

# **ALL SAINTS' THELWALL ANNUAL TRUSTEES REPORT 2012**

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## **Aims and purposes**

All Saints Church Thelwall Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility of co-operating with the incumbent, the Reverend Douglas Black, in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish, the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. Our church's purpose statement is Growing Up, Growing Together, Growing Out and Growing More.

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

When planning our activities for the year, the incumbent and the PCC have considered the Commission's guidance on public benefit and, in particular, the specific guidance on charities for the advancement of religion. In particular, 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;
- developing their knowledge and trust in Jesus;
- providing pastoral care for people living in the parish;
- missionary and outreach work.

To facilitate this work it is important that we maintain the fabric of the Church and the Parish Hall.

## **Achievements and Performance**

### *Worship and Prayer*

We offer a wide range of services, traditional and modern, that will meet a variety of needs. We are keen to offer services that are accessible as well as being spiritually fulfilling. For example, evening prayers provide a quiet, intimate and reflective environment for worship, while the main Sunday morning services aim to provide all-age worship in an outgoing and child friendly atmosphere. The short, "Fresh Expression" Bitesize services, held at the parish hall, have attracted an attendance of 70 to 80 adults and children and have focused either on youth work or mission work outside the parish

Our numbers continue to grow. This is particularly evident at our special seasonal services and all-age worship. Also many of the events organised by our action groups have become real springboards for growth. We are committed to the nurturing, protection and safekeeping of all especially children and young people.

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Our regular menu of Days of Prayer, overnight retreats, joint evensongs, Lent courses, Advent complines, Bible Study groups, 'focus' Sunday evening services, and so on, continue to provide a 'mixed economy' of worship and devotion for a broad church.

The Worship Action Group is tasked with developing worship, nurture & prayer in line with the church's mission statement.

Over the past year we have been working on choir recruitment, opening up the church for quiet prayer, organising joint evensongs with Christchurch Latchford, and making our communion services more child/newcomer friendly. We now have the Sunday school children joining the service at both the beginning and end of the service. Easy to follow service booklets have been produced along with an easy to follow service sheet for the baptism service.

In addition, we run many regular groups where people can meet, to discuss life and faith issues e.g. fellowship groups, retreats & special services.

Bible study groups are flourishing and help people at all stages of Christian commitment to develop their relationship with Jesus. A variety of material has been used and comments from group member how that the studies have been useful and worthwhile. We have a significant number of newer members so it will be important that we offer them opportunities to grow and learn. During 2012 we will look to provide flexible environments of nurture. The need to integrate newer folk into the life & work of the church will become a priority

The number on the electoral roll is now 195, an increase of two on last year, 49 of whom live outside the parish. The average weekly attendance by regular worshippers was 100 but this number increased at festivals.

As well as our regular services, we enable our community to celebrate and thank God at the milestones of the journey through life. Through baptism we thank God for the gift of life. In marriage public vows are exchanged with God's blessing. Through funeral services friends and family express their grief and give thanks for the life which is now complete in this world and to commend the person into God's keeping. We have celebrated 10 baptisms, 6 weddings and held 26 funerals in our church (or crematorium) this year.

### *Deanery Synod*

Three members of the PCC sit on the deanery synod. This provides the PCC with an important link between the parish and the wider structures of the church. Synod has met three times this year.

In May Synod met at Thelwall, and as this was the last meeting of the three year cycle, Thelwall provided supper for all members. Thanks were given to Revd. Malcolm Kelly for his services to the Deanery as this was his last meeting before retirement. Two of our representatives, Elaine Whittaker and Jean Lester retired in May, and we welcomed Jean Topps and Kath Mellor to represent All Saints Thelwall.

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The Synod met in March when Canon Revd. David Felix gave a very clear presentation about the Women Bishops' Measure. The new Synod met in September, when a vote was taken regarding the Women Bishops' Measure.

### *The Church and Parish Hall fabric*

In April Jean Fisher retired from her post as churchwarden having completed her full term of six years. Mike Horne has replaced her and has quickly and competently taken on the responsibility of the role.

