

# THE PARISH OF ALL SAINTS' AND SALUTATION, BLACKWELL



THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE  
PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL,  
CHURCH GROUPS, & RELATED ORGANISATIONS  
FOR THE CHURCH YEAR 2015-2016

## The Parish of All Saints and Salutation Blackwell

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## **Introduction**

### **1. General Reports**

This is the eighteenth 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 I am especially grateful to Dee Wastnedge, who was instrumental in producing this Annual Report.

**David Railton, Vicar**

**April 2016**

### **Vicar's Report**

This is my first contribution to the Annual Report as Vicar of this parish – although rather unusually, it will be my second Annual Meeting! At the interview for the post, back in November 2014, the candidates were asked to prepare a talk on what their priorities would be if given the post. I remember quoting the title of a book a friend had given me called 'Hit the ground kneeling'. This book, written by Stephen Cotterell, Bishop of Chelmsford, encourages people new in role, whatever that role is, to be active listeners – not to come in to a post tilting at windmills and ripping up trees, but listening and discerning for a time (most helpfully a year) before acting. This allows you to see every season, to see where God is already at work, to save you from spoiling the good things while trying to address the less good. This is what I have tried to do, and perhaps you might judge how successful I've been!

That being said, it has been a very busy and full year, with much to celebrate, much to give thanks for, with many possibilities and challenges ahead.

### **Gratitude**

At the end of this first year I wish, in my report to the Annual Parochial Church Meeting, to express my gratitude to the parish for the warm welcome we received as a family, and for the huge amount of support we have received through the last 12 months. It wasn't a small change for us moving from Derbyshire up to the North East, but apart from the break-in at the Vicarage a few weeks after we arrived, everyone has been very kind and welcoming, and it is very much appreciated.

## **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 Revds. Brian Holmes and Robin Fletcher were stalwarts through the vacancy, and their support for the parish, and me personally has been unwavering. The Revd Deborah Robinson, the Associate Minister for Coniscliffe is an important member of the team, and I have enjoyed working with Deborah over the past months, and look forward to watching her ministry flourish. In December last year, we welcomed the Revd Sarah Jay as Associate Minister at All Saints, and I look forward to working with Sarah too. 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.

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. Again, the Readers did much to keep the worship in the parish on track during the vacancy, and have been a great source of support this last year. Each Reader, though, makes a distinctive and invaluable contribution to Church life, in addition to juggling many demands in their lives. I was licensed as a Reader before being ordained, so I appreciate what a wonderful job they each do.

Another important member of the Ministry Group is Katie Hollis, our Youth and Children’s Minister. Katie spends part of her time working at Hummersknott School and Coniscliffe School, and the rest looking after our Junior Church, Youth Fellowship and Toddler Group. 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 charring and leading an important PCC committee: Andrew Watson, Community Outreach Committee; Helen Newell, Finance Committee; Andy Hopkins, 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.

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 people I would like to thank in this section are Alison Hardy, the PCC Secretary, and Dee Wastnedge, who has stood in as secretary on the occasions that Alison couldn't make it because of studying commitments. The PCC simply cannot function without efficient and able secretarial support.

### **The Parish Secretary**

Nicky Waller, the Parish Secretary, makes a huge – often unseen – contribution to parish life. 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 as I get to grips with all that goes on in the parish.

### **Caretaker**

I am grateful to our caretaker, Gary Fowler, for his work in looking after the locking up and cleaning of the hall during the year, and to the people who stand in for Gary when he is off. It is also appropriate at his point, to thank all those who look after the gardens and 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.

### **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 and refreshed as the Parish Profile was written. It remains the vision of the church

### **Growing the Church**

Work has also continued through all of the committees to promote church growth. Communications continue to be reviewed and the website refined. A weekly email is sent to those requesting it with the Weekly Herald (pew sheet) attached. During 2015 this was updated to an electronic version including more detail and extra articles of interest each week – and currently over 200 people receive this eNewsletter each week.

Following a decline in numbers attending Sunday services last year (2014), this year saw some stabilising of attendance and modest growth as the year progressed. Consideration needs to be given as to how this growth can be sustained and built upon, and in particular how the decline numbers of young people can be reversed. Despite that decline, there are still good number of youngsters involved in the church as members of the choir, as altar servers, and as part of the Sunday School, and they must be encouraged and affirmed. Consideration should also be given to developing the ministry around occasional offices – which includes baptisms, weddings and funerals – all of which take place in the church throughout the year. We can be grateful to our Musical Director and Organist Jeremey Maritz, and the choir, for their ministry of music throughout the year. This too may serve as a possible focus for growth in years ahead.

### **Growing as Disciples**

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. The previous initiatives relating to prayer have helped to

encourage personal spiritual growth and faithfulness, as have the well-attended Lent Groups and other home discussion and prayer groups.

Regular church attendance by all electoral roll members continues to be a great challenge for All Saints' and indeed all churches. Many people lead busy and demanding lives, of course, and the church needs to provide opportunities for discipleship development in ways that are not impossible even for the busiest of souls to access. But 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 rise to the challenge of 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.

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. The Shared Ministry Development Group continues 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. A brief Stewardship campaign was held in September which resulted in an increase in the Planned Giving, for which the church is grateful, but more will need to be done in the months ahead. We are richly blessed by the work of the Treasurers of both the Millennium Trust and PCC.

### **Growing in Service**

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 are grateful to the caretaker, Gary Fowler 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 was 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. Our Parish Share contribution of £94,000 also helped to provide ministry for communities in the Diocese of Durham where this would otherwise be impossible to fund. 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.

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. The existence of the Traidcraft Stall indicates a desire to promote trade justice. 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. As the Group begins to work towards achieving the status of Eco-Congregation for the church, a very generous gift from a parishioner enabled solar-pv panels to be fitted to the roof of the millennium Centre, which will reduce the cost of electricity used, and will make the hall far more environmentally friendly. The ministry at All Saints' Church was enhanced in the latter part of the year as Revd. Sarah Jay joined the parish as an Associate Minister. The team of Readers, retired ministers, Youth Minister, and now Sarah, mean that we are well resourced, and blessed by the variety and talent of those ministering here.

### **Into the future**

So, this brief review of how we have made advances in the areas of our Parish Vision can 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, let us now 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, let us strive to grow God's kingdom in this place.

*David Railton*

**Vicar**

### **Secretaries Report**

The PCC have met 6 times this year under the chairmanship of our new vicar. There has been an attendance of 70%. Whilst I have busy training to teach Dee Wastnedge and Helen Newell have prepared and distributed minutes from these meetings. I am very grateful for their kindness and efficiency. Thank you to all the contributors for submitting reports in a timely fashion which has enabled the annual report to be put together by Mrs Wastnedge. The report can be downloaded from the website using the following link <http://www.allsaintschurch-blackwell.org.uk/pewsheet.php>

**Alison Hardy, PCC Secretary**



## **Electoral Roll Report**

The number of people on the Electoral Roll has risen to 301 although the actual number is probably less than this as people often leave the area without informing us. Only 1 person has asked to be put on the Roll. About 55% of those on the Roll reside in within the parish boundary with over 80% being in the DL3 postal area.

