

ALL SAINTS' CHURCH, PARISH OF RUDBY-IN-CLEVELAND

ANNUAL REPORT

by the Parochial Church Council for the year ended 31 December 2020

The Parochial Church is a corporate body established by the Church of England and operates under the Parochial Church Council Powers Measure. It is a charity exempted by order from registration with the Charity Commission.

Appointment to membership is set out in the Church Representation Rules and all who attend Church services are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and stand for membership.

Our correspondence address is –

PCC Secretary – Mrs.J.A.Pyle, 18 Deepdale, Hutton Rudby TS15 0DS.

Our Priest in Charge is Revd Dr Robert Opala, Rector.

Our Curate is Revd David Sudron.

During 2020 we moved into the benefice of Whorlton, consisting of Rudby with Middleton, Crathorne and Whorlton with Carlton and Faceby.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Our Church's aims are:

- to worship God, through Word and Sacrament
- to witness to Him and try to carry out His work in this village, reaching out to the wider community
- to play a positive and witnessing role in the wider communities of the Deanery and Diocese of Yorkshire and the North East, and, where possible, beyond these boundaries.

Objectives of the PCC:

The PCC has the responsibility co-operating with the Rector and Curate in all matters of general concern to the pastoral, social, ecumenical and evangelistic mission of this Church of England parish.

- A. It therefore discusses and seeks to develop in line with current needs, matters of:
 - worship and outreach, including collaborations with other parishes and local churches
 - religious education, for children and adults
 - local and social ministry, including encouraging fellowship within the church in the contexts of village, the plurality and the Local Ecumenical Partnership
 - charitable giving to regional, national and international communities.
- B. It is responsible for maintaining our church building and Church House.

- C. It is responsible for managing the finances of the Church in the parish, so as to enhance the generation of income and support the costs of worship and outreach, religious education, local and social ministry, charitable giving and the running and maintenance of the buildings.
- D. It receives reports from Deanery Synod and is responsible for contributing the parish's share of priestly ministry and other costs in the Deanery and Diocese.

PCC MEMBERSHIP 2020

Chair	Revd Robert Opala, Rector
Church Wardens	Jennifer Watt (701730) Owen Searle (701355)
Vice-Chair	Shelagh Simpson-Holley (700367)
Treasurer	Nick Roberts (700836)
Secretary	Ann Pyle (700151)
Parish Gift Secretary	Margaret Roberts (700836)
Deanery Synod Members	Dileas Turner, Shelagh Simpson-Holley, Diana Baker (780672) (elected until 2022)
Assistant Clergy	Revd David Sudron
Reader	Su Reid (700035)

At the APCM in October Mrs. Jill Thompson stepped down as treasurer and Mr. Nick Roberts took over. We thank Jill for her long years of unstinting service.

Elected PCC Members

Retire 2021 – Pamela Hayton (700658), Pat Searle, Nick Roberts
(all re-appointed until 2023)

Retire 2022 – Judy Jung (700622), Ann Pyle, Sallyann Hewitt (700550)

Retire 2023 – John Saxton, Dileas Turner and Bob Baker were elected
at the delayed APCM on 25 October 2020.

PCC Committees

Pastoral Su Reid, Rev.Opala, (M.Donaldson and W. Cook co-opted)

Church Fabric Su Reid, Churchwardens, S.Simpson-Holley, John Saxton, Nick Roberts

Social Mesdames Hayton, Hewitt, Pyle, Searle, Thompson (M.Hamilton and A.Taylor co-opted)

Church House Management. Priest, Reader, Pat and Owen Searle

Electoral Roll Officer Su Reid Independent Examiner Margaret Roberts

Su Reid announced her resignation as Electoral Roll Officer from December 2020.

Church House Managers and bookings. Mr & Mrs O. Searle.

There are vacancies to be filled by election onto the PCC.

In September 2020 it was agreed that eight sub-committees should be created. These and their memberships are listed below.

