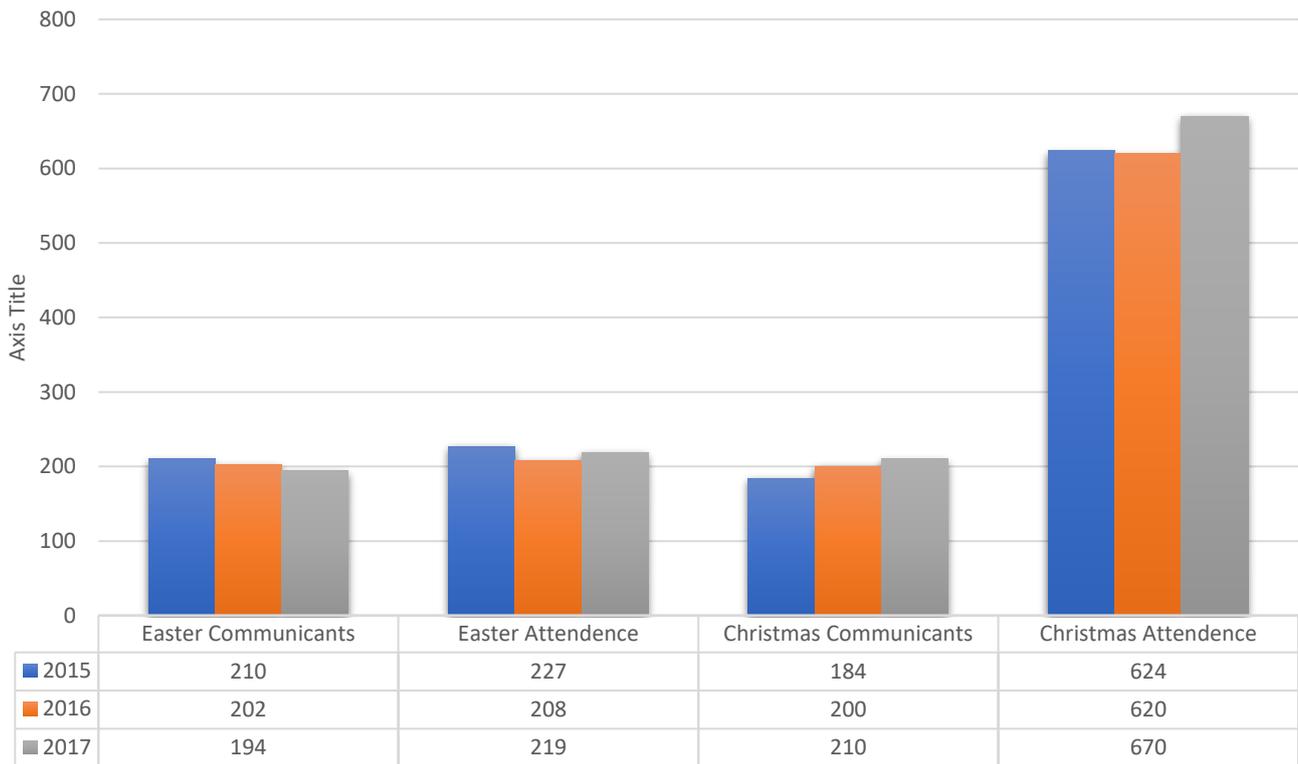
The Parish Vision was first developed in 2009, revisited in 2011 and refreshed as the Parish Profile was written in 2014. In May 2016, there was a Parish meeting to look at the Parish vision and the current situation in the church and how this informs our plan for mission in the future. From this meeting, a Mission Action Plan (MAP) was developed. This plan continues to be in place and serves as a focus for our planning, but during the year, I attended two weeks of training put on by the diocese called Missional Leadership for Growth (MLG). This aims to help the church grow its understanding of what it means to be missional, recognising the changing society in which we are called to witness means that we have to think differently about how we reach out to others with the message of the good news of Jesus Christ. One of the requirements of the course was that a MLG team be gathered to look at a missional project in the parish. The gathered team at Blackwell decided that our project would be called 'Through the glass doors' which aims to increase the connection with the many people who come to use the Millennium Centre, but don't come through the doors in to the church. However we have to understand that the movement should be both ways.....and while we seek to encourage people to come through the doors in to the church, we must also empower and enable the members of the congregation to go out through the doors to engage with the community as Christian disciple – as salt and light in the world. The first part of the 'Through the glass doors' project involved a questionnaire which was used at the Christmas Fayre, and will be used again to see what people who currently use the hall think about the church and the services and facilities on offer. We are also planning to introduce digital signage in the foyer, providing an up to date and attractive way to let people know what is going on at All Saints' and to pass on information about the Christian faith.

Parish Numbers

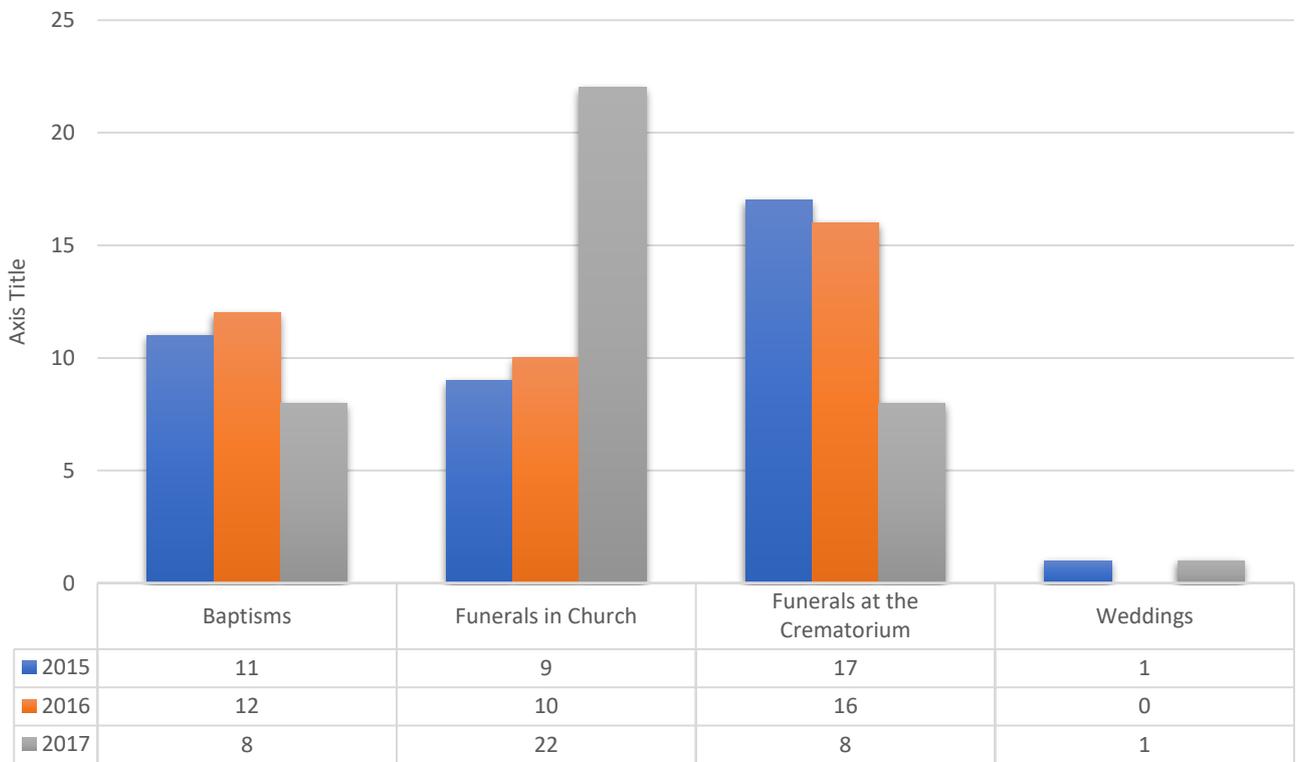
I have decided to add something different to my report this year to give people an idea of the numbers of people attending church during the year, as well as numbers for the occasional offices. I have gathered the data over the last three years and present it to you for your consideration below. I hope that you will see that this reflects the healthy situation we are in as a church.