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

**David V Smith**  
**Electoral Roll Officer**

## **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.

**David Railton**  
**Nicky Waller – Parish Secretary**

## **2.0 Worship and Faith Development Report**

### **Confirmation Candidates**

The 2015 Darlington Deanery Confirmation Service took place at St Mark's Church on 3<sup>rd</sup> 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: Grace Rayner, Rachael Walker, Emily Gill, Michael Skilbeck, Niamh MacMurray, James Beck, and Charlotte Wood. They all received their first communion the following Sunday at All Saints'. We continue to pray for their grow in faith.

David Railton

### **Shared Ministry**

The Shared Ministry Development Group 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.

While the group didn't meet regularly during the vacancy, it met more four times last year and will continue to develop in its role in to the future.

David Railton: Chair of the Shared Ministry Development Group

### **Annual Report of the Children's and Youth Minister**

The position of Children's and Youth Minister has a number of different roles which are detailed within this report. This has also expanded once again this year to provide support at High Coniscliffe CE Primary School.

#### **Junior Church**

Junior Church continues to meet each Sunday during term time. Numbers have dropped slightly, and we are working on ways to improve this. Many thanks go out to our most valuable team of volunteer leaders who continue to provide enjoyable sessions to children and young people accessing Junior Church.

We invited children from Abbey Federation of Schools once again to join us for this year's nativity. Grateful thanks to Emma de la Motte and all those who helped for their support with the nativity.

#### **Messy Church**

We hold a monthly Messy Church on Sunday mornings, which usually takes place during the 10:30 service on the first Sunday of the month. This continues to be popular with young families who attend and have again seen new families accessing Messy Church this year. In the coming months we are looking to hold a family friendly service on an afternoon to encourage more young families to attend church.

### **Youth Fellowship**

Youth Fellowship provides young people of confirmation age and above opportunity to meet. Following discussions, it was agreed to be reduced this year from weekly to monthly sessions as a result of a significant drop in numbers. We continue to meet monthly either in the Millennium Hall or for off site events. Youth Fellowship are also invited to join in deanery events organised by DACYM (Darlington Area Churches Youth Ministry) which include outdoor activities such as kayaking, canoeing and mountain walking alongside a short act of worship. We are also establishing links with the youth of Holy Trinity and are looking forward to meeting with them for sessions and events.

### **Traidcraft**

The Traidcraft stall offers Fairtrade goods on a Sunday morning after most 10:30 services. Junior Church members have supported the running of the stall which is also available at events including the Garden Party and the Christmas Fayre. I also run a Traidcraft stall once per term with the students at Hummersknott Academy as part of their fairtrade policy. The stalls at Hummersknott continue to be very successful.

### **Toddler Groups**

The toddler groups allow parents and carers to bring their children to play and meet other young families. Tuesday afternoon sessions are directed towards children aged 2-4 years old; and Friday morning sessions consist mainly of babies and toddlers aged up to about two and a half. Approximately 8 children attend Tuesday group and Friday group is based on a membership of currently around 20 babies and toddlers. Due to our members' support we are able to cover our costs (hall fees, refreshments, crafts, replacement of toys and special events) and we also sponsor a child, Lwiza, through the World Vision programme. Parents and carers also help to run our toy stall at the Garden Party and bran tub at the Christmas Fayre. Thanks from myself and parents and carers go out to our wonderful volunteers who continue to help with refreshments. Anne Willson's scone week proves to be the highlight of the toddler group calendar! Thanks also go out to Dawn, who provides fun crafts for children on Tuesdays.

### **Play and Praise**

Once a month the Friday toddler group join the Pre-School children for the Play and Praise service held in church. Play and Praise sessions include bible stories, activities and songs for young children. David and I then deliver a similar session at High Coniscliffe Pre-School later in the morning.

### **Open the Book**

Our Open the Book team consists of volunteer storytellers from Blackwell and Coniscliffe parishes. Open the Book is a three-year rolling programme of themed and dramatised Bible storytelling to primary schools. We present these stories to Abbey Federation of Schools and High Coniscliffe CE Primary School as part of their assemblies and collective worship. We have received lots of praise from school staff and pupils for our Open the Book storytelling. Thank you to the team for their continued hard work. I am now also able to offer training and support to other parishes wanting to establish Open the Book teams in the area.

### **Hummersknott Academy**

I continue to work within the Achievement Centre at Hummersknott Academy through small group interventions, and the RE department by assisting with off site visits. I run two lunchtime clubs with Martin

and Mel Stand of DACYM (Darlington Area Churches Youth Ministry) and also support the Harvest Festival and Christmas, Easter and Fairtrade assemblies. I'm also a member of the Governing Body's Community Committee.

### **High Coniscliffe CE Primary School**

From September 2015, I began working in High Coniscliffe CE Primary School to provide pastoral and worship support. I plan and deliver weekly collective worship (assemblies) based on the weekly lectionary readings. I organise the termly school church services and also work with nurture groups. Last term I arranged a prayer spaces event, providing each classroom with a different creative prayer activity each day. St Mary's Cockerton CE Primary School and St. Aidan's Academy also ran similar activities during the same week. Pupils from all three schools were joined by Bishop Mark at St. Aidan's for a celebratory Act of Worship on our prayer spaces. Due to the success of this week I'm looking to provide more permanent creative prayer activities in each classroom at High Coniscliffe.

### **Lesotho**

In October I was lucky enough to travel to Lesotho with a team from Durham Lesotho Link and Bishop Paul. My role was being part of the youth team, providing support and training to over 60 youth workers in various areas of Lesotho. Many thanks to all who helped fundraise for this. On my return I have raised awareness of the issues faced in Lesotho through my work in schools and by preaching at St. Edwin's.

Over the past year we have faced challenges with the quantity of children and young people accessing groups and services at church. We are working to improve this and the support I continue to receive from the Ministry Team, volunteers and the congregation is most valuable and gratefully received. I continue to thoroughly enjoy my role here at All Saints'.

**Katie Hollis**

**Children's and Youth Minister**

### **Worship Committee**

It has been another busy year for this Committee, but thankfully with the arrival of our new Vicar, Debby Gill was able to relinquish the role of Acting Chair, and return to the position of Secretary. The following were some of the items discussed during the four meetings which took place:

- After many years of dedicated service to this Committee and indeed to other roles at All Saints', Enid Smith tendered her resignation, and grateful thanks to Enid for all her work were noted.
- Parade services. Poor attendance over a period of time had caused some anxiety, especially with one in particular of the uniformed organisations. However, over the year, the Vicar has been visiting the groups and bridges are being re-built, and it is hoped that there will be an improvement in communications. It was finally agreed that there would be four and not three Parade services each year: Mothering Sunday, Harvest, Remembrance Sunday and one other.
- Servers. There had been a problem with non-attendance from a number of the young servers, and this was addressed. In addition, some adults had agreed to become servers, and this new combination was working well, after the training sessions.