- 1) Safeguarding/Risk Assessment: Ms.S.A.Hewitt, Mrs.J.Watt, Mrs.D.Turner, Mrs.S.Simpson-Holley.
- 2) Finance: Mr.N.Roberts, Mrs.J.Watt, Mr.O.Searle, Mrs.P.Searle, Mr.M.Lewis (co-opted).
Generous giving: Mrs.P.Searle, Mr.N.Roberts, Mrs.J.Watt, Mrs.S.Simpson-Holley, Mr.M.Lewis (co-opted).
- 3) Fabric: Mr.O.Searle, Mrs.J.Watt, Mrs.J.Jung, Mr.N.Roberts, Mr.J.Saxton, Mrs.S.Simpson-Holley.
- 4) Pastoral/Liturgical: Rev.R.Opala, Mrs.S.Reid, Mr.O.Searle, Mrs.D.Baker, Mrs.M.Donaldson(co-opted).
- 5) Communications: Mr.R.Baker, Mrs.S.Reid, Mrs.P.Searle, Mr.J.Saxton, Mrs.L.Malkin (co-opted).
- 6) Outreach (mission growth): Rev.R.Opala, Mr.O.Searle, Mrs.D.Turner, Ms.S.A.Hewitt, Mrs.J.Watt.
- 7) Church House: Mr.& Mrs.Searle.
- 8) Social: Mrs.P.Searle, Mrs.P.Hayton, Ms.S.A.Hewitt, Mrs.J.A.Pyle.

In 2020 the PCC met on the third Tuesdays of January and March in Church House. In April, June, September (twice), November and December they met remotely. A week before main PCC meetings the Standing Committee (Rev.Opala, Mrs.J.Watt, Mr.O.Searle, Mrs.Simpson-Holley, Mr.N.Roberts and Mrs.A.Pyle) meet to draft the agenda.

Among topics discussed were communication within the new benefice, charitable giving, data protection, the PGS, the Services rota, the role of Sacristans, Eucharistic Ministers, Servers and Sidespersons.

The APCM was held in Church on Sunday 25th October, having been postponed from April 26th, in response to the diocesan message that all churches should be closed from March 23rd.

In March an emergency team of Mrs.J.Watt, Mrs.Simpson-Holley, Ms.Hewitt and Mr.Searle, together with Rev.Opala, was formed to decide quickly about the cancellation of services.

Church was closed from 23rd March until Sunday 19th July for services. In addition Church was open for private prayer on Sundays and Wednesdays between 19th July and the end of August.

Services continued to be held until the end of the year, using social distancing arrangements. In addition morning worship was held using Zoom for those wishing to self isolate.

The formation of the Whorlton Benefice in November 2019 has been most successful. All six parishes have conducted regular services, joint meetings and events, particularly during lockdowns. Unfortunately Holy Communion could not be taken to people less able to attend church regularly. However Eucharist Services have been held on Zoom as have the Tuesday morning Communion services (formerly held in Church House). Many social and support activities such as 'Soup a Friday' and inter-denominational events have been put in abeyance during the past year. We hope that these can begin again after the lockdowns are over.

We continue to have concerns about the age profile of regular worshippers and aim to attract more young families to Church.

Work in the primary school with members of other congregations increased in the early part of the year. However this has had to stop during lockdown. It is hoped that once the pandemic recedes we will be able to resume our previous activities.

The PCC is very concerned that our income is decreasing while costs rise. We are operating with a current account deficit in the Parish since the running costs of the church are currently around £1000 per month, whilst our current weekly receipts are £720, largely as a result of the generous financial support from those who attend church. We do not receive any local or national government support.

PCC Secretary's Report 2020

The Church Council met on nine occasions – four face to face meetings and five remote meetings on Zoom. The Annual Parochial Church Meeting was held in October 2020 in Church. Attendance was good at all meetings.

At the meeting of the Church Council after the APCM, Mr.Nick Roberts was appointed as Treasurer, replacing Mrs.J.Thompson who retired after many years of faithful service.

At the Annual Meeting of Parishioners Mrs.Jennifer Watt and Mr.O.Searle were re-elected as Church Wardens for one year.

Mrs.P.Hayton, Mrs.P.Searle and Mr.N.Roberts were re-elected as PCC members and new members Mrs.S.Reid, Mr.R.Baker, Mrs.Dileas Turner and Dr.J.Saxon were elected.

In September 2020 Sub-Committees were formed, each to focus on a limited area of work and to meet as and when they required.

Topics discussed during the year were Generous Giving, Parish Giving Scheme, Services during lockdown, Church opening hours, Communications, Safeguarding and Risk Assessments.

Reports from Committees and Sub-Committees

1. Safeguarding, Risk Assessment and Health and Safety

Activities this year with Safeguarding have been mainly administrative and organisational. Pat Searle has very adeptly organised Protected Files covering PCC areas, one of which is Safeguarding. It is intended that this will hold the Parish DBS information so that we can keep some record of who has current DBS Certificates and when we need to renew these and for whom.