Christmas and Easter numbers



Occasional Offices



Into the future

So, this brief review of the past year, with the thoughts for the future, should provide encouragement and many reasons for thanking God. While we are richly blessed in our buildings, our worship, and most of all

in the many remarkable people associated with the Parish Church, there is still much to do to develop our worship, discipleship and service. There are no shortages of opportunity and challenge, and the only way we will continue to develop and grow as Christians and as a church, is through working together, recognising and developing the gifts and talents of each person, and empowering all as we seek to grow God's kingdom.

We have much to celebrate, much for which to give thanks – and while we have looked back on the past year in this report, we once again look forward to the future. Let us be confident of God's presence with us, and in this confidence, let us strive always to be the people God is calling us to be, and let us continue to strive to grow God's kingdom in this place.

David Railton, Vicar

The Church Wardens Report

This past year has been the 6th year in attendance as Pro-warden and full Churchwarden, and I must admit I am looking forward to bit of a rest! Whether I get that rest remains to be seen, but here's hoping.

David and Sarah continue to put their personal touch onto our Church and I for one can see the fruits of those efforts. As mentioned previously, they have had a hard act to follow but I have always been impressed with the willingness David has shown to listen to all points of the discussion but still able to make his guidance known and keep us on his track. This is the path we should continue to take. David's role as Area Dean for Darlington, continues to pull him in various directions but it will be a pivotal role within the diocese and one that we should all support him in this role. I can see that at All Saints, we are an extremely important cog in the diocese and our contribution on various roles within the Diocese is understood and appreciated. We as a congregation, should take pride in this contribution and accept that maybe it requires us to be more supportive, either financially or volunteering.

During my term, it has been my pleasure to chair the social committee and I give a very big thank you to all the members of the committee and those who are co-opted to help at various events. I hope that my experience can be used in future events. For the last year, Dee has taken over the general the running of the committee. It is not such an easy task but one that she has done much better than she gives herself credit for. Keep it up Dee!

Additionally, I must also take the opportunity to specifically thank Anne, Sandra, and Ian for the support throughout my tenure.

Of course, a huge thankyou to Alison, who has had to put up with the various commitments the role has entailed. Whether this is driving back from Newbury to go straight to a meeting or opening the Church up for various events, then locking up afterwards. We are both looking forward to less of that.

Finally; I thank David for his inspiration, advice and leadership and to both him and Sarah, for their continued fellowship.

Andy Hopkins, Church Warden

Secretaries Report

The PCC have met 6 times this year under the chairmanship of the vicar. There has been a good attendance and the meetings usually last around one and a half hours, beginning with a prayer or Bible reading. I am thankful to Dee Wastnedge for taking minutes in my absence. The report can be downloaded from the website using the following link <http://www.allsaintschurch-blackwell.org.uk/pewsheet.php>

Kirsten Bertram, PCC Secretary

Parish Office

The Parish Office is staffed every weekday morning from 9.30am until 12noon (by voluntary helpers on Tuesdays) and is the focus of parish administration. The cheerful and dedicated staff and volunteers help keep the Vicar on track, and produce endless Orders of Service, rotas, readings, hymns, posters, letters and so much more with seldom a word of complaint! There is often a cup of tea and biscuit or sweet to be had, and always a smile and a cheerful word. As the first port of call for many who contact the Parish Church, the office is a happy and welcoming place, striving always to give a good first impression of All Saints' Church.

Nicky Waller, Parish Secretary & David Railton, Vicar

Electoral Roll Report

The number of people on the Electoral Roll has fallen to 279, which is due to a number of people having left the parish and 8 deaths. 3 people have been added to the roll in the last year. About 55% of those on the Roll reside in within the parish boundary with over 80% being in the DL3 postal area.

As per the Church Representation Rules, a full revision of the roll will be required in 2019.

Year		Number on Roll
2007	Full Revision	310
2008		306
2009		302
2010		323
2011		340
2012		333
2013	Full Revision	310
2014		325
2015		300
2016		301
2017		287
2018		279

David V Smith, Electoral Roll Officer

2. WORSHIP AND FAITH DEVELOPMENT REPORT

Confirmation Candidates

The 2017 Darlington Deanery Confirmation Service took place at St Michael's Heighington on 6th June and conducted by the Bishop of Jarrow. We were grateful to all concerned for a wonderful service. I was delighted to be able to present Jonathan Wilson-Downs for confirmation, and to welcome him for his first communion at All Saints' the following Sunday. We continue to pray for his growth in faith.

David Railton, Vicar

Shared Ministry

The Shared Ministry Development Group (SMDG) has the responsibility of helping the Church to discern where there are opportunities for ministry and mission, and also of spotting the people who are possibly being called to contribute with their talents. It is also the group within the parish that encourages the fostering and discerning of vocation. Each Christian disciple has a vocation: God is calling him or her to become a particular person and to fulfil certain roles. For some of us this will involve ministry or service near the centre of the Church's life; for others it will be lived out mostly in the world – at home, at work, or through charitable interests.

Because of the Missional Leadership for Growth training and project, the SMDG has had a bit of a sabbatical this year, but will pick up its work again in the coming months.

David Railton, Chair of the Shared Ministry Development Group

Worship & Education Committee

It has been another busy year for the Committee, and some of the topics which came under consideration there were as follows:

- Lent Groups. During Lent 2017 a study on characters from the film, *Les Misérables* was undertaken. This was something of a departure from the York Courses which we have used in the past, but it was felt that there were valuable points to be learnt from the course, and it was a bit more "stretching" for the participants. In Lent 2018 we will be looking at the film, *Chocolat*, and Hilary Brand's study course on Christ and the Chocolaterie.
- Lenten Addresses. These took place on the Sunday evenings during Lent, and were well-attended.
- Holy Week and Easter. A Eucharist was offered every day in Holy Week, with the Stations of the Cross, and Compline was celebrated after the Passover Meal (which was attended by over sixty people). The Children's Holy Week events took place, with a Family Service on Good Friday morning, drawn together by Eileen Auty and other willing helpers.
- A new cross. Rev. Brian Holmes made a beautiful, large cross which was displayed in the Foyer. It was hoped that a plaque would be made for the base, to explain where it had come from.

- Parade Services. Parades have been well-attended by most of the uniformed organisations, but sadly some of the Scouts will not attend, not even on Mothering Sunday or Remembrance Sunday, despite being a Church-affiliated group, with the advantages that such groups have. A lot of effort has gone into having discussions with the particular group involved, but this has met with no success, which is very disappointing. Efforts to solve this difficulty are on-going.
- Patronal Feast of All Saints' 2017. Bishop John Pritchard (a former Bishop of Jarrow) was our guest preacher, and there was a Faith Lunch after the 10.30am service.
- Saturday Prayer Hour. The first of a new offering of monthly prayer meetings was held on Saturday 3rd June 2017. The Hour runs between 9.00 – 10.00am; coffee is provided, and everyone is welcome. During the first half-hour, a new style of prayer is experienced, and in the second half-hour there is a more focused intercessory period on topics which may have been suggested beforehand. The meeting usually takes place on the 3rd Saturday of each month. Any change to this will be notified. The aim is to be more visibly prayerful as a church, and to spend time specifically supporting the church's work through prayer.
- Prayer Labyrinth. The possibility of constructing a labyrinth in a part of the field which would not take up a large area, could be mown over the top of, (not being created with hedges) and used as a different way of praying, was to be brought to the PCC for initial consideration.
- Service booklets. It had been discussed at previous meetings that the service booklets needed renewing and refreshing, but it was decided not to move forward at present, because of the cost. The matter will remain under consideration.
- Remit of the Worship Committee. As the remits of the different PCC Committees had been reviewed, and in some cases, changed, the Vicar felt it right that the Worship Committee should revert to being the Worship and Education Committee, meaning that the responsibility for looking at education courses, Lent Groups, etc. would now come back to this Committee for discussion. One of the possibilities discussed was a Film Night, with a viewing one week, and an informal discussion the following week. Other educational possibilities were another evening Bible Study, a Lecture Evening, or a debate.
- New Organist/Choir Director. The Committee welcomed Andy Young and looked forward to his input into the encouragement of the Choir, and the music of the church generally.
- Music Ensemble. This group continues to offer music at evening services about once a month, and has also taken part in a morning service, alongside the Choir.
- Joint events with Elm Ridge Methodist Church. Our main joint events this year were the Advent Service of Light, and the Service of Nine Lessons and Carols. Members of the choir from All Saints' Hurworth were also invited to take part in these.
- Wednesday Afternoon Reading Group. Jean Vanier's book, The Gospel of John – the Gospel of Relationship was to be studied.
- Advent Addresses. As these were not well-attended the previous year, they would not take place in 2017.
- Healing Services. These will be held again in the future, as they were greatly appreciated.
- All Souls' Service. There was much positive feedback about the service, and the music provided by the Choir was especially commented on and appreciated.