- The Lent Course for 2016 was not to be a York Course, as these were not always “stretching” the groups, so one based on implementing the Parish Vision of encouraging discipleship was to be used instead. During the Sunday evening services, there was to be a series of talks, after evening prayer, on the subject of “Christian Heroes”. At the 10.30am services, the Lenten Prose was to be used.
- During Holy Week, there would be services of holy communion each day: Monday and Tuesday at 7.00pm, and Wednesday at 10.00 am, (with the first 12 Stations of the Cross); Maundy Thursday at 7.30pm followed by the Vigil; Good Friday (using the Reserved Sacrament), and a new (to All Saints’) service on Holy Saturday evening, with the First Eucharist of Easter, and the renewal of baptismal vows. There would also be Compline after the Passover Meal on the Wednesday evening.
- Back to Church Sunday was held on 20<sup>th</sup> September, but was not to be a single event, but part of a “Season of Invitation”, with additional events to which invitations to friends can be offered, such as to Harvest, Remembrance Sunday, Advent, and Christmas services. People are more likely to come back to church if they are invited more than once.
- Links with Elm Ridge have been appreciated, and will hopefully continue to grow. In particular, the Elm Ridge Choir members came to join with All Saints’ Choir for the Advent Service of Light, and there were joint services during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.
- New microphones have been organised by Jeremy Maritz, and they are a vast improvement on the old ones; but there are still a few glitches in the sound system to be ironed out, including the occasional “booming”. The Loop system is working well, but a resolution to the problem of the “black hole” in the sanctuary, where output from the mics cannot be heard properly, is still under review.
- The recommendation of the PCC to the Worship Committee: **“During 2015 – 2016 the PCC particularly asks this committee to monitor and develop the standard of the Liturgy and to look at ‘one-off’ and occasional services. This committee should also look at how we might involve children and young people in services.”** There is to be open discussion in the committee, with a view to working out strategies to enable this to happen.
- Our link with the Hamburg churches. Pastorin Gabriele Voigt came to join us for our Remembrance Sunday Parade service, as she was visiting for a conference on baptism in Durham.
- On Armistice Day our usual 10.00am communion service began at 10.45am so that the formal act of remembrance could link up with the national observation of the two-minutes’ silence.
- There was a memorial service held in memory of Claudia Lawrence at All Saints’, in recognition of her mother’s links with the church.
- The monthly service at The Gardens Care Home was discussed, and this was to be considered further at the Ministry Group, as regards using a slightly simplified liturgy, and the Vicar was to discuss with Rev. Dr Andrew Stobart the work that Elm Ridge does there too.
- Confirmation classes will be held as usual in 2016, but with the young people who were confirmed last year being invited back to join the new candidates for further teaching and nurture.
- Youth Fellowship is to have more of a structured input, half social and half faith-based, so as to make it more meaningful.

- Information was given regarding Bishop Paul's Prayer Walk around the Deanery at Ascensiontide. There is a very detailed itinerary, and all are welcome to join the walk at any point. There will be services at Sadberge and finally at All Saints' when the walk is concluded.

**Debby Gill**  
**Secretary**

### **Parish Readers**

With the arrival of our new Vicar, there have been some welcome changes – but the year has still been a busy one, as we have begun to work together. With the arrival also, later in the year, of the Rev. Sarah Jay, we look forward to exciting times ahead! Although we at All Saints' and Coniscliffe are fortunate enough to have seen new arrivals, there will be clergy retirements from St Herbert's, Middleton St George and All Saints' Hurworth in April 2016, which will mean that service cover will be needed in those churches. So if you don't see us, or our clergy "at home", it doesn't mean we are taking a Sunday off; we may be working elsewhere.

All of the Readers have been involved in the various aspects of parish work and ministry, including leading worship, preaching, education/Lent groups, outreach and pastoral care. Susan still continues to work as Pastoral Assistant to the Vicar; Kevin still organises the Men's Group; Debby is Secretary to the Worship Committee and also prepares some of the alternative evening services; Keith and Sarah (Cliff), whilst fulfilling very demanding day jobs (as does Kevin), preach and take services both at All Saints' and elsewhere. As I have written each year, the Readers' life is never dull, and if anyone reading this feels that they would like to explore this ministry, please get in touch with the Vicar, so that you can explore your calling. You may think that there are enough of us to do the work that needs to be done, but "the fields are white for harvest, and the labourers are few". We want to see God's Kingdom grow here, and across the Deanery.

It has to be said, also, that without the faithful prayers of the congregation, and support from David and the rest of our clergy, we would not be able to do the things that we do. It is a privilege and a joy. Thank you.

**Debby Gill, Susan Leatherbarrow, Kevin Winkworth, Keith Whiston, Sarah Cliff**

### **Verger's Report**

Well it's that time of the year again, doesn't time fly when you are enjoying yourself; well that's the way the Vergers' think as they go about their work, preparing the Church for the numerous and varied services which take place at All Saints' Church. There are a team of Verger's who work tirelessly to make these services run smoothly, and efficiently. Therefore, my sincere thanks go to the following – Andrew Watson, Alan Waller, Phil Elliott-Lyall and Bryan and Anne Tyreman, for carrying out their duties in a superb and responsible manner. My thanks go to the Vergers who carry out their duties at the 8.30am and the 6.30pm Sunday services. Finally, may I take this opportunity to thank Gillian Bower who does a great deal of unseen work whilst preparing the Church for funerals, weddings and baptisms, also looking after all of the linen with great diligence and care. Once again a great big thank you to each and every one of you and may we continue to work in harmony as a team for many years to come. God bless you all.

**Mike Fryer**  
**Head Verger**

## **Safeguarding Report**

Over the last 12 months the Diocese has made available to people who work constantly with young people Safeguarding training in both levels 1 & 2 – otherwise known as SG1 & SG2, and I am pleased to report that a great number of people from All Saints' Church, who qualified to attend the training on both levels, did so. I am grateful to them for doing this, as it not only helps the individuals who took part, but also reflects fully the Church's view on Safeguarding, and that we as individuals do not take our role or responsibilities lightly, when it comes to the well-being of children who we come into contact with at Church. As a result of this, and of the constant vigilance which is carried out, there have been no issues which have occurred, and therefore I am pleased to report that no issues have been reported.

**Mike Fryer**

**Safeguarding Officer**

## **Wardens Report**

Half a decade ago when I was asked to become firstly a pro-warden and in due course a warden I was delightfully ignorant that during my term there would be an interregnum although I was aware of the responsibilities of a warden.

A churchwarden is appointed by the Bishop and responsible, with the vicar obviously, for the day to day functioning of the parish. There are various legal responsibilities which can result in bizarre tasks, such as the inspection and listing of all moveable items within the church building.

The responsibility was brought to the fore during the interregnum. Due to the hard work of Pat Howarth and the fact as a parish we have countless people who freely volunteer their time the interregnum passed smoothly.

During my term I have been Chair of the finance committee this has been an easy task due to the calibre of the other committee members and the tight rein Peter Davison has on the finances. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the various members of the committee over the last five years for their skills, thoughts and advice during the past five years. Particularly I would like to thank Peter for making my life as Chair easy.

As a parish we are blessed to have such a large number of people who give their time and talents freely which enables so many aspects of parish life to function smoothly. Many people routinely and quietly complete tasks which are unseen by the majority of the parish. As a warden you become far more aware of these people and tasks, I am probably still not aware of all however. I am very thankful to these people who, again, make the life of a warden easier.

I am aware however that as a parish we should not become complacent. We need to continue to grow in an ever challenging world, both financially and spiritually. This may require new ways of practice and thinking, both of which could seem daunting.

A year ago David and Sarah joined us and I hope that have both felt loved by the parish. I know that David is conscious of the challenges that face us and the many blessings within the parish. Furthermore, I know that the wardens will continue to support him in his ministry amongst us.