The Rector is ultimately responsible for the whole Benefice Safeguarding. Therefore he can access the information through the Benefice Parish office.

The Rector has completed Safeguarding training which has been logged with the Benefice records.

Andrea Wheatley, Benefice Administrator, provides the Benefice clerical support. She is the Lead Person who has the responsibility to carry through the DBS checks. We need to be GDPR compliant. We are able to maintain essential safeguarding Information through the parish office via the Protected file which has been set up for us by Mrs.Searle and backed up via the Benefice office.

Some administration needs to be followed through and many of our current DBS checks are due for renewal in 2022.

In terms of reported Safeguarding incidents, concerns or queries, there have been no issues raised with me.

I welcome any comments if people feel that more guidance is needed about reporting incidents, worries or queries.

Safeguarding is now a regular reporting topic at the PCC meetings.

The Health and Safety group became very active during 2020 carrying out Risk Assessments to open the church after the lockdown between March and July and again between November 1st and December 6th.

They took the opportunity, led by Dileas Turner, to update the Health and Safety Policy and carry out and update Risk Assessments. These were communicated to the PCC.

The Health and Safety policy was accepted by the PCC on 19th January 2021 and all persons were nominated for positions as identified in the policy.

The supporting risk assessments were communicated to the PCC via a discussion document distributed prior to the meeting.

The Rector has signed the completed Health and Safety File; one copy is in the office at the vicarage and one in the vestry of All Saints.

The policy and risk assessments will be reviewed in January 2022.

2. Finance Report

There was an increase in General Funds in 2020 of £11,843 (deficit 2019 £14880) Receipts increased by £16,575 to £49,310. Gift aided donations increased significantly thanks to several individual generous gifts.

No tax was recovered in 2019. But £15,348 was recovered during the year which covered the period from April 2017 to April 2019. Claims will be submitted for the periods to December 2020 during 2021 which will be about £6,500. Many of our givers have changed to giving to paying by direct debit through the Parochial Giving Scheme and tax on this Scheme is recovered on a monthly basis.

Although Church was closed for the greater part of the year the card reader has made it possible for people make donations electronically. Thanks to this £1,669 was received.

Covid restrictions have meant that most charity events, funerals and weddings have been cancelled and as a result we were unable to raise the usual amounts for charities. Similarly, the usual social events did not happen. But thanks to the Quizzes and Raffle £2,375 was raised.

Costs decreased mostly due to the closure of the Church. There have been no major repairs during the year.

Church House was also closed for most of the year. Donations received were down, but taking into account income from the solar panels, costs were covered.

The accounts show a surplus of £11,843, but for the receipt of tax recovery which related to previous years there would have been a deficit of £3,500.

At end of the year there was £26,000 in bank accounts and shares valued at £28,000.

Agreed reserves set at £15,000 represent 4 months spend and do not allow for any major expenditure on the Church or Church House.

3. Fabric Committee and Churchwardens

There were no major changes to, or in the condition of, church fabric during the year. The decision was taken to sell the remaining pews (at £100 each) which had been in storage since the reordering of the church, to accommodate the creation of the servery.

In January a trial was undertaken to ascertain the feasibility of having a nave Altar. Discussions were held with the Diocesan advisors as to how this might be most effectively achieved. It was subsequently agreed not to change the ordering of the church.

The Lady Chapel altar was moved forward to enable westward facing Communion services to be undertaken.

The Churchwardens are grateful for the support they receive from members of the congregation to ensure the smooth running of our services and church events.

4. Communications

The sub-committee met for the first time on 21st September 2020. At that meeting a 'brainstorming' session identified good and bad features of communications. Ground rules for conduct of the meetings were agreed and a review of existing communications methods was made. At this and subsequent meetings an agreed list of priorities and actions was created to be carried forward. It was agreed that meeting durations should target less than an hour.