- Youth Fellowship. This was to be re-launched in 2018 and would run on the third Sunday evening of each month, with the Vicar in attendance.
- Thy Kingdom Come. We will be participating in this prayer initiative which comes from the Church of England, during the ten days between Ascension Day and Pentecost. The possibility of having a Prayer Walk around parts of the parish was suggested, and the Vicar has been in touch with the Methodists' Pioneer Minister in regard to this. This might take place on Saturday 19th May.
- A new school link. Polam Hall School is now part of a Christian Academy Group, and various members of the PCC are involved as a Governor, Advisor and Chair of Governors. The Vicar has taken assemblies at Polam, and invitations to come to All Saints' for different events have been issued, so as to build up a relationship with children and their families.

Debby Gill, Secretary to the Worship and Education Committee

Parish Readers

This year has been a bit different from the usual, (if indeed there is a "usual" year) in that our number of Readers has gone down from five to four, after Sarah Cliff left us to begin her training for ordination. Whilst her leaving All Saints' has left us feeling bereft, we are absolutely thrilled for Sarah, and know that our loss is the wider Church's gain. With all the gifts she has to offer, the parishes where she will work will receive such blessing. We continue to pray for her and Gary and wish her well in her continuing ministry.

As for the rest of us, we continue our work as part of the Ministry Team, into which we have been delighted to welcome the Rev. Raymond Cuthbertson recently; and we look forward to getting to know him better as we serve alongside him.

It seems invidious to itemise the kinds of things that individual Readers are doing, week by week in the parish, as each one of us has specific calls upon our time, and indeed everyone's work and home circumstances are different, so this year, the Readers' Report will give a general picture of the way in which we are involved, both within the parish and beyond. Here are some of our duties and interests:

- Supporting the Vicar in his work
- Regular preaching duties
- Pastoral oversight and responsibilities
- Leading Lent Groups
- Involvement with the Music Ensemble and evening services
- Participating in Continuing Ministerial Development by attending Study Day sessions in Durham (including one on Psalms this year)
- Being part of the Missional Leadership for Growth Team for All Saints'
- Working as Secretary to the Worship and Education Committee
- Co-ordinating the Men's Group
- Participating on different Committees at All Saints'

It is a great privilege to be licensed as a Reader, and no two Readers have the same duties, except for following our calling to serve God in the parish, in our places of work, at home, and everywhere that we

find ourselves. We are blessed to work as members of a great team of people, and would recommend to anyone, if they are feeling the stirrings of any vocational call, whether to lay or ordained work, don't let that call go unheeded. Speak to the Vicar, and step out in faith. Following one's calling may not necessarily be an easy option, but it is, without doubt, enriching, stimulating and fulfilling. All Saints' Parish Readers could not do what we do without the prayers and support of the Vicar, the rest of the Ministry Team and the congregation, and we would like to express our heartfelt thanks.

Debby Gill, Susan Leatherbarrow, Kevin Winkworth, Keith Whiston

Verger's Report

Another year has passed at All Saints Church for the Vergers who work tirelessly, whilst preparing the Church for the numerous services which take place. The Church runs smoothly and efficiently with their continued work.

My thanks go to all the Vergers, Alan Waller, Phil Elliott-Lyall, Gillian Bower and Brian and Anne Tyreman who work very hard whilst preparing the Church for the 8.30, 10.30 and also the 6.30pm services, along with the funerals, baptisms and the occasional wedding. My sincere and grateful thanks to you all. A special mention to one Verger who is recovering after an illness, that is Andrew Watson; we wish him all the best for a speedy recovery and a speedy return. The team is not the same without you. My heartfelt thanks to the Vergers each and every one of you, and may we work in harmony as team for many years to come.

God Bless you all.

Mike Fryer, Head Verger

Safeguarding Report

I am very pleased to report that everyone at All Saints who is associated with children, take safeguarding very responsibly. I am grateful to all of you as it is evident that you do not take your responsibilities and duties lightly. This also reflects in the Church's view of the well-being of all the children who we come into contact with whilst at Church. As a result of this I am very pleased to advise that no safeguarding issues have been reported.

Mike Fryer, Safeguarding Officer

Readers and Sidespeople

After many years I have surrendered the rota to Nicky in the church office There is now a total of around 60 parishioners regularly involved, some just readers or sidesmen, some both. The informal system of substitution if dates are inconvenient works well, but sometimes Nicky does not know of changes in time to amend the pew sheet.

Mike Frankton

Church Choir

The choir has worked hard this year leading the music for our services. They have coped well with the different music that they have been asked to sing – and I would like to thank them for their support and help in settling in since September. I am really proud of them – and it is a real pleasure to have the opportunity to lead them. Barefaced flattery aside, they do a hard job beyond the excitement of Christmas and Easter – one that is very different from being in a concert choir.

However, for the choir to continue doing these things efficiently, there is something that they need... You! There is an expectation, I think, that you need to turn up for every rehearsal and every service. You really do not need to be an expert, or to be able to make every rehearsal, just to be able to give a little time and voice. This might sound like a hard sell advert – it is – the choristers I have work very hard, but sometimes feel very lonely. I am looking at a variety of possibilities – from putting on afternoon rehearsals for special services to making it more convenient to rehearse for a Sunday morning.

I want to grow the choir so that we can serve the church in Blackwell all the better. If you have any suggestions, please let me know.

Andrew Young, Director of Music

All Saints' Music Group

The Music Ensemble continues to regularly lead 6.30pm Services. They usually take place on a monthly basis with a break for Summer. We aim to provide an uplifting, joyful Service. Sam, on percussion, is a welcome addition. If you wish to join us phone Dorothy on 01325 720205.

Dorothy Puchala

Flower Arrangers

I would like to thank all Parishioners who have supported the Flower Arrangers over the past year. Either with donations of money in the flower collection box which is put on the table at the back of church for festival flowers. Memorial donations in memory of loved ones. Wedding Anniversaries and flowers for Christenings. Thanks also to everyone who came to the Coffee Morning in February at which we raised £231.

Thank you also to the team of Flower Arrangers who have over the past year arranged some beautiful arrangements, especially the festival flowers. When arranging flowers we don't have time to sit and chat, so one Saturday in February we all went to the Town House in Houndgate for afternoon tea and a social chat. We had an lovely afternoon and are going to meet socially again. We would still like to have more people on our rota so if there is anyone who would like to come and join us please contact me.

Lona Martin

3. Stewardship: Finances & Grounds Reports

PCC Treasurers Report

I am pleased to report that our performance in 2017 has been better than anticipated. Our budget for 2017, prepared towards the end of 2016, indicated that we expected to make only a small surplus for the year whereas the actual surplus was much higher.

Details of the results are shown in the extracts from the Annual Report and Financial Statements included under 'Abridged Accounts' later in this document.

The Statement of Financial Activities indicates that there was an overall surplus for the year, with income exceeding expenditure by £17,154. This compares to the surplus of £4,135 in 2016, a positive increase of £13,019.

Total unrestricted income increased from £203,096 in 2016 to £208,764 in 2017, helped in part by legacies left by some of our parishioners.

Disappointingly, although our surplus has increased it is concerning that unrestricted planned giving actually decreased in the year by over £4,000. A number of givers either died or moved away during the year but hopefully this trend in the reduction of planned giving will not continue in 2018.