**Helen Newall, Church Warden**

### **Readers and Sidespeople**

With a new rota just starting and several newcomers to fill gaps, there is now a total of around 68 parishioners regularly involved with the rota. Some just readers or sidesmen, some both. The informal system of substitution if dates are inconvenient works well, but sometimes Nicky Waller does not know of changes in time to amend the pew sheet.

**Mike Frankton**

### **All Saints Music Group**

The Music Group has continued to enjoy singing, playing and leading worship together. We have played well known contemporary songs and traditional hymns. We have also learned some new hymns during the year. A small, but regular group attend the Evening Services. The informal nature of the services provides us with the opportunity to worship God and to have fellowship with each other.

**Dorothy Puchala**

### **Flower Arrangers**

Well, another year has flown by! A year which has at times been difficult for my team of flower arrangers, there has only been four of us to arrange flowers all year. We have managed to work around illness, holidays and family commitments sometimes arranging on our own, but we have always been able to get flower arrangements into church. Thank you Joyce, Debbie and Alison for all your help, hard work and the wonderful flower arrangements that they done over the year. Thank you ladies!

I am pleased to announce that Sue Alexander, Deborah Field and Sarah Railton have joined our flower rota, although Sarah can only manage the festivals at the moment, but the pressure is off.

I would like to thank all Parishioners for their support over the year. For the donations we have had towards the cost of flowers, the individual donations and money left in the collection basket and the wonderful support you gave us at our coffee morning. We raised £313. 23p thank you every one. Also your kind words of appreciation about the arrangements we have done. It gives us pleasure to know that we give pleasure to so many of you. Thank you

The past year has again been a successful flower year with some beautiful flower arrangements in church and perfume from them.

**Lona Martin**



### **3. Stewardship: Finances & Grounds Reports**

#### **PCC Treasurers Report**

It is disappointing to report that 2015 was not a very successful year for the Church's finances. 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 deficit for the year, with expenditure exceeding income by £13,952. This compares to the surplus of £5,611 achieved in 2014, a negative turnaround of £19,563.

Unrestricted income has fallen from £226,720 in 2014 to £206,477 in 2015, a drop of £20,243. The majority of this was caused by a reduction in Planned Giving in 2015 which, including the amounts we are able to reclaim through gift aid, amounted to a shortfall of £15,109 in overall Planned Giving.

Unrestricted costs decreased slightly in the year from £221,681 in 2014 to £220,642 in 2015. Included in these costs is our Parish Share payment to the Diocese. We pledged to pay £94,000 in 2015 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 £14,578 (2014: £14,202). This includes £3,079 from the Garden Party, £3,567 from the Christmas Fair and £1,000 from the Strawberry & Wine evening.

We have continued with our Charitable Mission and Giving throughout the year and I am pleased to report that we gave over £23,300 to good causes during 2015.

Details of both of these items are again included in the extracts.

We have many groups within our Church which as well as social activities also provide funds for the Church. These include Tea and Coffee (£876); Social Committee (£2,008); 100 Club (£1,087) and Bell Ringers who raised £2,336 during the year enabling them to make a donation of £2,000 to the Alzheimer's Society. In addition, our Pre-School had another successful year producing a surplus of £3,895 on top of a surplus of £9,358 in 2014, a tremendous achievement by all those associated with the Pre-School.

The deficit for the year has resulted in our Total Net Assets at the end of the year decreasing to £67,012 (2014: £80,964). We have an Unrestricted Fund of £63,781 and Restricted Funds of £3,231.

I repeatedly reported during 2015 that the deficit we were expecting would severely deplete our cash resources and this turned out to be the case. Although our Balance Sheet indicates that we ended the year with a bank balance of £65,421 it must be noted that 1) a large amount of this belongs to the Pre-School as a result of grants received in advance for 2016, 2) our creditors significantly exceeded debtors and 3) we are holding £3,231 in the Restricted Funds. Consequently, our true bank balance at the year-end was only

approximately £10,000 compared with £28,000 at the end of 2014. Another deficit in 2016 will give us severe cash flow problems.

Therefore, we must either increase income or reduce expenditure or, if possible both, to restrict the outflow of our cash resources.

We have pledged £94,500 to the Diocese for our 2016 Parish Share contribution. This is a substantial amount of money but it is vital for the Diocese to enable it to continue to support all of its churches. The Diocese has actually requested parishes to consider increasing their share payments in 2016 by 5% in order for it to continue to move forward in its present setup, which would mean us increasing our payment to £98,700, somewhat more than we have pledged!

I would welcome any suggestions on how we can increase income and/or reduce expenditure.

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

**Peter Davison**  
**Treasurer**

**Abridged Accounts – please see following 6 pages Nos: 17, 18, 19, 20, 21 and 22**

**THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF  
ALL SAINTS' AND SALUTATION BLACKWELL, DARLINGTON  
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2015**

	Unrestricted Funds 2015	Restricted Funds 2015	Total Funds 2015	Unrestricted Funds 2014	Restricted Funds 2014	Total Funds 2014
	£	£	£	£	£	£
<b>INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM:</b>						
Donations and legacies	105,962	-	105,962	122,491	7,944	130,435
Charitable activities	8,124	175	8,299	9,263	-	9,263
Investments	588	-	588	569	-	569
Other trading activities	91,803	-	91,803	94,397	-	94,397
	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
<b>TOTAL INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS</b>	<b>206,477</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>206,652</b>	<b>226,720</b>	<b>7,944</b>	<b>234,664</b>
	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====
<b>EXPENDITURE ON:</b>						
Raising funds	66,205	145	66,350	63,120	111	63,231
Charitable activities	154,437	-	154,437	158,561	7,944	166,505
	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>220,642</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>220,787</b>	<b>221,681</b>	<b>8,055</b>	<b>229,736</b>
	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====
<b>NET (EXPENDITURE) / INCOME BEFORE OTHER RECOGNISED GAINS AND LOSSES</b>	<b>(14,165)</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>(14,135)</b>	<b>5,039</b>	<b>(111)</b>	<b>4,928</b>
Gains on investment assets on revaluation	183	-	183	683	-	683
	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
<b>NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS</b>	<b>(13,982)</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>(13,952)</b>	<b>5,722</b>	<b>(111)</b>	<b>5,611</b>
<b>RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS:</b>						
<b>TOTAL FUNDS BROUGHT FORWARD</b>	<b>77,763</b>	<b>3,201</b>	<b>80,964</b>	<b>72,041</b>	<b>3,312</b>	<b>75,353</b>
	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
<b>TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD</b>	<b>£ 63,781</b>	<b>3,231</b>	<b>67,012</b>	<b>77,763</b>	<b>3,201</b>	<b>80,964</b>
	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====

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

**BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2015**

	2015	2014
	£	£
<b>FIXED ASSETS</b>		
Tangible assets	2,472	1,331
Investments	13,683	13,500
	<u>16,155</u>	<u>14,831</u>
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Bank accounts	65,421	68,111
Cash in hand	2,792	2,779
Debtors	7,065	15,051
Stocks	375	1,741
	<u>75,653</u>	<u>87,682</u>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
Creditors - amounts falling due within one year	(24,796)	(21,549)
	<u>50,857</u>	<u>66,133</u>
<b>NET CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
	<u>67,012</u>	<u>80,964</u>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		
	<u>67,012</u>	<u>80,964</u>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	£ 67,012	£ 80,964
	=====	=====
<b>PARISH FUNDS</b>		
Unrestricted	63,781	77,763
Restricted	3,231	3,201
	<u>67,012</u>	<u>80,964</u>
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>	£ 67,012	£ 80,964
	=====	=====