The main issues requiring further action and resolution have included:

- Harvest, All Souls and Christmas 'Booklets' (often delivered electronically). Thanks to Su Reid for leading on these. They were all well received.
- The dilapidated state of the Church House notice board required urgent attention. Bob Baker carried out this work in early October. The board looks much better but beware, the lower part of the frame has significant wet rot (some filling was done but it is likely that a carpenter will be needed to repair the frame within the next couple of years).
- Concerns about the efficacy and content of the monthly Church News (an LEP Publication) were debated. It was agreed to restyle 'The Church News' as 'The Village and Church News' (Bob is the compiler/editor). The idea is to make it more inclusive and more relevant to everybody in the Parish. The first of the new style issues is for February 2021 and feedback thus far has been complimentary (the test is now to keep it up!)
- The issue of providing a Wi-Fi link in All Saints to stream services, funerals and weddings was felt to be important in these days of 'Lockdown'. After some research by Pat Searle, John Saxton took up the challenge and it was agreed that a low cost and speedy solution would be to 'piggy back' on an existing router

using Wi-Fi repeaters. Les and Wendy Cook were approached and agreed to allow use of their router (many thanks for this!). Sanction for expenditure of £120 for the purchase of 'repeaters' was agreed and John procured and subsequently tested the equipment.

The Sub-Committee continues to meet regularly. It has and will continue to take an active role in furthering interests of Rudby in Cleveland through effective communication.

5. Pastoral/Liturgical

Liturgical Sub-Committee

It was proposed to form a Liturgical and Pastoral Sub-Committee when other Sub-Committees of the PCC were set up during 2020.

After discussions, it was agreed to operate a separate Sub-Committee for Music, and to use the term 'Pastoral Committee' for wider matters than the original intention, which was to develop the practice of Home Communion for those who cannot attend Eucharists in church.

The Liturgical Sub-Committee, therefore, is focussed on the Liturgy of the church and the forms of worship used week by week.

It does not meet formally, but does its work through regular communications between the Rector and the Lay Reader and, separately, between the Rector and the Church Wardens.

Its most obvious decisions during the first months of its existence in the autumn of 2020 concerned the management of services with limited numbers in church, including Christmas services, and the development of services outside the church building.

Special Christmas services in church included the Gift Service on December 13th, and three Christmas Eucharists on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

Services outside the church included the Zoom All Souls Service on November 2nd, a Zoom Morning Prayer with Remembrance on November 8, a Zoom Benefice Eucharist on Advent Sunday, November 29, Zoom Morning Prayer for members across the Benefice every Sunday morning, and a popular LEP Carol Service on the Green on December 16th.

Music

Diana and Bob Baker began the year in January assisting Robert with his choice of hymns. This enabled him to use many that were known both by the organist and the congregation.

When the Church reopens for worship and music this could be used again, albeit with no singing. We turned to the manual issued by the RSCM titled 'Sunday by Sunday'. This gives guidance each week to support the season and the Bible Readings set for each Sunday.

As we found ourselves without an organist or a choir, the Rector asked if we could find hymns on line which included both. This brought some restrictions to our choices. However every week the choir at St. Martin's in the Fields, London, has

been uploading hymns on to a website that we can download from and use without charge. Fortunately we are members of the RSCM and have access via 'A Church Near You' resource hub. Needless to say they have not always been the ones we would have chosen! But we have found some super new hymns that we are trying to use whenever possible. Occasionally we have turned to YouTube and other platforms which bring a little more complexity.

Christmas brought with it the usual challenges. We selected 30 hymns to use in Church and a further selection to use with prepared sheets on the green. We also help prepare music for Weddings and Funerals when requested. We have had many pleasant comments from members of the congregation, the public and the clergy. We will continue to 'do our best'. Requests are always welcome and we will always try to fulfil them.

6. Church House

Church House is a popular and attractive venue for both Church and secular events.

Because of the pandemic we were unable to open Church House in 2020 for our regular users e.g. Beavers and Scouts, W.I., the Local History Group, a keep fit class, a dance class, the Wednesday Social Club. We were able to continue with the Tuesday 10.a.m Holy Communion Services on a few occasions, before the various lockdowns were in place. These will resume as soon as it is possible and safe to do so.

The Feed in Tariff from the solar panels that were installed in December 2011 contributes to the operating surplus, and the panels have recouped more than the outlay. This has been our main source of income this year.

Pat and Owen Searle continue to look after the day to day running of Church House and also take bookings. A professional cleaning company has now been employed to clean quarterly. As soon as Church House is fully operational again, we shall have to review the situation. For the time being the Searles continue to open the hall as required and to operate the heating.

7. Social Committee

Almost all our social events planned for 2020 had to be cancelled because of the pandemic.