Unrestricted costs once again decreased in the year from £201,234 in 2016 to £191,317 in 2017. Included in these costs is our Parish Share payment to the Diocese. We pledged to pay a reduced amount of £90,000 in 2017 and I am very pleased to announce that, once again, we paid this amount in full as we always have done, a very commendable achievement for our parish.

Full details of our income and expenditure during the year are provided in the extracts.

Fundraising during the year was, once again, excellent with a total raised of £15,653 (2016: £14,668). This includes £3,538 from the Garden Party, £4,362 from the Christmas Fair and £1,000 from the Strawberry and Wine evening.

We have many groups within our church which as well as social activities also provide funds for the church. These include Tea and Coffee (£987); Social Committee (£2,312); 100 Club (£1,097) and Bell Ringers who raised £1,562 during the year enabling them to make a donation of £1,570 to the Alzheimer's Society.

Our Pre-School had a very successful year turning a deficit of £876 in 2016 into a surplus of £4,860 in 2017, a positive swing of almost £6,000.

The surplus for the year has resulted in our Total Net Assets at the end of the year increasing to £88,301 (2016: £71,147) of which £84,573 are Unrestricted Funds and £3,728 are Restricted.

We have increased our 2018 Parish Share undertaking to £94,000 in line with the Diocese request for parishes to try and increase their pledges by 5%. We have kept our expectation of planned giving at a similar level to that received in 2017 and consequently our budget for 2018 is only showing a breakeven position. Therefore, as always, it is vital that we remain diligent in our control of costs and make every effort to continue to increase income.

Finally, I would like to thank David and the Finance Committee for all the support and encouragement I receive.

Peter Davison, Treasurer

Abridged Accounts – please see the Appendices on pages: 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37

Planned Giving

Although this year's accounts show a reduction in planned giving, I am pleased to report that this is due to the loss of parishioners who have moved or passed away, rather than any reduction in giving by members of the scheme,

We have a total of 120 Planned Givers – either by standing order or the weekly green envelope – and your continued generosity has enabled the PCC to restore its Parish Share pledge back to the level of 2016 following the reduction last year.

Going forward, however, the PCC is keen to be in a position to increase this if possible, and has decided to embrace a new direct debit based giving scheme which will make administration much simpler and hopefully supercede the present standing order based scheme – there will be further news regarding this later in the year.

We are also conscious that giving should not just be about a financial commitment, and our ongoing Stewardship efforts over the next year will bear this in mind – please watch out for further news, and give what you feel you are able to further our efforts to Grow the Kingdom in this Parish and beyond.

Ellis Leatherbarrow, Planned Giving Treasurer

Buildings and Grounds Committee

The Quinquennial Inspection was carried out in July and following the visit the Church received a very favourable report. The conclusions and summary of which were as follows:- *'It is evident that the premises continue to be the subject of responsible care and maintenance. No items were identified as matters for urgent concern or attention'*.

We are fortunate at All Saints to have relatively new and modern buildings but even so hardly a week passes throughout the year when there is not something that requires repair or attention in the church, Millennium Centre or grounds - blocked sinks or drains, leaking taps and gutters, damaged doors and cupboards and flower beds that need planting and maintaining. These tasks and many others are undertaken by a small group of volunteers and to them all I would like to say a big thank you. Much of their work probably goes unnoticed but without their efforts it would not be possible for the buildings and grounds to be maintained to the standard we have all come to expect.

This year has also seen repairs carried out to the entrance doors of the Millennium Centre, the repositioning of a number of loose roof tiles on both the church and Millennium Centre and in January the repair of the glass roof in the Garden Rooms' corridor. Work is due to commence shortly to repair the damage in the kitchen caused by water leakage.

Every Sunday when we come to worship we take it for granted the church will be clean, neat and tidy, but this is only possible due to the efforts of the church cleaners. To everybody on the church cleaning rota I would like to say thank you. We are always looking for new volunteers to join the rota and especially so this year as over the last twelve months we have lost a number of members so please give some consideration to joining the team.

Finally I would like to thank all members of the Building and Grounds Committee for their support and invaluable advice throughout the last year.

Sally Johnson, Churchwarden, Chair Buildings and Ground Committee

Salutation Hall

Salutation Hall has continued to be used in the year by its regular groups and for parties.

Rental income in the year was £2,703, which against costs of £1,564 produced a surplus of £1,139, which, although lower than the previous year, remains a satisfactory return for the hall. The majority of the costs are those associated with heat and light, insurance and repairs and maintenance.

Many thanks to Dee Wastnedge who continues with her very efficient running of the bookings system and the rest of the committee of David, Colin Price, David Curran and Sally Johnson who help in its running.

Pam Davison, Salutation Hall Committee

4. CHURCH COMMUNITIES GROUPS & ACTIVITIES REPORTS

Social Committee

Overall, another successful and busy social year with our usual Garden party and Christmas Fayre, both of which were well supported by both helpers and attendees and enjoyable for all. We learnt a few things which can be carried forward for future event with maybe some new ideas. Many thanks to all involved. A Coffee morning in September brought us back after the summer holidays, along with a very successful afternoon tea for the elderly in the Parish, with live music from Nathan Barker and his friends. The traditional Harvest Ceilidh was held in October and although it would have been good to see more people there, those who were had a good time.

After the Christmas Fayre, we had the customary SSAFA concert setting us up for Christmas.

The New Year started with another successful return of the "Castle Players". They continue to go from strength to strength as they performed to a sell-out crowd. This was followed by a coffee morning on behalf of the Flower Arrangers, which was well supported, and evening with The Miles Roses, a folk group who

sang in Church and a quiz night with fish & chips, which also was a sell out and a very enjoyable evening. Sadly, we had to cancel the Parish Coffee morning scheduled for the 3rd March due to snow!

We are always open to suggestion for events, so feel free to mention to us at any time. As ever – many thanks go to the team who make up the Social Committee. Without them, none of these events would be able to take place.

We are always open to new members. Being a member does not mean you have to attend all events, so it is not too onerous. We are lucky to have a good supporting cast that we are able to call upon for their continued support.

Dee Wastnedge, Pro Churchwarden and Committee Note Taker

Green Action Group

“The purpose of the Green Action Group is to help the Church to appreciate our individual and joint share of responsibility for climate change, and to relate this to our Christian faith.

The Group will encourage the Church and the wider community to move to a simpler, more sustainable lifestyle that will protect all God’s creation and justice for all God’s people.”

We have met on 4 occasions during the last year. We continue to tend the All Saints' orchard, which produced a crop of apples and plums last autumn which were shared with the congregation.

We have continued to write articles for the Church magazine on 'green' issues and to remind PCC committees of the environmental dimension to their work. The review of lighting requirements in the Church and the Millennium Centre is ongoing, but progress is awaiting the outcome of Project Gooseberry.

In November All Saints' and Salutation achieved the Eco-Church bronze award, which is an ecumenical partnership helping Churches and individual Christians to care for creation as an integral part of their faith. We are now starting to work towards the silver award.

In Advent we organised a giving tree in the foyer, with money raised going to support homeless people in Darlington at Christmas time

We are looking for more members of the congregation to join the group, so if you would like to get involved with promoting environmental issues in the church community then please sign up on the new PCC committee sheets in the foyer or have a word with any member of the group.

John Thorley. Chair – Green Action Group

All Saints’ and Salutation Ladies Fellowship

As is customary we have travelled far and wide without adding to our carbon footprints.

We scoured the USA looking for moccasins, climbed mountains in Scotland, delved into hidden gems in both an attic and a Tudor mansion in Yorkshire, explored modern dairy farming and reminisced past events in the area. Closer to home we learned how the latest news and gossip is delivered to the homes of those

who are blind or partially sighted. Music is always high on our agenda. Fools' Gold was so popular a repeat visit is planned in the summer. All Saints' new choir master, Andy Young, brought out hidden talents in the choir. Members hesitated to applaud – but a later congregation was not so reticent. Andy, the choir and vicar were guests at the buffet supper which followed the service. A novelty this year – our Strawberries and Cream were accompanied by a magician. Keswick offered an enjoyable variety of interests on our annual outing.