The ramp and its safety railings are now completed and have been well received by regular members of the church and visitors alike. We have had improvements to the sound system and advances in the use of computer projection system. We continue to monitor the graveyard via the stewardship group and regular maintenance has been supplemented by pruning the hedge to a more manageable size.

The main challenges for 2012 are due to recent extreme weather and focus on the roof. On two occasions, during August and December, it leaked significantly and we are still finalising repairs on the roof, wiring, vestry floor and organ as a result of water damage.

At the hall stolen lead flashing was replaced with a plastic equivalent. Additional folding tables and trolleys to hold them have been purchased to replace the old broken tables and the children's chairs have been replaced. Patio flags have been laid at the front of the hall to provide an area for tables outside and hard standing for stalls for an outdoor event. Fire bells have been donated by Lymm Baptist Church and installed and four car park lights have been installed. Recently the electrical systems have been put under stain, particularly those in the kitchen. To help, the fuse board is to be replaced and repositioned and a new water boiler purchased to replace the geysers currently in use.

Gant funding has been sought from Awards for All and WREN for replacement windows, guttering, water pipes under the car park and two heaters in the hall, repairs to the septic tank and upgrading of the electric wiring, fire doors and fire alarm system.

### *Pastoral Care*

Over the past year or so the church has received frequent requests to help people with stress, relationship difficulties, financial problems and bereavements issues. The demand for help is increasing so we are looking to set up a 'listening and counselling referral service at church, using trained parishioners.

Outreach Action Group organised a well-attended Parish BBQ. Personal invitations were given out by individuals and to all living in the parish via the parish magazine. The BBQ closed with a short service.

Following the successful 'Home Alone' lunches for the elderly people we are considering starting a monthly 'coffee and chat' meeting aimed specifically at those who live alone. One third of the village is 60+ years of age!

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After the well-received 'Experience Pentecost' in 2011 we repeated this venture with 'Experience Harvest'. This explored the 'fruits' of the natural world, those of the garden, fields, flock, sea and earth, and linked them to various fruits of the Spirit. A range of activities was available for each topic. Our close relationship with Thelwall Junior School enabled all the pupils to visit with their teachers and consider the meaning of Harvest. The church was open to all on two evenings and on Saturday morning. During Saturday a group of 11 preschool and infants school children were able to enjoy this experience under the guidance of Sunday school teachers.

Our work with the Thelwall schools continues to develop. Apart from taking assemblies and classes, we arrange for visits by the Coverdale Puppets and Simon Smith (musician). We give each year 6 child a booklet about moving to high school

Three members of the congregation currently undertake baptism visiting. The family is visited a couple of weeks before the service, when there is the opportunity to discuss the reasons for baptism and answer any questions. On the day, they assist Douglas during the service and distribute a Certificate of Baptism and a lighted candle to the parents. The twice-monthly 'Praise and Play' service is a short service for and preschool children and their carers. It provides a bridge between the baptism service and our regular Sunday morning service and we have been encouraged at the attendance of parents at family services. By doing this, it is hoped that families may be more inclined to attend further services in the future and begin to form a relationship with God and His Church.

The Young Peoples Action Group oversees all the different aged youth groups. While the Sunday School and Junior Church meet on a Sunday morning concurrently with the church service, Explorers, Pathfinders and TFD's meet on a Monday evening. With way lifestyles have changed, it is often easier for youngster to attend a midweek evening meeting than to come on a Sunday morning.

Work has continued on compiling job descriptions. A number changes of personnel among the leaders of some groups has demonstrated the value if this work.

Our young people have been involved in a number of church services throughout the year, the 'Prize-giving' service, Harvest Festival, Christingle and Crib services. The Explorers gave a presentation on the work of 'Adoption Matters, North West', which is one of the charities we support financially. Pathfinders and TFD's visited the Operation Christmas Child warehouse in Liverpool to assist in the packing of shoeboxes. And all our young people contributed to success of the church float at the annual Thelwall Rose Queen festival.