The annual Fellowship Lunch was held in February, catered by Elaine Swift Catering. The meal was enjoyed by 62 people, with everyone remarking on the high standard of the food. This event has again proved to be extremely popular and will be repeated when we can open Church House again.

The BBQ due to be held in the Searles' back garden, next door to Church House, had to be cancelled. It is postponed until Saturday 26th June 2021 (if gatherings are allowed). This always a lively, friendly social event so we will be having it as soon as we are able.

The quiz arranged for September had to be postponed but we decided to move this online. We aim to hold one every two or three months; these have proved to be very popular. We have put details on a specialist online quiz site (The Answer Line) and this has drawn in people from all over the country. To Christmas 2020 these had raised just under £500 so are being continued for as long as possible.

The Christmas Fair incorporating a Charities Fair as part of our social outreach, Obviously had to be cancelled this year. The representatives from the eleven charities all expressed their disappointment but asked to be involved in 2021. As a gesture of goodwill and to show our thanks for their support in the past, each of the charities received a donation of £10 from the PCC.

As this is usually our biggest fund raiser of the year, we decided to still run the raffle but to move it online. Tickets were sold online and also by having a table outside Spar for three mornings prior to the draw, observing coronavirus restrictions. We were able to use the contactless card reader and this proved to be a great success. The raffle raised an incredible £1555. One thing learned is that it will certainly be worth having a table outside Spar again in 2021 as it attracted people who would not normally have attended the Christmas Fair.

In 2021 we hope to have several social events, not only to raise money but but also to show fellowship and friendship and to try and attract people not connected with the Church. Zoom is certainly proving popular and we are hoping to organise a simple afternoon tea or coffee morning, not to raise funds but simply so that people can see each other and chat.

Thanks go to the Social Committee for all their hard work and of course particularly to those people who support the events.

Pat Searle.

8. Outreach (Mission Growth)
No formal meetings were held in 2020.

Additional Reports

Sacred Space was set up as an opportunity for people to come together and find some quiet time for personal and guided reflection and meditation. The session lasted about 40-45 minutes. It was an ecumenical group that assembled with a number of Methodists and people outside of the Parish joining in. The format of the evening was Music, reflection on a theme and then intercession and prayers for those in the parish and wider community who had asked for prayer.

Lisa Opala.

Open the Book 2020.

Owing to the restrictions imposed as a result of the Covid 19 virus pandemic, the Group were unable to go into Hutton Rudby School from the beginning of March 2020. They did manage to perform four Bible stories to Reception, Year One, Year Two, Year Three and Year Four classes during Tuesday assemblies in January and February. For the same reasons the Hutton Rudby School was unable to hold Easter, End of Year, Harvest and Christmas Services in Church.

We hope that when restrictions are lifted and there are normal opening times we will be welcomed back into the school.

Jennifer Watt.

Local Ecumenical Partnership

Despite the lockdowns during the year we were able undertake most of the activities that we usually carry out together with our friends from the Methodist and Roman Catholic congregations living in the village. Before the first lockdown we celebrated the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, with daily meetings in the Hub, and World Day of Prayer (previously Women's World Day of Prayer) in Church House. Thereafter, we used our newly acquired online and Zoom skills for other events.

- The Good Friday Act of Witness was held virtually on the Village Green. Using the skills of Revd Richard Bradshaw and John Wallis, this included a video walk with the usual stopping places, with readings and hymns, and was broadcast using YouTube.
- The *Christian Aid* house to house collection and coffee morning could not take place in the usual format. However, a Christian Aid Just Giving page was set up and raised more money than the previous year. In addition we ran a "Click and Collect" Plant Stall online which proved to be very popular, and likely to be repeated.
- In the summer we held an open-air Service of Witness on the Green, which despite the weather was well supported and an excellent act of witness.
- The Towards Christmas appeal for the Salvation Army was extremely well supported with both monetary donations and gifts.
- It was not possible to hold the traditional Village Carol Service in All Saints Church, so we held an evening "Carols on the Green" service. This was very well attended and much appreciated. There was a collection for Salvation Army which raised nearly £400.00. We have been asked to make this an annual event.
- *Open the Book* fortnightly assemblies were broadened to include both Key Stage 1 and 2 children, but unfortunately these ceased in March due to lockdown.
- The monthly Newsletter, edited by Bob and Diana Baker, was distributed to every house in the village as in the past, and distributing online for some months due to lockdown and for safeguarding reasons. We again produced a Christmas card from our churches which was distributed with the December newsletter.