Members manned stalls at both the Garden Party and Christmas Fair and gave numerous Christmas presents to Family Help (formerly known as the Women's Refuge). We were also able to give cash donations to both US and St. Teresa's Hospice. Thanks, were given to Nicky Waller who, after many years, no longer felt able to mastermind the jewellery and toiletries stall on behalf of the fellowship.

Thanks are due to all the committee as well as the members who together made the year so successful. In particular, Sue Elliott-Lyall who took on the role of chairman in addition to looking after our funds. Our thanks also to Krys, the caretaker, who has been so helpful throughout the year. It has been challenging to translate our requirements into Polish. (We learned later that Krys has left us and welcome Scott Marshall in his place.)

The year ended with 65 members and a healthy balance in the bank.

New members and visitors are always welcome. Details of our meetings can be found in the Church magazine and on the notice board in the foyer.

Sandy Hood, Hon. Secretary, Ladies Fellowship

Men's Group

The Men's Group is an informal organisation that meets monthly. We arrange visits and meetings. It does not matter if you cannot attend regularly and there is no membership subscription. We just hope you will come when you can, get to know people better and have fun. In 2017 we were pleased that some of the men from Holy Trinity joined our group

During the course of the year we have had talks on mental health and on St Teresa's Hospice, visited the Kings Church and the Northumbrian Water Treatment Works, been to a brewery and to the Dogs. Our speaker at the Annual Dinner was David Hutcheon.

Please watch the pew sheet for news of forthcoming events

Kevin Winkworth, Secretary

Ladies Night

We re-established an old group called Ladies Night back in 2016. This is purely to give the Ladies of the Parish, and any who wish to join us, an opportunity to meet and socialise outside of Church, and hopefully get to know one another a little better. Sometimes, when sitting in our pews, we see people across the Church, but don't get the opportunity to speak. Our last event was Sunday lunch at the Otter and Fish in

January and we hope to get more planned for the near future. If anyone has any ideas they would like to share with us, we would be grateful.

Dee Wastnedge, Chair

Parish Lunch

The parish lunch is held on the third Thursday of the month. Everyone from the parish is welcome to attend and there is always a sign-up sheet in the foyer for people to indicate if they will be attending or not. The lunch continues to be very popular with between 40 and 50 people attending each month. We have a varied menu throughout the year, offering a main course and a pudding on most occasions. Sometimes, for example at Christmas, we enjoy some extra treats! We have a great group of helpers but if you would like to help, please let us know. Help with setting up and putting away is just as important as preparing the food each month.

Anne Willson

Circle Dancing

Venue: Salutation Hall

Monday Evenings during school term time - 7.30pm -9.30pm

Cost: £2.00 per evening

Another year of dancing has seen our membership numbers fall slightly, with an average evening of 14 dancers. We enjoyed our wine and strawberry evening in July, and our Christmas Party drew our dancing for 2017 to a close. At 8.30pm we have our refreshment break when we are all able to catch up on each others news. We were pleased to make a donation to the Darlington Memorial Scanner Appeal of £200.

We are a friendly group and always pleased to welcome new dancers. Why not come along and give us a try?

Mary Henry

The Hand Bell Ringing Group

"Let the bells ring out at Christmas"

Once again, the All Saints' hand-bell ringers ventured forth to ring out carols in the pre-Christmas weeks. This year's chosen charity was St. Teresa's Hospice. We were welcomed at our usual venues of Morrison's Morton Park, Morrison's North Road and ASDA. At Sainsbury's, the ringing was combined with bag packing, and we were very grateful for the support of members of the congregation and friends. In total, with the help of a donation from the church carol singers, £1570 was raised for our charity. A cheque was presented to Scott and Alison Marshall, representing St. Teresa's, at the morning service on Sunday 14 January. As always, a big thank you goes to the bell ringers who rang their hearts out, and to others who contributed by holding collection buckets, counting money, and packing bags at Sainsbury's.

However, we urgently need new members to swell our ranks. Whether you have no experience at all, or if you have rung hand bells in the past, we would love to hear from you. Please contact me if you have a little time to spare, and feel that you would like to join our friendly group.

Jane Elliott

Badminton Group

The Badminton Group meets almost every Friday from 8 p.m. to 10 p.m. in the Millennium Hall, during term time. We have between four and eight adult players who attend regularly and we would welcome more adults and younger people to join us, as this helps to encourage developing players and adds variety to the game of 'old hands'.

There is one court on which we play doubles games, although more energetic participants are welcome to play singles games, whilst the rest of us catch our breath and catch up on the weekly news! We each pay £2.00 per session, so if you are interested in joining us, please ring Sue Elliott-Lyall on 01325 241225, or just turn up on the night and you will be most welcome.

Sue Elliott-Lyall

Knitting and Crafts Group

This group was formed in September 2012 to bring together those people who have an interest in any form of craft – knitting, sewing, embroidery, crochet, tapestry, dressmaking – the list is as diverse as the talents!

The group meets most Thursdays from 2.00 p.m. to 4.00 p.m. in the Barbara Bishop room off the Church foyer. To date we have involved ourselves in several charitable projects, such as knitting warm winter woollies (hats, scarves and gloves) for King's Church food bank (to be distributed with food parcels during the winter months), very small items of clothing for premature babies, most notably 'traffic light' pom pom hats, which premature babies wear to denote seriously ill cases (red), improving health (amber) and significantly improved (green) and recently, cute little Easter chicks, to be filled with small eggs and sold in aid of charity.

There is a wealth of knowledge to be shared by members of the group, so please, feel free to join us if you would like to spend a very sociable, and loquacious afternoon, with the customary cuppa and a biscuit! Ring Sue Elliott-Lyall on 01325 241225 for further details.

Sue Elliott-Lyall

Church Refreshments

Thanks to a dedicated bunch of volunteers, the Sunday morning refreshments, after the 10.30 service, continue to provide a pleasant half hour or so to meet up and chat. This year we've reluctantly said goodbye to Daphne Eleanor and Christine Robinson, both of whom have taken their 'turn at the urn' for

many years. However, Kit and Denny Tang have kindly stepped into the gap and for the first time ever, we have a reserve in Margaret Lewis.

Many thanks for Pat Williams who continues to keep up the supplies of tea and coffee. If anyone can spare about an hour, three or four times a year, they would be very welcome.

Wendy Day

Scrabble Club

The Scrabble Club was formed in January 2011 and has continued to enjoy regular attendance ever since, with numbers having fluctuated since our move from Salutation Hall, so that between 3 and 8 players are attending now most weeks.

The club meets every Wednesday afternoon in the Garden Rooms at church from 1.45 p.m. to 4.00 p.m., when people are paired up to play a game, before having a break for refreshments, then continuing with a different 'opponent'. The group is very friendly and welcoming and some of the most fascinating discussions seem to be held across a Scrabble board (mostly relating to the spelling of certain words and their meaning!),

The cost is £2.00 per person each week, so if you would like to join, you are most welcome. Please, come along or ring Sue Elliott-Lyall on 01325 241225 for further details.

Sue Elliott-Lyall

5.COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CHARITIES REPORTS

Lay Pastoral Care Scheme

The Lay Pastoral Care Scheme consists of two parts. The first is the pastoral visiting done by the Parish Visitors – visiting a number of people through the year, keeping up the contact between the church and those who are having difficulty for one reason or another. I would like to say a big 'thank you' to Susan Leatherbarrow for the important work that she does in co-ordinating this part of our ministry in her role as Lay Pastoral Assistant: she makes a huge contribution in all the pastoral work that she does, and her caring concern and selfless support of so many is a blessing to this parish. We should all be grateful to the team of visitors – Susan Leatherbarrow, Pat Williams, Debby Gill, John Jarvis, Gillian Mortimer, Gillian Bower, Judi Kent, Sue Elliott-Lyall and Mike Fryer – and for the ministry they provide.

The second dimension of the lay pastoral care scheme is the system of local representatives. Throughout the parish, we have people who deliver parish cards to neighbouring homes, keep an eye out for people who are new to the area, delivering a welcome pack to them, and generally act as a link with the Church. These opportunities of contact with those who live in the parish are important and can and should be developed and built upon.