All group continue to be run with the aim of providing a safe environment for the young people to express and explore their faith and beliefs through relaxed discussion and hopefully some fun along the way. Our plans for the next 12 months will involve a consolidation of leaders: supporting both new and long serving leaders, exploring new ways of working, of having a flexible leadership team in order to best serve the needs of our children and young people as they explore the Christian Faith in a changing world.

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The hall is used extensively, by local groups, individuals and the church

The local groups include Guides and Scouts, Bridgewater Players, Circuit Training, Good Companions, Day nursery, Morris Men, Pre-school mums & tots, Ladies Group, Women's Institute and Ferry Club which is an after school and holiday club for primary aged children.

The church is a prominent provider of social events in the village and there are several events held at the hall that have become successful 'fixtures' in the calendar, church jumble sale, Burns Night party, Hoe Down and Bonfire event.

In addition there are many other individuals and groups that use the hall's excellent facilities for parties and meetings.

### *Mission and Evangelism*

As a result of the visit to Rwanda in 2010 by two of our congregation there was a desire to respond to the human need and help the people have better lives. We are currently raising £6000 over the next two years to support income generation and self-help projects in Rwanda with Samaritan's Purse. We continue to give support to the Youth for Christ, Church Urban Fund, Adoption Matters North West, Church Pastoral Aid Society and USPG by regular donations given by standing order from the church account. The Children's Society is supported with donations from our Christingle service and also from personal collection boxes.

Another huge amount of tins and packet food were received for Save the Family at our Harvest Festival. These gifts were transported to Plas Belin, a residential centre for homeless families near Chester. Save the Family exists to keep homeless families together and stop children from being taken into care.

We received 181 shoe boxes of gifts for Operation Christmas Child at our annual 'Toy Service' and individual wrapped toys received were given to the local 'Sure Start' centre in Runcorn

Our Bible study groups support a local women's refuge with donations of toiletries.

Once again we participated in the annual street collection for Christian Aid and raised about £1600 for the charity.

All Saints' Thelwall is a fully registered Fairtrade Church. In 2011 sales of fairly traded goods at the regular stall, held on the first Sunday of the month and usually manned by members of the Youth Groups, totalled over £1400. We also ran stalls on behalf of Fair4All at both the Rose Queen event and the Christmas Fayre.

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The Parish Magazine is an informative and free monthly magazine, delivered to every house in the village. It aims to have a little bit of interest for everyone in the village and has numerous contributors. It also provides a platform for local businesses to advertise at a moderate rate. Through the advertising revenue the magazine continues to be self-funding. Thanks to Neil for updating our website which has a number of new features.

### *Ecumenical Relationships*

The Lymm and District Churches Together (LDCT) consists of 9 churches covering Lymm, Oughtrington, High Legh and Thelwall. It's council typically has 3 lay people and the minister from each church and in 2011 had 4 meetings. The clergy also had their own meetings. As well as the Annual General Meeting there was a prayer breakfast during the week for Christian Unity, a Songs of Praise service and a United Act of Worship. Through LDCT we were involved with Women's World Day of Prayer, a quiz night for Christian Aid and the Christian Aid street collection in May. During 2011 LDCT started to plan for a Warrington Youth for Christ worker to work in the district and particularly in the local schools

The Sanctuary Café in Lymm is run by a group of Christians drawn from many of the churches in the LDCT group including volunteers from All Saints. It continues to be busy and has extended its opening hours to 5pm. During 2011 the café celebrated its second anniversary.

### **Financial Review**

Total receipts for the Church, Parish Hall and 200+ Club were £119,760, of which £282 was investment income.

Voluntary giving is done via Standing Order, Give as you Earn, GAYE and envelopes. We encourage 'givers' to 'Gift Aid' their contribution and a total of £10,600 was claimed in tax rebates under the Gift Aid Scheme for the financial year 2010/11. This figure included transitional relief of around £1185

We have also received restricted donations of £1,000 for the ramp and path project and £100 for graveyard maintenance. A transfer of £350 was made to the designated organ fund, taking the balance in the account to £1,493

Out thanks to the Social and Communications Action Group who oversee our events that raised a total of £10,840 for the church and the parish hall.