Revd Richard Bradshaw retired as Chairman of the LEP as he and Ruth were moving to Thirsk. He was replaced by Owen Searle. Richard's leadership and skills will be sorely missed and were very much appreciated when he returned to the Village for

the Carols on the Green. Jennifer Watt, Bob Baker and Owen Searle were elected as the representatives of All Saints, and Nick Roberts undertook to continue as Treasurer.

Church Membership

a. Electoral Roll

A full revision was carried out in 2019 and the next is due in 2025. In the meantime, people can be added or removed, if they so request, at any time.

The current (March 2021) number on the Roll is 127 people in 86 households.

b. Attendance

Due to the Coronavirus pandemic, services in church were suspended from 15th March to 19th July and again from 1st November to 6th December. However, during these periods of lockdown services of Morning Prayer and Eucharist were held online via Zoom or YouTube. The zoom services have continued to be held each Sunday when the church could reopen between lockdowns as there are some people who could be vulnerable to the virus and prefer to self isolate. These services have attracted people from the Benefice and some who do not normally attend church

YouTube services were provided by the Rector from either one of the churches in the Benefice or from the vicarage.

In those periods since July 19th when the church has been able to open precautions had to be taken, following government guidelines, to attempt to keep attendees safe from the virus. Wearing of face masks, hand sanitising, registering for track and trace and social distancing.

From Jan 5th - March 15th

Eucharist services were held at 9.30 am on Sunday or once a month at 8.30 am with a service of Morning Prayer being held at 9.30.

In addition Eucharist services were held on Tuesdays at Church House.

The attendances at these services were:

Sunday 9.30 am Eucharist	average	34 for 8 services
Sunday 8.00 am Eucharist	average	7 for 2 services
Sunday 9.30 am Morning Prayer	average	31 for 2 services
Tuesday 10.00 am Eucharist	average	12 for 10 services
Sunday 10.00 am Benefice Service		62

There was one Service for the sick

There was one funeral

There were 2 Baptisms.

From March 17th -July 18th

Services were provided via Zoom or YouTube

From July 18th – Nov 3rd

Sunday 9.30 am Eucharist average 25 for 14 services

Sunday 8.00 am Eucharist-no service was offered; there was a 9.30 Eucharist each Sunday.

Sunday 11.00 am Morning Prayer via Zoom. Su Reid, our reader, continued to offer these services every Sunday with an average of 10 people joining every week and a number of people less frequently.

Tuesday 10.00 am Eucharist average 11 for 11 services

There was an ecumenical service on the Village Green on 6th Sept.

There was a Benefice Service at the Old Church at Whorlton.

There was an All Souls Zoom Service on Nov 2nd; an estimate of 25 people were involved

There were 3 funeral services

There was 1 wedding.

From Nov 1st -Dec 6th

No services were held in church.

Zoom services continued to be held every Sunday.

From Dec 6th-27th

Sunday 9.30 am Eucharist average 25 for 3 services.

Zoom service of Morning Prayer continued throughout December with an increase in numbers of people joining.

Tuesday Eucharist 10.00am average 9 for 3 services.

Christmas Services

Christmas Eve 6.00 pm 26 adults 3 children 10.00 pm 23 adults.

Christmas Day 9.30 am 17 adults 2 children

December 27th 9 30 am Eucharist 13. There was also a Zoom Morning Prayer Service.

Zoom Services (Morning Prayer)

These were organised and delivered by our Reader, Su Reid, each Sunday from June 21st until the end of December. These have a regular attendance of 10 people with an additional increasing number of others.

It is estimated that from late June until the end of the year a round number of 360 attended these services. An additional Zoom All Souls Service was held on November 2nd with an attendance of 25.

Middlesbrough Food Bank

The Middlesbrough Food Bank (<https://middlesbrough.foodbank.org.uk>) is part of the Trussell Trust. It feeds an increasing number of people across Teesside who cannot, at any given time, provide themselves or their families with enough food. The reasons for this are

many, and it is not a new problem – but it has been made more acute by the current pandemic.

Over 90% of the food distributed is donated by members of the public – in kind, in cash, in online donations. For almost ten years now – since March 2011 – we have been collecting non-perishable food, and also sanitary items for women and babies, in Hutton Rudby. We deliver these on Tuesdays to the Food Bank Depot in the Skippers Lane Industrial Estate in Middlesbrough.