**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	Restricted Funds	Total 2015	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2014
	£	£	£	£	£	£
<b>Voluntary income</b>						
Planned giving:-						
Envelopes, covenants and Gift Aid	68,444	-	68,444	79,808	5,000	84,808
Tax reclaim	17,450	-	17,450	21,195	1,250	22,445
Collections (loose plate)	9,901	-	9,901	12,260	-	12,260
Donations	-	-	-	715	-	715
Contributions towards Youth and Children's Minister	9,000	-	9,000	8,000	-	8,000
Special Charity collections	1,167	-	1,167	513	1,694	2,207
	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
	£ 105,962	-	105,962	£ 122,491	7,944	130,435
	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====

**Income from charitable activities**

**Church activities**

Choir Fundraising	-	175	175	-	-	-
Occasional offices	8,124	-	8,124	9,263	-	9,263
	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
	£ 8,124	175	8,299	£ 9,263	-	9,263
	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====

**Income from investments**

Interest receivable	£ 588	-	588	£ 569	-	569
	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====

**Other trading activities**

**Activities for generating funds**

All Saints Blackwell Pre-School	54,668	-	54,668	55,584	-	55,584
Other Fundraising	30,010	-	30,010	31,086	-	31,086
Salutation Hall lettings	5,799	-	5,799	7,232	-	7,232
Sundry income	1,326	-	1,326	495	-	495
	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
	£ 91,803	-	91,803	£ 94,397	-	94,397
	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====

<b>Total Income and Endowments</b>	£ 206,477	175	206,652	£ 226,720	7,944	234,664
	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====

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

**EXPENDEITURE**

<b>Raising funds</b>	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2015	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2014
	£	£	£	£	£	£
All Saints Blackwell Pre-School	50,773	-	50,773	46,226	-	46,226
Fundraising	15,432	-	15,432	16,884	-	16,884
Pre-School equipment	-	-	-	10	111	121
Sundry expenditure	-	145	145			-
	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
	£ 66,205	145	66,350	£ 63,120	£ 111	63,231
	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====
 <b>Charitable activities</b>						
<b>Church activities and expenses</b>						
Charitable and Mission giving	23,359	-	23,359	25,053	-	25,053
Parish share	94,375	-	94,375	94,375	-	94,375
Clergy expenses	1,135	-	1,135	1,691	-	1,691
Church running expenses	8,963	-	8,963	10,014	-	10,014
Cost of services	1,926	-	1,926	1,925	-	1,925
Books	226	-	226	324	-	324
Church maintenance	54	-	54	149	-	149
Insurance	751	-	751	721	-	721
Salutation Hall	3,152	-	3,152	4,566	-	4,566
Salaries, wages and honoraria	13,771	-	13,771	14,810	-	14,810
Sundry costs	2,405	-	2,405	1,282	-	1,282
Administration costs	2,818	-	2,818	2,318	-	2,318
Vestry refurbishment	-	-	-	-	7,944	7,944
Depreciation	452	-	452	333	-	333
Independent Examination	1,050	-	1,050	1,000	-	1,000
	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
	£ 154,437	-	154,437	£ 158,561	7,944	166,505
	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	£ 220,642	145	220,787	£ 221,681	8,055	229,736
	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====

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

FUNDRAISING					2015	2014
	Income	Expenses	Total	Donations Paid Out	Surplus/ (Deficit)	Surplus/ (Deficit)
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Garden Party	3,484	(405)	3,079	-	3,079	3,294
Christmas Fair	4,304	(737)	3,567	-	3,567	3,978
SSAFA Concert	-	-	-	-	-	123
Strawberry and Wine	1,000	-	1,000	-	1,000	-
Parish Luncheon Club	1,377	(1,272)	105	120	(15)	(131)
Magazine	1,332	(1,258)	74	-	74	59
Ladies Fellowship (excluding bank interest)	2,090	(1,780)	310	100	210	477
Tea and Coffee	1,052	(176)	876	-	876	908
Flower Fund	594	(1,101)	(507)	-	(507)	(526)
Parent and Toddler Group	1,757	(1,366)	391	252	139	(167)
Social Committee	3,933	(1,925)	2,008	-	2,008	1,571
Badminton	216	(210)	6	-	6	(5)
Men's Group	1,265	(1,261)	4	-	4	(2)
Youth Fellowship	5	(40)	(35)	-	(35)	47
Traidcraft	1,548	(1,538)	10	-	10	125
100 Club	2,182	(1,095)	1,087	-	1,087	1,155
Bell Ringers	2,336	-	2,336	2,000	336	252
Circle Dancing	1,102	(835)	267	250	17	(15)
Ladies Night	433	(433)	-	-	-	-
	£ 30,010	(15,432)	14,578	2,722	11,856	11,143
	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====

**Summary**

Income		30,010		31,086
Costs		(15,432)		(16,884)
		£ 14,578		£ 14,202
		=====		=====

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

	2015		2014	
	£	£	£	£
<b>CHARITABLE GIVING</b>				
PCC : Youth Worker		18,232		17,498
St. Teresa's Hospice		565		1,403
Children's Society - Christingle		460		513
Cancer Research		207		81
Darlington Memorial Coronary Care		176		-
North East Air Ambulance		169		-
Butterwick Children's Hospice		77		-
The Stroke Association		721		-
Churches Together in Darlington		30		-
The Andrew R.Riley Trust		-		783
Darlington Memorial ITU		-		333
The Campbell Village Trust		-		284
Zoe's Place Baby Hospice		-		245
The Royal Agricultural Benevolent Association		-		240
700 Club		-		210
British Heart Foundation		-		114
Macmillan Cancer Support		-		114
The Poppy Appeal		-		73
The MS Society		-		53
Salvation Army		-		50
		20,637		21,994
Groups:				
Parish Luncheon Group : Christian Aid	120		167	
Ladies Fellowship: US	50		50	
Parkinsons UK	50		-	
Samaritans	-		50	
Parent and Toddler Group: World Vision	252		252	
Bell Ringers: Alzheimers Society	2,000		-	
Parkinsons UK	-		2,180	
Circle Dancing: The Eve Appeal	250		-	
Marie Curie Cancer Care	-		160	
Darlington Mind	-		200	
		2,722		3,059
		£ 23,359		£ 25,053



## **Planned Giving**

You will note from the 2015 accounts to be presented by the Treasurer at the APCM that we show a drop in Planned Giving (before tax reclaim) of £11527.00 compared to the figure received in 2014.

The main reason for the drop in Planned Giving for the last year was the drop in Occasional Giving

2015: £6250

2014: £21770 (£5000 donation received for the Vicar's vestry works)

2013: £8085

2012: £13116

Since I took over as Planned Giving Treasurer in April 2014 we have lost 12 planned givers (4 died, 3 moved away, 1 in nursing care, 4 worshipping at a different church) giving a reduction of £9210 (before tax reclaim) in our income. In the period up to September 2015 we had an increase of £1140 (before tax reclaim) in giving, from 6 new members of the scheme. Following the September campaign, we have recorded an increase of £11248 (before tax reclaim), giving a net increase in Planned Giving of £3178 – approx. £4000 after tax reclaim. We have a projected budget deficit of £13000 for the coming year.