David Railton

Community Connections Group

During the last 12 months, our Group has established and strengthened links with a number of important charities in Darlington.

The most noteworthy have been: Safe Families for Children, where individual parishioners provide help and support to vulnerable families, and secondly, Darlington Town Mission (Helping to tackle loneliness in Darlington's elderly) – we have supported DTM on a number of their fundraising events.

We have also made strong connections beyond the parish. For example, 12 of our parishioners have now sponsored children in Burkina Faso through the Compassion programme – i.e. Releasing children from poverty in Jesus' name.

We have also helped the refugees in Darlington, by facilitating production of their Welcome Pack, courtesy of All Saints funding.

Another success has been the weekly box for the Darlington Foodbank. This has gone very well, so many thanks to all of you who contribute items week to week.

Our Group has also been active in establishing links with the wider local community. Two ways in which this is happening are:

1. The establishment of closer links with Polam Hall School, to get more of their pupils engaged with All Saints. We are now taking steps to build similar links with Hummersknott Academy.
2. We have established links with a homeless charity within our parish boundary, i.e. the Darlington 700 Club. We visited them in January, and, as a result, their Chief Executive John Elliston is coming to speak to the congregation at All Saints on July 8th.

We are gradually building up important links with the local and wider community, and I wish to express my thanks to my committee members for their support in this important venture.

Nick Auty, Church Warden and Chair on the Community Connections Group.

Magazine Report

Articles for the Parish Magazine continue to be submitted by both regular and new contributors and I am very grateful for all the efforts made by our loyal readership. The magazine continues to be a popular part of church life and provides a wonderful diary of services, events, and social meetings expertly compiled by Debby Gill for which we are all beholden.

I said in my first report as editor last year that I encourage any feedback, particularly critical, as to how the magazine might be improved to best serve the requirements of its loyal readership. I have listened to all who were willing to engage with me on this topic and I hope the magazine in its current form still meets with most people's requirements. If it doesn't, please tell me. Thank you once more to all who contribute and read the magazine.

Richard Rayner, Editor

The Children's Society

Thanks to the generosity of our Children's Society box holders, we were able to send £524.55 which is a fantastic total, thank you. This charity, which is also supported through the Christingle services at Christmas, reaches out to the country's most vulnerable children and young people to give them support and assistance. Their staff give individual help, but also act in a wider capacity through resources +publications, policy and lobbying, partnerships, commissioning and research. "We fight child poverty and neglect, and help all children have a better chance in life." If anyone else would like to join us as a box holder, we would be pleased to hear from you.

Wendy Day, Katie Malcolm, Honorary Local Secretaries

All Saints' Blackwell Pre-School

The pre-school takes children from the age of 2 years to school age. The new extended opening times are 8:30am - 2:30pm, these have proved popular with our families. The extended hours have enabled us to offer the '30 hours free child care' entitlement. Alongside the 30 hours for 3/4-year olds we offer the 'universal 15 hours' for 3/4-year olds. We do take children at the age of 2 years old, offering the 'Early Years entitlement' for eligible 2-year olds.

In March 2017 the pre-school was inspected by Ofsted, we received a 'good' in all areas. According to Ofsted 'The staff team is committed to providing a high-quality service, they are well qualified, experienced and have a clear understanding of how children learn and develop.' The manager Carole Ferguson has an Honours Degree in Education Studies and Mrs Amanda Summers holds an Early Years Foundation Degree. All staff members hold an Early year's qualification and a paediatric first aid certificate.

The inspector stated our 'strength was our parent partnership. Staff plan a range of activities, both indoors and outdoors that is appropriate to children's individual needs. As a result, children are eager and motivated learners who make good progress in all areas of learning and development.'

I would like to thank my very hard-working team of staff for the care they show each individual child, settling them in, and preparing them for primary school. Revd. David Railton and the pre-school committee for their time and commitment. Thanks, must also go to our parents, families and the congregation for their contributions to pre-school activities and fundraisers throughout the year.

Carole Ferguson, Preschool Manager

29th Darlington (All Saints' and Salutation) Rainbows

We have had a busy year full of activities and working towards several badges. The Rainbows have completed the 'Fairy Badge', they made sweet fairies, a fairy garden and an edible fairy garden and a few more activities and earned a lovely badge. We had a trip to Clip and Climb, this was a very enjoyable activity and they all managed to reach the top of all the climbing walls, we watched from the bottom. We have also

started the 'Rainbows around the world' Challenge badge, learning about all the Guiding Centres in the World, so far we have explored , 'Our Chalet' in Switzerland, tasting swiss cheese and chocolate. We have also invited Rebecca Aiken into our meeting as she has recently been to Sangam in India. Rebecca shared her experiences and photos, she came dressed in a lovely sari (tricky driving) and we made little saris for the rainbows to dress up in and go home wearing them.

We are next exploring the guiding centre ' Our Cabana' in Mexico and the centre 'Pax Lodge' in London.

On Thinking Day, we enrolled 8 Rainbows and we all renewed our Promise. We have a full unit and a waiting list to keep us going.

I would like to thank Emily who is a young leader and helps us every week and Laura who is a new helper to our group, we cannot run without them.

Can we request that any parents wants their daughters to join Rainbows if they contact the girlguiding.org.uk website and it will filter down to our list as we are unable to take names over the phone.

Jill Wildsmith, Unit Guider

11th All Saints' & Salutation Brownies

Throughout the year the Brownies have experienced and enjoyed many fun- filled activities and events. We have worked towards several badges including Cyber Safety and First Aid. As the festive season approached we attended the Division Carol Service which was held at All Saints. In the New Year the girls were involved in Farm to Fork activities which culminated in a very interesting visit to Tesco, Newton Aycliffe where we were shown many areas of the store not normally open to the public. During a couple of meetings, we were given some guidance on orienteering and then teams of Brownies and Leaders set out to complete an orienteering course in West Park.... a challenging night for some! In June we decided to have a 'Bring your Father (or significant male) to Brownie Night'. The men were encouraged to join in various activities, exercises and challenges. It was a fantastic night which was thoroughly enjoyed by everyone. In July we travelled to Park House in Hawkshead for our annual Brownie Holiday. An action-packed weekend was had by all including a visit to Brockhole where the girls and some of the Leaders enjoyed a treetop trail using high wires and low ropes. Very brave!!! Even braver some Brownies attended a camping weekend at East Shotten which unfortunately was very wet and wild.

As always, this and much more would not have been possible without the dedication, commitment and hard work of the helpers, volunteer Leaders, Jill, Sue & Grace and especially Julie Ross (Brown Owl).

Jill Barber, Brownie Guide Leader

26th All Saints Scouts

The Beavers have progressed well in 2017 with a lot of hard work by the Beaver leaders and the Beavers themselves, resulting in several the Beavers achieving the 'Bronze Award'. This is the highest achievement badge a Beaver can earn and is the first time this badge has been awarded in a considerable long time.

Becca Atkins the Beaver leader is unfortunately having to step down from her role due to work commitments and will be a great loss to the group. Hannah Ross is to step up and take her place. The group would like to thank Becca for her hard work and dedication over the last four years.

The Cub Scouts are being led by Kieran Malcolm and Claire Newton and they are going from strength to strength, with exciting activities. The Cubs and Beavers have been helped by a small number of adult helpers and adventure scouts working towards their Duke of Edinburgh awards.

The Scouts have been enjoying some interesting nights away with Archery and "Cluedini" being some of the activities taking place. Simon Garlick has been leading the Scouts and the program of activities has included a lot of traditional scouting!

Scout numbers have dwindled due to an age demographic gap between the Cub Scouts and Scouts who are moving up. However, it is anticipated that many Cubs will be moving up when they reach the appropriate age in September. The group is in a good position, but potential new leaders would be welcomed.

The group is steadily working towards achieving as many badges as possible in 2018.