People used to be able to leave their donations in church and also in the Methodist church, as well as in our porch at 6 West End. Now that the churches are closed, we are delighted that donations continue to arrive plentifully in our porch, and also in the Spar shop – and we are very grateful to the Spar team for their help and support in storing donations for us between our collections from there. People give very generously – in cash which we duly deliver to the Depot, in online donations, through the Reverse Advent Calendar scheme which brought in several beautifully wrapped boxfuls this year, and, above all, in regular bagfuls of tins and packets. Thank you!

Su and George Reid

The Rector's Annual Report 2020



There was so much to celebrate in the past year of 2020 at the entire Benefice of Whorlton, but especially in our Parish in Rudby-in-Cleveland. Although, it was a year of difficulties and challenges caused by a very powerful outbreak of the Covid-19 virus, I would be far from saying that the whole year was a failure. I think we did much more than we would normally do. We needed to re-shape almost the whole system of our work and life. Starting with services, which became virtual during the national lockdowns and then risk assessments that we had to do before re-opening our churches after the lockdowns, moving weddings and baptisms to safer times but still trying to accommodate some of the weddings and baptisms when it was allowed to do, keeping the service on-line alive for those who had to continue shielding and many other important things and events.

For me, the year started in a very innocent and peaceful way. Being still a baby, just two months old, our new benefice had already big plans for the future. And we started to realise some of the plans: the growing number of Film and Spirituality, Monthly Meditation, monthly Prayer for Healing and Wellbeing every first Tuesday, the Come and See Project and well-remembered pilgrimage to the Mount Grace Shrine in the middle of March 2020. But a week later the whole world stopped. The deadly virus hit us with an amazing strength. We all know the impact of its work. But I must say that from the very moment of the first national lockdown, the spiritual life of our parishes increased. Every day we had on-line services. We produced 114 recorded services which were placed online in the YouTube Channel 'Parish of Whorlton Benefice. They were watched 9,405 times by 1,184 unique viewers. The majority of them were from the United Kingdom and Ireland, but some were from such distant countries like of New Zealand (24 viewers), Australia (18), the USA (12), Canada (8) and even Poland (4 - mostly from the Opala family). In this place I have to mention that we had 2 unique viewers from the State of Israel and 1 from the Vatican State. So, the question is quite real: was Pope Francis watching us? Unfortunately, there was no viewer from the Russian Federation, which destroys the myth that Kremlin knows everything what is happening in the world.

In my view, the most impressive on-line services were during the Holy Week with one – nearly Hollywood production – Good Friday Walking on the Green service. I also enjoyed the VE services (virtual and in reality).

After lockdown, I especially remember our open-air service outside the old church of the Holy Cross in Whorlton at the end of summer 2020. I expected that 20-25 people would come, but nearly 90 worshippers joined us including the new Archdeacon of Cleveland.

And then came the second lockdown in November and moving to different Tiers. But we did not stop. We worshipped the Lord as much as we could. Some of the services were really very emotional and beautiful: firstly, All Saints and All Souls services, then Remembrance Day and, eventually, Advent and Christmas celebrations. We did as much as we could with all the Christmas Carols that took place outdoors in Hutton Rudby, Swainby and Crathorne. Christmas services included two Christmas Vigil services in Hutton Rudby. On Boxing Day we held the St Stephen feast-day service in the old church in Whorlton. I expected 4-5 people but over 20 attended the service in wet and cold weather conditions. For me, personally, there were two more events that lifted my heart. Firstly, taking part in the Pilgrimage to the Holy Island walking

5 days in the company of great people from our Benefice, and, secondly, becoming a British citizen at the beginning of November. So, now if somebody asks you about the nationality of your rector, you have to answer, he is British.

So, summarising, all I have to say now is.... congratulations and thank you to everyone who has worked twice as hard as normal to ensure that the Parish of Rudby-in-Cleveland and other parishes of the Benefice of Whorlton have kept alive and kicking during these difficult times. We should all be proud and thankful for what we have achieved. The Carmelite Order to which Lisa and I belonged for so many years has a beautiful motto: *Zelo zelatus sum pro Domino Deo exercituum*. In free translation from Latin into English this sentence means, **We are zealous for the Lord of Hosts**. I believe we are, and I hope, we will continue. God bless you all.

Robert Opala

Rector of Hutton Rudby

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'ROpala'.