

St Michael's Begbroke Annual Parish report 2019

Aims and purposes

St. Michael's Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility of cooperating with the incumbent, the Reverend Oliver Petter, in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish, the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical.

Objectives and activities

The PCC is committed to enabling as many people as possible to worship at our church and to become part of our parish community at St. Michael's. The PCC maintains an overview of worship throughout the parish. The Parish profile published in April 2018 reflected an awareness of the "the need to contact and involve new residents of the parish." St Bartholomew's is one of "three churches [in the Benefice which] are physically located on the edge of the communities which they serve, so there is little visibility of the church structures for village residents." Outreach is an imperative for our parish. The busy A44 provides a challenge with most of the villagers living on the other side from the historic church building.

Our services and worship put faith into practice through prayer and scripture, music and sacrament. We try to enable ordinary people to live out their faith as part of our parish community through:

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

In 2018 the PCC expressed a commitment to the Diocesan Vision, of which four points had great resonance:

- To make a bigger difference in the world and serve the poor.
- To share our faith with adults, children and young people and grow the church in every place; rural, urban and suburban.
- To serve every school in our community.
- To put the discipleship of all at the heart of our common life and set God's people free.

We continue to reflect on this vision, and our PCC away day in March enabled us to reflect further as a Benefice.

To facilitate this work it is important that we maintain the fabric of St Michael's.

Achievements and performance

Worship and Prayer

Our principal gathering is the 9.30am Parish Communion service each Sunday. In 2019 we began a study group with two series in Lent and autumn. These met in the Village Hall, seeking to draw in others. We held an all age gathering in Advent, also in the Village Hall.

Electoral Roll

The total on our Electoral Roll is 16.

Ministry at St Michael's

The Vicar was supported by Rev'd Jim Turner in leading worship. We were grateful to Rev'd Dr Richard Turnbull, resident in the parish who assisted in leading worship, having begun to worship in St Michael's in early 2019.

Deanery Synod

Neill Brodey faithfully continued in his role as our representative. The Synod provides the PCC with an important link between the parish and the wider structures of the church

Safeguarding

The PCC adopted the new Safeguarding Policy in January. Thank you to Caroline Waugh for her work as Safeguarding Officer.

Pastoral Care

Visiting Rev'd Oliver Petter, and Rev'd Jim Turner have visited all church members who have requested it and where appropriate. We are grateful for the pastoral care expressed among the community.

Mission and Evangelism

St Michael's continued to reflect on mission and evangelism, as we gathered for our Benefice Away Day at Ripon College Cuddesdon in March. Some of the conclusions drawn were to set up a pastoral team across the Benefice; to improve the notice sheets and noticeboards to aid ongoing reflection and prayer through the week; to increase opportunities to nurture faith; and to create a p/t Administrator post.

In Lent we began a study group, meeting in the village hall on Tuesday evenings. This used the *Pilgrim Couse* drew a group of typically 6 people, and produced conversation and reflection of depth. We began a second series in the autumn, also in the village hall. This course looked at the first part of Mark's gospel, and was designed by Richard Turnbull. It was much appreciated, and a follow up planned for Lent 2020.

In Advent, Neill Brodey again produced an Advent Trail leading around the village. This linked to our website. The signs were beautifully created and we were aware that they made a positive impact. Our Christmas Carol Service went very well with a packed church.

In Advent we held an all age gathering in the village hall, with several creative activities reflecting on the Christmas story as well as festive decorations. There was a reading, reflection, carol and prayer. We attracted 40 people, including an effective team of volunteers. We were grateful for the input of Bruce and Annabelle Cummings, key members of the Woodstock Baptist church, and residents of Begbroke. The event flowed from a conversation with them at the summer strawberry tea party.

The Vicar attended the Diocesan Common Vision conference.

Servery/WC project

2019 saw exciting progress in the project to install a servery and loo for Holy Cross. Christian Randall of Conservation Architects LLP was appointed, and permissions were sought.

The church in the community

Promoting St Michael's via a Friends' scheme

We decided to hold two events with a view to beginning to found a Friends of Holy Cross project. The best approach was simply to put on events and generate conversation and gathering. For the launch we held an afternoon in the Village Hall in April, showing some details of the work we have done spiritually in recent years and showing diagrams of the planned repairs and refurbishments. To provide a child friendly event, we ran an Easter Trail with competition forms and prizes in the community orchard behind the village hall.

In June we held a strawberry tea party in the churchyard, having leafletted throughout the village. There was a very good attendance, and some fruitful conversations took place. All enjoyed the lovely decorations and outstanding provision of cakes from the resident team, with special thanks to Jenny.

Plans were laid for a concert to celebrate the opening of the new facilities in late 2020, and for a plant sale, working with Bunkers Hill nursery.

LVS School

The vicar took part in several religious studies classes at neighbouring LVS Oxford, assisting the RS teacher.

LVS school held a Remembrance service in St Michael's in November, and their Christingle service in December.

The vicar was appointed a Governor to LVS school.

Begbroke Link

We continued to provide regular articles for the Begbroke Link, and were grateful for their support of the church.

Begbroke Community Orchard

In October the vicar was invited to lead a Blessing of the Community Orchard as part of Apple Day celebrations. This was an invitation we were especially grateful for.

Church Life

Open church – Keeping the church open is a valuable and cherished part of our ministry. Thank you to Rob, Jenny, Rosa and all those who helped to open and close the church throughout 2019.

Church cleaning – thanks are due to our loyal church cleaners for their dedication and care in keeping the interior of the church so clean.

Tea & coffee Thanks to Rob for provision of splendid post service coffee throughout 2019. This is much appreciated by regulars and visitors alike.

Flowers. The beautiful flower displays in church are warmly appreciated, and thanks to all who help with floristry.