Scott Denham, Group Scout Leader 26th All Saints Scouts

29th Darlington Guides

New guides joined us in September 2017 Term with the girls enjoying a Golf Taster session at Blackwell Grange Golf Club, working on guiding challenge badges, a Halloween Treasure Hunt, made bath bombs and body scrubs and Christmas tree decorations. Some of the guides and leaders attended Church parades and the Church Christmas fair in November. During the winter term the guides have tried Archery, worked on a Go for It Badge, celebrated Guiding World Thinking Day in February, made brooches for Mother's Day gifts and will be going to Planet Leisure bouncing on trampolines for the last day of term. We also held a District Bring and Buy Sale in March fundraising for Motor Neurone Disease and raised £320, which is one of the charities supported by Soroptimist International Durham and was an element of the challenge badge Shared Vision our guides were working on since September.

We are looking forward to the summer term which usually involves more outdoor adventures such as our hike to Hurworth and will conclude with a District Guide Camp with St. Augustine's Guides, at the end of term.

Louise Gibson, Unit Leader, 29th Darlington Guides

29th Salutation Brownies

29th (Salutation) Brownies have had a busy and fun packed year.

One of our highlights was a Brownie Holiday in the summer at Durham Camp House. We chose the film Moana as our theme and played games, made crafts and cooked lots of things linked to Moana. We also

all either worked towards our Brownie Holiday or the Advanced Brownie Holiday badge. We had so much fun we have booked to go again this year with a Roald Dahl theme.

We have also been busy completing our Fire Safety, Cook, Finding Our Way, Agility and Stargazer Badges throughout the year. We really enjoyed visiting Darlington Fire Station and even managed to fit 18 Brownies into one fire engine!

We've had lots of celebrations during this year- we celebrated Chinese New Year, Christmas and several Promise Ceremonies. Most recently our newest Brownies were enrolled whilst roller-skating! We have enjoyed taking part in various church parade services and loved making the daffodil posies for Mother's Day.

A huge thank you goes to our dedicated leaders; Katherine, Katharine, Sophie and Rachel. As well as our guide helpers Layna and Ellie.

We are looking forward to another busy year.

Jenny Groves, Brownie Leader

Millennium Hall

The Millennium Hall and the Garden Rooms continue to be busy. We have regular users along with many parties and functions. The halls lend themselves very well to serve the Parish and the local community. I would like to thank the Trustees for their support, especially the Vicar, Pam Davison and who receive the brunt of my calls and pleas for help when required. I would also like to thank Kris Hartman, who left in January and now Scott Marshall, our caretaker.

If you would like to book one of the halls, please email hallbookingenquiries@gmail.com or ring on (01325) 460998 after 5.30pm

Dee Wastnedge, Booking Secretary

All Saints' Millennium Centre Trust (Darlington) Limited

The Millennium Centre is run by an independent charitable company which is limited by guarantee. The land on which the Centre is built is leased for 99 years (from 1997) to the company by the church; and to be a member of the company one has to be a member of the parish electoral roll. There are 12 Trustees: The Vicar, seven nominated by the PCC one nominated by the Bishop of Durham, one nominated by the Mayor of Darlington, one nominated by the senior ward councillor, and one nominated by Evolution: The Council for Voluntary Services, although following the demise of Evolution, we are looking for a new group to be involved. Again, all trustees have to be members of the company and thereby also members of the parish electoral roll.

We are grateful to all of those who served as Trustees over the past twelve months and we are particularly grateful for the contributions of Dee Wastnedge, the Bookings Secretary; Pam Davison, the Finance Director; and Alison Barker, the Company Secretary. We certainly couldn't manage without them.

The Millennium Centre remains busy, though with costs escalating, especially the cost of fuel, we cannot be complacent about the finances. We continue to be helped in reducing the running costs by the solar pv panels – but a rise price of fuel is always a concern. Some of the many groups using the Centre are parish organisations; some are groups that are associated with the church; and others are community-based or private initiatives. In an average week, several hundred people of different ages can be using our facilities. To maintain the popularity of the Millennium Centre, it is vital that we sustain very high standards of provision. The constant use of the centre means that regular maintenance is needed, and we also need to look to developing and replacing existing fabric as wear and tear take their toll. In the year, some thought was given as to how we might further develop the centre, and how the current facilities can be updated. A proposal was put forward under the title of ‘Project Gooseberry’ which received the support of the Trust and congregation. The project will require significant funds if it is to go ahead, and we are currently trying to find funding from various outside agencies.

The Trustees have an enviable partnership with the PCC and Church, and one of the most wonderful parts of this from the Trustees’ perspective is the work done by the PCC’s Buildings and Grounds Committee. We are grateful for the latter taking care of all of the day-to-day upkeep of the building with great effect.

The Church community of All Saints established the Trust to build and run the Centre as a way of furthering its own vision to make this community more like God’s kingdom than it otherwise would be. The All Saints’ Millennium Centre remains an excellent example of how the Church contributes to the well-being of our society in ways that are often overlooked but which make a positive difference to countless people. Though a separate company, the Millennium Centre and its Millennium Trust represent a gift from God.

David Railton, Chairman of All Saints’ Millennium Trust (Darlington) Ltd.

6. WIDER CHURCH AND SYNOD REPORTS

Deanery Synod & Group Council Report

The first Synod of the year took place at All Saints’, Blackwell and represented the first opportunity for our new Area Dean to chair the meeting. He welcomed our guest speaker, Brian Robinson from “Broom Tree Life Group”, which is a network of Christians serving the people of Darlington suffering with mental health problems. He described how depression and mental illness affects people and some of the daily struggles they endure. The “Care and Share Group” at Kings Church is a good example of the work being undertaken, providing a space for adults who would otherwise be isolated. A presentation from the “Deanery Poverty Enabling Group” then asked Synod to consider what represents poverty and what actions Synod could take to address some of the current issues. Ray Leonard one of three “Bridging the Gap” officers in the Diocese also talked about his role. The meeting ended after Synod had received an update on the forthcoming “Talking Jesus” event, due to start on 2 March.

The summer meeting and first of the new Triennium was held at St Columba’s. Having welcomed those members new to Synod the Area Dean commenced the formal part of the evening with the elections of the various office holders. Hylda Hopper agreed to stay on another year to assist and support Andrew Maxwell, the new Lay Chair. Janet Fletcher decided to stand down as Deanery Secretary and was replaced

by Reverend Sue Bruce. Hylda then gave a detailed review of the last Triennium, which was followed by the presentation of gifts to our outgoing Secretary and Archdeacon Nick, who was due to retire in July.

St Matthew's hosted the last Synod meeting of the year. The first presentation of the evening was given by Andy Harris, "Diocesan Leader in Youth Mission and Ministry", and he spoke about the recent youth audit that had been carried out across the Diocese. This had focussed specifically on the 11-18-year-old age group and had resulted in a report being published. He advised Synod of some of the forthcoming events planned in the Diocese. This was followed by a presentation by Nathan Bruce, "Diocesan Parish Giving Champion". Nathan explained what his role entailed and gave members an outline of the new "Parish Giving Scheme". An update on the Deanery Plan, a report of the current Parish Share position and updates from the Enabling Groups brought the meeting to a conclusion.

Michael Shepherd, Deanery Treasurer

The West Darlington Group of Parishes

The West Darlington Group includes the parishes of Blackwell, Coniscliffe, Darlington Holy Trinity, Darlington St. Cuthbert, and the plurality (several parishes with one stipendiary priest) of Hurworth, Dinsdale and Sockburn, and Middleton St George. The Group Council meets several times through the year when good practice and news is shared. It is an opportunity to look to work together with other churches, understanding that it is better on occasion to pool resources, rather than to be 'in competition'. The Group saw the arrival of a new minister to the post of Priest in Charge of St Cuthbert's and Holy Trinity this year – so we have a full complement of ministers in the group.