The hire of the Parish Hall brought in an income of £21,530

£54,000 was spent to provide the Christian Ministry from All Saints, including the contribution to the diocesan Parish Share, which increased by 3%.

Work on the path, ramp and safety rails is now complete and £1,800 of the Lillian Enid Kennedy endowment was spent.

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### **Reserves Policy**

It is our policy to invest our fund balances with the CBF Church of England Deposit Fund. The balance in the CBF Fund stands at £38,691 at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2011, this amount being sufficient to cover emergency situations.

The 200 Club acts as a working reserve for the Parish Hall. This club raised £858 in 2011 and the fund now stands at £3784. Should any large amounts be required, then short term funding would come via church reserves with PCC approval.

### **Volunteers**

Firstly to everyone we say a big 'thank you' for the wholehearted participation in the life and work of All Saints. Your contribution is greatly appreciated by everyone but especially by the trustees. We would like to extend a particular vote of thanks to our wardens Richard and Mike and offer a huge thank you to Jean Fisher whose term as warden came to an end last April. Their support for the church goes well beyond the 'call of duty'. Our great gratitude also goes to our licensed Reader, Pip, and our Readers Emeriti, Bob and Jean. They make a significant contribution to the life and work of our church. Colin is currently training to be a Reader and will be licensed next year. Additionally, we would like to thank Felicity for overseeing our music and musicians in worship with insight and enthusiasm. Our treasurer, Jean Topps has settled into the role and keeps the PCC well informed about matters financial. In a similar vein, Kath's secretarial talents help the PCC function smoothly and efficiently. We are thankful to them both for their readiness to serve in these ways. Our thanks go to our Independent Examiner Mike Brewer who has examined our accounts with the utmost care and attention to detail.

### **Structure, governance and management**

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. At All Saints the membership of the PCC consists of the incumbent (our vicar), churchwardens, lay readers and members elected by those members of the congregation who are on the electoral roll of the church. All those who attend our services/members of the congregation are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and stand for election to the PCC.

The PCC members are responsible for making decisions on all matters of general concern and importance to the parish including on how the funds of the PCC are to be spent.

The PCC held 6 meetings during the year with an average level of attendance of about 85%. Given its wide responsibilities the PCC has a number of action groups each dealing with a particular aspect of parish life. These groups cover worship, outreach, young

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people, social events and communication, parish hall, baptism preparation, Fair4all, choir and music, bible study and finance. Each action group submits a report to the PCC at every other meeting, advising what has happened and what is happening within their group. The PCC members are free to ask questions to members of the action groups who are on the PCC. Bullet points are then included in the minutes which can be seen on the church notice board.

### **Administrative information**

All Saints Church is situated in Thelwall. It is part of the Diocese of Chester within the Church of England. The correspondence address is the Vicarage, Bell Lane, Thelwall, Warrington, Cheshire.

The PCC is a body corporate (PCC Powers Measure 1956, Church Representation Rules 2011) and registered as a charity on 9<sup>th</sup> April 2010 with the Charity Commission (Charity number 1135426).

PCC members who have served from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2011 until the Annual General Meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> April 2012 are:

Rev Douglas Black (Chairman)  
Frank Whittaker (Deputy Chariman)  
Mike Horne (Churchwarden)  
Richard Speed (Churchwarden)  
Jean Sheppard (Lay Reader and Deanery Synod Representative)  
Bob Lester (Lay Reader)  
Jean Topps (Treasurer and Deanery Synod Representative)  
Kath Mellor (Secretary and Deanery Synod Representative)

(2009)

Karen Tipping  
Bob Powell

(2010)

Mike Cooke

(2011)

Gary Alcock  
Jean Fisher  
Heather Ireland

There are 14 trustees:

Rev Douglas Black, Frank Whittaker, Mike Horne, Richard Speed, Jean Sheppard, Bob Lester, Jean Topps, Kath Mellor, Karen Tipping, Bob Powell, Mike Cooke, Gary Alcock, Jean Fisher, Heather Ireland.

**Approved by the PCC on 28<sup>th</sup> March 2012 and signed on their behalf by the Reverend Douglas Black (PCC Chairman)**