This represents an increase in giving by 34 people (31 existing and a further 3 new members) – approx. 25% of our Planned Givers.

Should you wish to join our Planned Giving Scheme – which may be either by standing order or by the Green Envelope Scheme (which is placed in the offertory when you attend Church) - please either complete one of the Giving in Grace leaflets available in the foyer and pop it in my pigeon hole, or speak to me after the 10.30 Service on Sundays.

Regular giving provides a security of income for the Church, and allows the PCC to plan realistically to continue and expand our mission.

The PCC, and myself, are extremely grateful for the generous support provided to the Church through the Planned Giving Scheme

Three final thoughts, however:

1. We cannot continue to rely on the generosity, and ability, of occasional givers to balance our budget
2. We have had a very encouraging and generous response to our request to our committed givers to prayerfully consider their ability to increase their giving – we cannot hope or expect to them to be able to draw deeper into the well in the future
3. Our choice therefore seems to be to re-examine our expenditure, or increase our resources. We have to grow the Church, and the generosity of those within it!!

**Ellis Leatherbarrow**  
**Planned Giving Treasurer**

## **Buildings and Grounds Committee**

This year has seen two major projects undertaken. The first in November was the installation of solar panels on the Millennium Centre roof and the second, more recently, the refurbishment of the Vicar's vestry.

During the year a number of other works have been completed including provision of new front doors to the Millennium Centre, redecorating of the Garden Rooms and laying of a new carpet, replacement of the light bulbs in the Millennium Hall ceiling and installation of improved lighting for the car park.

As always I am very grateful to the small band of volunteers for who give so much of their time to look after the day to day repairs and maintenance of the buildings and grounds. Never a week goes by when their services are not required.

In January the Cherry trees at All Saints' and the Beech trees at Salutation Hall were pruned by a qualified arborist. It had been hoped that the arborist would have been able to carry out selective pruning of the Silver Birch, at the front of the church, as there was concern over falling branches but this was not possible. The tree is covered by a Tree Preservation Order and so permission is required from Darlington Borough Council before any work can be carried out. Following inspection by the Council consent was refused.

Every Sunday when we come to worship we take it for granted that the church will be clean, neat and tidy but this is only possible because of the work 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 three members, so please give some consideration to joining the team.

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

**Sally Johnson**

**Pro Warden, Chair Buildings and Ground Committee**

## **Salutation Hall**

Salutation Hall continues to be a valuable asset for the parish not only being used by many groups within the church but also for external groups and parties.

We have a number of regular users of the hall including Brownies, Circle Dancing, Keep Fit, Karate and Pilates. In addition, the Hall has been used 25 times during the year for parties.

Rental income in the year was £5,799, which against costs of £3,152 produced a surplus of £2,647. The majority of the costs are those associated with heat and light, insurance and the provision of the caretaker.

2016 promises to be an interesting year as we are currently talking to potential users of the Hall who may wish to use it on a 5-day weekly basis.

Many thanks to Dee Wastnedge who continues with her very efficient running of the bookings system and the rest of the committee of Colin Price, David Curran and Sally Johnson who help in its running. Also thanks to Gary Fowler for his work as caretaker.

**Pam Davison**

**Salutation Hall Committee**

## **4. Church Communities Groups & Activities Reports.**

### **Social Committee**

This fourth year of leading the Social Committee allowed us to get back to a more normal running of the social year.

Overall, another successful social year, with our usual Garden party and Christmas Fayre, both of which were well supported by both helpers and attendees, slightly down on previous years but enjoyable for all none the less. The Garden Party reverted to form with rain. (I really must get the vicar to understand the importance!) We learnt a few things which can be carried forward for future event. Many thanks to all involved.

The year started with the welcome of David and Sarah, Sam and Alice. Quickly followed by a Quiz, the Garden Party and the Fourum Concert. The latter growing in popularity and we will be welcoming them back this year – albeit later in the year. A Coffee morning in September and we were back and running after the summer holidays.

The traditional Harvest Ceilidh was held in October with “Blind Panic” and I was very pleased to see them continue their excellent skills and good night was had by all.

After the Christmas Fayre, where we only just missed last year’s total, the year fizzled out, as the customary SSAFA concert, had to be cancelled at a late stage due to the musician military commitments elsewhere. I understand Gordon is confident to stage this year’s event.

The end of the term has seen another successful return of the “Castle Players”. They continue to go from strength to strength as they performed “Pride and Prejudice” to a sell-out crowd. I am looking at moving them into the Church next year to accommodate more people.

2016 has stumbled a little as a couple of events have had to be cancelled due to lack of helpers for some key events but I am sure we can get back to a normal service. We supported the Choir Quiz in March and we have Northern Voices attending in April.

I am always open to suggestion for events, so feel free to gently bend my ear at any time. As ever – many thanks go to the team that I represent but special thanks to Ian, Sandra, Anne, Dee, Clifford & Alison, who do all the real hard work.

**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.

**Andy Hopkins**

**Church Warden**

## **Annual Report of the 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 global warming, 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 ensure justice for all God’s people.”*

We have met on 3 occasions during the last year. We continue to tend the All Saints' orchard, which produced a crop of apples which were shared with the congregation last autumn. We had a stall at the Summer Fayre, continued the 'No Car Day' on the first Sunday of every month and to submit articles for the Church magazine. Monitoring of Church and Hall energy usage has resulted in changes to the boiler controls to match better with times when the buildings are in use. We are in the process of looking at the lighting requirements of the Church and the Millennium Centre. Solar panels have been fitted.

We have just signed up as a member of Eco-Church, which is an ecumenical partnership helping Churches and individual Christians to care for creation as an integral part of their faith. We are in the process of completing a baseline survey, and will be involving the congregation in working towards the bronze award over the next few months.

We are looking for more members of the congregation to join the group, so if you would like to get involved 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**

Ladies Fellowship continues to thrive, providing an opportunity for meeting friends old and new. We began the year with a tour of China hosted by Sue Elliott-Lyall, heard from the Town Crier, went back 4,000 years to when IT first began (though it wasn't called IT back then), delved into childhood memories, explored Darlington's past and arranged flowers for Christmas. One unusual visitor captured the hearts of the members with his abilities to help his owner. This was Ned, a familiar sight locally, alongside Liz on her motorised scooter. Ned was trained by Dogs for the Disabled. On a lighter note, our Strawberry Evening in June was a great success and in July members enjoyed a day out in Whitby. The year ended with our traditional Advent Service in Church followed by a supper for members and guests from the choir and clergy.

Members manned stalls at both the Garden Party and Christmas Fair. Some of the unsold jewellery was sent to Dogs for the Disabled. Christmas presents were collected for the Women's Refuge. We were also able to give cash donations to both US and to Parkinson's UK.

Thanks are due to all the committee and also to the members who together made the year so successful. In addition, our thanks must go to Gary Fowler, the caretaker, who has been so helpful throughout the year in setting up and clearing away after our meetings in the Millennium Centre.