David Railton, Chairman

APPENDICES

**THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF
ALL SAINTS' AND SALUTATION BLACKWELL, DARLINGTON
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2017**

	Unrestricted Funds 2017	Restricted Funds 2017	Total Funds 2017	Unrestricted Funds 2016	Restricted Funds 2016	Total Funds 2016
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM:	£	£	£	£	£	£
Donations and legacies	110,391	-	110,391	111,744	9,420	121,164
Charitable activities	65,165	-	65,165	56,629	880	57,509
Investments	2	-	2	512	-	512
Other trading activities	33,206	-	33,206	34,211	-	34,211
	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
TOTAL INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS	208,764	-	208,764	203,096	10,300	213,396
	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====
EXPENDITURE ON:						
Raising funds	13,781	-	13,781	13,539	-	13,539
Charitable activities	177,536	293	177,829	187,695	9,510	197,205
	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	191,317	293	191,610	201,234	9,510	210,744
	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====
Net gains on investments	-	-	-	1,483	-	1,483
	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
NET INCOME / (EXPENDITURE)	17,447	(293)	17,154	3,345	790	4,135
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS:						
TOTAL FUNDS BROUGHT FORWARD	67,126	4,021	71,147	63,781	3,231	67,012
	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	£ 84,573	3,728	88,301	67,126	4,021	71,147
	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====

THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF

ALL SAINTS' AND SALUTATION BLACKWELL, DARLINGTON

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2017

	2017	2016
	£	£
FIXED ASSETS		
Tangible assets	1,488	1,980
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
CURRENT ASSETS		
Bank accounts	77,722	73,858
Cash in hand	3,323	3,212
Debtors	13,332	7,044
Stocks	108	198
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	94,483	84,310
LIABILITIES		
Creditors - amounts falling due within one year	(7,670)	(15,143)
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
NET CURRENT ASSETS	86,813	69,167
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES	88,301	71,147
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
NET ASSETS	£ 88,301	£ 71,147
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
PARISH FUNDS		
Unrestricted	84,573	67,128
Restricted	3,728	4,021
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
TOTAL FUNDS	£ 88,301	£ 71,147
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

**THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF
ALL SAINTS' AND SALUTATION BLACKWELL, DARLINGTON**

INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM:

Income from donations and legacies

	Unrestricted Funds 2017	Restricted Funds 2017	Total Funds 2017	Unrestricted Funds 2016	Restricted Funds 2016	Total Funds 2016
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Voluntary Income						
Planned giving:-						
Envelopes, covenants and Gift Aid	73,553	-	73,553	77,935	7,536	85,471
Tax reclaim	20,574	-	20,574	20,010	1,884	21,894
Collections (loose plate)	12,123	-	12,123	8,247	-	8,247
Contributions towards Youth and Children's Minister	-	-	-	5,000	-	5,000
Special Charity collections	558	-	558	552	-	552
Donations and Legacies	3,583	-	3,583	-	-	-
	<u>£ 110,391</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>110,391</u>	<u>£ 111,744</u>	<u>9,420</u>	<u>121,164</u>

Income from charitable activities

Church activities						
Choir Fundraising	-	-	-	-	880	880
Occasional offices	9,806	-	9,806	7,835	-	7,835
All Saints Blackwell Pre-School	55,359	-	55,359	48,794	-	48,794
	<u>£ 65,165</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>65,165</u>	<u>£ 56,629</u>	<u>880</u>	<u>57,509</u>

Income from Investments

Interest receivable	£ 2	-	2	£ 512	-	512
	<u>£ 2</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>£ 512</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>512</u>

Other trading activities

Activities for generating funds						
Fundraising	29,434	-	29,434	28,207	-	28,207
Salutation Hall lettings	2,703	-	2,703	5,495	-	5,495
Sundry Income	1,069	-	1,069	509	-	509
	<u>£ 33,206</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>33,206</u>	<u>£ 34,211</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>34,211</u>

Total Income and Endowments	<u>£ 208,764</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>208,764</u>	<u>£ 203,096</u>	<u>10,300</u>	<u>213,396</u>
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**THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF
ALL SAINTS' AND SALUTATION BLACKWELL, DARLINGTON**

EXPENDITURE

Raising funds	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2017	Total 2016
	£	£	£	£
Fundraising	13,781	-	13,781	13,539
	=====	=====	=====	=====
Charitable activities				
Church activities and expenses				
Charitable and Mission giving	7,105	-	7,105	15,850
Parish share	90,000	-	90,000	94,500
Clergy expenses	1,077	-	1,077	1,310
Church running expenses	5,898	-	5,898	3,780
Cost of services	1,824	-	1,824	1,709
Church maintenance	884	-	884	60
Insurance	553	-	553	554
Salutation Hall	1,564	-	1,564	2,557
Salaries, wages and honoraria	13,041	-	13,041	13,006
Sundry costs	994	293	1,287	757
Administration costs	2,355	-	2,355	2,290
Vestry refurbishment	-	-	-	9,420
All Saints Blackwell Pre-School	50,499	-	50,499	49,670
Depreciation	492	-	492	492
Independent Examination	1,250	-	1,250	1,250
	-----	-----	-----	-----
	£ 177,536	293	177,829	197,205
	=====	=====	=====	=====
Total Expenditure	£ 191,317	293	191,610	210,744
	=====	=====	=====	=====

**THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF
ALL SAINTS' AND SALUTATION BLACKWELL, DARLINGTON**

					2017	2016
FUNDRAISING	Income	Expenses	Total	Donations Paid Out	Surplus/ (Deficit)	Surplus/ (Deficit)
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Garden Party	3,928	(390)	3,538	-	3,538	3,036
Christmas Fair	4,796	(434)	4,362	-	4,362	4,056
SSAFA Concert	181	-	181	-	181	222
Strawberry and Wine	1,000	-	1,000	-	1,000	1,020
Parish Lunch Club	1,592	(1,117)	475	160	315	421
Magazine	1,220	(1,567)	(347)	-	(347)	346
Ladies Fellowship (excluding bank interest)	2,212	(1,945)	267	200	67	328
Tea and Coffee	1,113	(126)	987	-	987	1,007
Flower Fund	1,000	(897)	103	-	103	(53)
Parent and Toddler Group	1,259	(1,297)	(38)	-	(38)	(438)
Social Committee	4,649	(2,337)	2,312	-	2,312	1,343
Badminton	248	(250)	(2)	-	(2)	2
Men's Group	1,216	(1,206)	10	-	10	(4)
Youth Fellowship	-	-	-	-	-	(17)
Traidcraft	-	-	-	-	-	(106)
100 Club	2,192	(1,095)	1,097	-	1,097	1,133
Bell Ringers	1,562	-	1,562	1,570	(8)	(16)
Circle Dancing	966	(820)	146	200	(54)	66
Ladies Night	300	(300)	-	-	-	20
	<u>£ 29,434</u>	<u>(13,781)</u>	<u>15,653</u>	<u>2,130</u>	<u>13,523</u>	<u>12,366</u>

Summary

Income		29,434				28,207
Costs		(13,781)				(13,539)
		<u>£ 15,653</u>				<u>£ 14,668</u>

**THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF
ALL SAINTS' AND SALUTATION BLACKWELL, DARLINGTON**

	2017		2016	
	£	£	£	£
CHARITABLE GIVING				
PCC : St. Teresa's Hospice		720		242
Children's Society - Christingle		558		552
North East Air Ambulance		30		101
Alzheimers's Society		112		100
British Heart Foundation		714		100
Marie Curie		412		-
Breast Cancer Awareness		412		-
Ovarian Cancer Research		360		-
MacMillan Nurses		393		-
Mind		283		-
CDDFT Charity Scanner Appeal		250		-
Anthony Nolan Trust		243		-
Friends of Darlington Memorial Hospital		210		-
Bright Red		150		-
Meningitis Now		148		-
Youth Worker		-		11,164
Darlington Assistance for Refugees		-		75
Water Aid		-		75
Together We Can		-		150
Dementia UK		-		188
Save the Children		-		101
Myeloma UK		-		450
Parkinsons UK		-		185
Salvation Army		-		65
		<u>4,975</u>		<u>13,548</u>
Groups:				
Parish Lunch Club : Christian Aid	160		130	
Ladies Fellowship: USPG	100		50	
St Teresa's Hospice	100		-	
Darlington District Talking Newspaper	-		50	
Bell Ringers : Alzheimer's Society	1,570		-	
Darlington District Talking Newspaper	-		1,620	
Circle Dancing: MRI Scanner	200		-	
St. Teresa's Hospice	-		200	
Parent and Toddler Group: World Vision	-		252	
		<u>2,130</u>		<u>2,302</u>
		<u>£ 7,105</u>		<u>£ 15,850</u>
		=====		=====