New members and visitors are always welcome. Details of our meetings can be found in the Parish Magazine and on the notice board in the foyer or by contacting the Chairman, Jane Elliott, on 01325 722199

### **Sandy Hood**

**Hon. Secretary**

**Ladies Fellowship**

### **Men's Group**

The Men's group is a very relaxed dimension to parish life. We have no organisational structure, no membership, no money, no officers and not much idea what we are doing most of the time. We come together once a year to plan a vague programme and ask individuals or small groups to organise each event. We meet monthly and advertise our events on the pew sheet.

In the last year we have been ten-pin bowling, been on a brewery trip to Northallerton (I think that was where we went?), played quoits and had a meal at the Blue Lagoon (I particularly enjoyed this as I don't get liver and onions at home). Our annual dinner was held at The Black Bull at Moulton when the Vicar gave an excellent talk on his formative years in South Africa. We are hoping to arrange a visit to the Flymo factory in April.

Our May event (24<sup>th</sup>) is a historical walking tour of Darlington town centre. Please join us if you can.

**Kevin Winkworth**

**Secretary**

### **Ladies Night**

This year, we re-established an old group called Ladies Night. 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 afternoon tea at the Kings Head which was well attended and hopefully enjoyed by all.

**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

We have continued with our Circle Dancing throughout 2015 with very little change. Our membership has dropped to 27 but we still average around 17 dancers each evening. Our dances are composed of very simple steps and we have learned a few new dances during the past year. 8.30pm – 9pm is our refreshment break and our opportunity to catch up on each other's' news. After paying our rent we were able to make a charitable donation to The Eve Appeal of £250. We are always pleased to welcome new dancers, so feel free to come along and see if this is something you could enjoy.

**Mary Henry**

## **Report of 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 the Alzheimer's Society, to support its work in Darlington and the surrounding area. We were welcomed at our usual venues of Morrison's North Road, Morrison's Morton Park, 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 who volunteered to help with this. In total, with the help of a donation from the church carol singers, £2000 was raised for our charity. A cheque was presented to Rebecca Scott, Fundraiser for the North-East, at the morning service on Sunday January 10th. 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.

As our group of ringers has dwindled a little over the past few years, we are **urgently** looking to recruit new members to the group. Whether you have no experience at all, or if you have rung hand bells in the past, we would love to hear from you, and welcome you into the 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 a small number of 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!

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, 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) and most recently for Ellis Leatherbarrow's appeal for Syrian refugees arriving in Greece; very small items of clothing for premature babies; hats for people recovering from the effects of chemotherapy, and jumpers and hats for 'Fish and Chip' babies in Africa.

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**

Thank you to all who turn up with milk and biscuits to serve the refreshments after the 10:30 Sunday service. For 12 Sundays, as the volunteering part of his Duke of Edinburgh's Award, Aaron Skilbeck is being a great help carrying trays, washing up and helping generally. He will be much missed when he finishes. Thanks go to Pat Williams for keeping us well stocked up with tea and coffee. All profits go to Church funds.

**Wendy Day**

### **Scrabble Club**

The Scrabble Club was formed in January 2011 and has continued to enjoy regular attendance ever since, with numbers having increased since our recent move from Salutation Hall, so that between 6 and 15 players are attending now each week.

The club meets every Wednesday afternoon in the Garden Room 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!),

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 and Missionary Organisations and 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. We should all be grateful to the team of visitors - Pat Williams, Debby Gill, John Jarvis, Gillian Mortimer, Alison Marshall, Gillian Bower, Sharon Lucas, Judi Kent, Sue Elliott-Lyall and Mike Fryer – and for the ministry they provide. I would also 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.

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 Outreach Committee**

During this year the community outreach group has been looking at how we engage with the parish and beyond to the wider community.

In November we arranged the faith lunch for the Patronal Festival which was well attended by 60 members of the church coming together for an enjoyable event. Thanks to all who helped to organise and arrange the lunch and those who attended and supported the event with food.

We hope to hold a faith tea in May with Songs of Praise on the field around Pentecost, weather permitting. Regarding the web site, discussions are ongoing and the group continue to offer their support to help it communicate effectively with the parish and beyond.

In the wider community – we have been in touch with the Foodbank to find out more about their work in Darlington, and have received offers from them, to come to us and explain more about their work.

Recently with the assistance of Sandy we have made contact with the Darlington Assistance for Refugees DAR – who will come to speak in church on 17<sup>th</sup> April to explain their work. The group will also be attending the DAR open general meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> April to find out how the parish can help.

Finally, many thanks to all our committee members for their support and advice over the past year.

**Andrew Watson**

### **Magazine Report**

In January I retired as Parish Magazine Editor after over twenty years holding the position.

It has been both a pleasure, and a challenge at times, to move from a twelve to sixteen-page edition produced in-house with basic IT skills (I learnt on the job!) and rudimentary printing, to the thirty-six or forty page professionally printed beast that we now possess.



I would like to express my gratitude to all the contributors- - which included a number of stalwart regulars – who submitted copy over the years, often at short notice and when they weren't expecting a request!

I am very disappointed to see, despite announcing my departure over six months ago and after several appeals from the vicar, that no-one has come forward to take on the role.

It is not technically challenging, and can be hugely enjoyable. It requires three to four hours work per month, and a modicum of ability to use a computer, which I would be more than happy to impart if required.

At present the vicar is holding the fort, so to speak, but this cannot continue due to his many commitments and without a new Editor the Magazine will die.

If anyone is interested or thinks they can help in any way, please speak to David.

**Ellis Leatherbarrow**  
**Editor**

### **The Children's Society**

In February each year, Wendy and I gather in box holder's collections for the year, to send to the Children's Society-this year our total was **£481.88**.

*Many thanks to all box holders for their generosity.*

The charity supports children who are often in most desperate situations, having suffered abuse, neglect and exploitation, and face a future with little or no prospects. Through emotional support, and practical aid the Society staff are able to help children turn their lives around for the better, but they need our financial contributions to ensure they can continue to reach these youngsters.

We have 30+ box holders in our parish, and are keen to increase that number. If you would be interested in collecting for this charity in this way, please speak to one of us.

**Wendy Day, Katie Malcolm**  
**Honorary Local Secretaries**

### **All Saints Blackwell Pre-School**

The pre-school is open for three hours each session from 9:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m., Monday to Friday, term time only, we offer quality child care with a high staff to child ratio. When places become available we take children from the age of two to school age. The pre-school is full and has a healthy waiting list. We do advise parents/ carers to put their child's name down as soon as possible, to avoid disappointment.

All members of our experienced and very knowledgeable staff hold a child care qualification. The manager, Carole Ferguson has an 'Honours Degree in Education Studies' and Mrs Amanda Summers holds an 'Early Years Foundation Degree.'

In our last Ofsted inspection, we received a 'good.' The officer said, 'Children are extremely happy and settled in a vibrant, welcoming and accessible pre-school. The educational programme is excellent;

practitioners use excellent resources to provide exciting and stimulating first-hand experiences. The quality of the teaching is consistently very good.'

The pre-school has had another successful year, I would like to thank my very hardworking staff team for their continued support, and the Revd. David Railton and the pre-school committee for their time and commitment. Thanks must also go to the parents, families and the congregation for their contributions to pre-school activities and fundraisers throughout the year.

**Carole Ferguson**

### **29th Darlington (All Saints and Salutation) Rainbows**

We began our year in with an evening of 'What we did on our holidays' as an ice breaker. We said a sad farewell to Karla as she was off to university again and we welcomed Charlotte back from university. We had an autumn walk one night to collect sticks and leaves, we then fashioned these into a world wish stick man from one of our roundabouts. We also made Poppy wreath pictures from hand prints for Remembrance Day. The last term we have worked on a chocolate badge, this involved a lot of chocolate tasting, Smartie bingo, we also had a lady come in to run the meeting one week with a lot of chocolate activities. We finished the term of with a Christmas party themed 'Charlie and the Chocolate Factory in fancy dress. We have attempted many activities e.g., Weaving, Bell ringing, making monkey pictures for Chinese new year, Tie Dying pillow cases, bird feeds which were very messy.

We had had a steady flow of new rainbows and therefore Enrolment nights have been a regular event. Finally, I would like to thank Grace, Abi, Karla and Abby for all their help each week, the unit would not run without them.

**Jill, Unit Guider.**

### **11<sup>th</sup> All Saint & Salutation Brownies**

Another fun packed year has been had by all in the 11<sup>th</sup> All Saints Brownies. On a cold spring morning in April, we attended a Division event at Carlton Lodge Activity Centre. The girls enjoyed a range of outdoor activities including archery and building a raft from oil drums, wood and rope. They raced around the lake but unfortunately a couple of Brownies took an early dip!

Brownie Holiday in June this year was a weekend spent at Hazel House in Ripon. We all had a fantastic time visiting various local museums and the swimming pool. In October, a group of Brownies, their families and dogs, spent a wet and windy morning on the Toffee Apple walk around the countryside at Spennymoor, fundraising for Camp House. There were quite a few aching limbs and sore feet by the end of the day.

As the festive season approached, we were very busy working towards the Caring Christmas Challenge badge. As part of the badge the girls made an assortment of Christmas crafts which were sold at the Church Fayre. We also wrapped and filled over 30 shoe boxes with toiletries bought from the proceeds of the Fayre and the kind generosity of many. These were donated to the Moses Project in Stockton. In December we went carol singing at Worsley Park Residential Home. It was a lovely night thoroughly enjoyed by everyone. All this would have not been possible without the dedication, commitment and hard work of the helpers, Leaders and especially Brown Owl (Julie Ross).

**Jill Barber**

**Brownie Guide Leader**

## **26<sup>th</sup> Darlington Scouts**

The 26<sup>th</sup> Scouts have been involved in a number of activities this year including a Summer Camp outside of the district at Ullswater, Cumbria for the second year running where 14 Scouts went on a hike, developed their team working skills in open canoes and learnt how to sail dinghies. A bag pack at Morrisons Supermarket to help raise funds for the camp achieved £840.00 and our grateful thanks go out to all the Scouts and Parents who helped out with this. Activities across the Summer and Winter Terms 2015 have involved a bike ride, wide games, a walk and BBQ along the river, and lots of cooking particularly in the kitchen. In addition, the Scouts have been climbing, attended Laser Quest and developed their team skills at Hollywood Bowl and some went on a hunter-avoid activity at County level called Operation Sanctuary, near Durham. This Spring Term 2016 has seen a focus on a Creative Writing Badge in association with Kip McGrath where the Scouts are writing a 500-word essay on a variety of curious and weird subjects.

The return to Scouts in September generated some serious concerns about the future of the unit due to Hannah Ross (Assistant Scout Leader) stepping down to concentrate on running the Beaver Unit for a final term before going travelling. Our huge thanks go to her for her 3 years of support. This has however meant that the unit was nearly closed due to Alasdair Ross (as the only Scout Leader) being unable to provide sufficient adults to ensure safety ratios are met. Where this happens the unit nights are unable to go ahead. Fortunately, thanks to a major commitment from a small number of parents who came along to help – Suzanne Williams, Heidi Williams, Julia Wilson, Helen Newell and Gavin White (in particular) – all meetings took place. However, the situation remains delicate as additional Uniformed Scout Leaders are required if the unit is to be maintained and if we wish to do outdoor activities as a more Leaders are needed for the correct ratios to be adhered to.

We currently number 28 Scouts with a regular supply of Cubs moving up. The good news is that Gavin White has been made an Assistant Scout Leader, so we welcome him to many years in Scouting, but we still need more Leaders if we are to ensure a full programme focussed on “Adventure and the Outdoors” is to be managed. If anyone is interested in finding out more, please contact Alasdair and he will be delighted to discuss this – note that if you cannot make every week, that doesn’t matter.

**Alasdair Ross**

**07866 250690**

**26<sup>th</sup> Darlington Scout Leader**

## **Millennium Hall**

The Millennium Hall and the Garden Rooms continue to be busy. We have regular users along with many parties and functions. I sometimes wish we had an extra room available for booking more regular users with the enquiries I have had this year. 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, Colin Price, Pam Davison and David Curran who receive the brunt of my calls and pleas for help when required. I would also like to thank Gary Fowler, our caretaker.

If you would like to book one of the halls, please email [hallbookingenquiries@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:hallbookingenquiries@hotmail.co.uk) 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. 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 also lost several regular bookings over the course of the year, although we are still fortunate in having a breadth of groups and activities in the Centre. 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.

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 the day-to-day upkeep of the building with great effect.

Towards the end of 2015, we were able to fit Solar-PV panels to the roof of the Millennium Centre, following receipt of a very generous donation to cover that cost. Thank you to the donor, and thank you too to Colin Price for his hard work in getting everything in place for the fitting of the panels in a very short space of time. The panels generate electricity which can be used in the centre, and any excess is fed in to the grid which brings a payment to the Trust. The use of solar panels is also an important part of the church showing proper concern for the environment, and seeking to be good stewards of God's created world.

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 meeting of 2015 was held at Walkington House. Members were reminded of the new Diocesan mission statement "Blessing our Communities", which has three main priorities, namely; **Poverty, Young People and Growth**, and were asked to split into their respective "Groups", before providing feedback around three main areas; Things that are going well, Things that are going less well and Areas for development. Other important items covered during this meeting were: the Deanery Pilgrimage at Brancepeth on 16 May, the Confirmation on 3 June at St Mark's and the need to re-visit the "Deanery Plan".

The summer meeting of Synod was held at Cuthbert House, the new Diocesan office near Durham. Members were given a guided tour of the Resource Centre and received a short presentation on the work that it undertakes. The Area Dean provided a detailed report of the Deanery Pilgrimage, which had been attended by over 80 people. The remainder of the meeting was devoted to the ongoing work around the "Deanery Plan", the new Diocesan structure and the Diocesan elections.

An extra meeting of Synod was held at St James the Great in September to discuss the content of the "Deanery Plan". Unfortunately, it was not possible to present a "final draft" of the document, but members were given the opportunity to look at the supplementary paper and suggest appropriate amendments. The "Plan" incorporated proposals to merge the "Standing" and "Mission and Pastoral" committees and to form new ones, whose focus would be on the three Diocesan priorities.

Miss Christine Large (Headteacher of St John's C of E Academy) was the main speaker at the final Synod meeting of the year. Christine talked about the Academy and more specifically the "Prayer Garden", the idea for which had been instigated by some of the pupils, who had asked for a quiet place for reflection and prayer. The PTA had helped with the fund-raising and a local shop had also made a generous donation. Some pupils spoke about the project and this was followed by a Q & A session. Further discussions then ensued in order to approve the final draft of the "Deanery Plan".

**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. 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'.

**David Railton**