

Christ Church, Derry Hill Annual Report 2020

In the year since the last Annual Parish Meeting the PCC has met 4 times to decide on the business of the parish.

Staff

The Marden Vale Team Ministry comprises Team Rector Rev'd Bob Kenway, Team Vicars Rev'd Linda Carter and Rev'd Teresa Michaux, also Rev'd Jim Scott (with PTO), Licensed Lay Minister Enid Powell, and Sr. Jenny Colby (Church Army), plus supporting retired clergy.

Attendance

Average attendance during October was 21 (*down on previous year due to COVID restrictions.*)

Attendance at Easter – n/a church closed due to COVID lockdown

Attendance at Christmas was 30 (*down on previous year due to COVID restrictions*)

Occasional services:

children baptised 1

marriages 0

funerals 12

Electoral Roll 81 19 not resident in the parish

Safeguarding

The PCC has complied with the duty under Section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016 (duty to have due regard to House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults). Christ Church, Derry Hill adheres to The Church of England's Safeguarding Policy 'Promoting a Safer Church' 2017.

The Safeguarding Policy and Good Practice Guidelines were reviewed in October 2020.

Contact details of the current Diocesan Safeguarding Advisers have been updated on documentation and websites following the retirement of Heather Bland.

There are no safeguarding incidents to report.

The Parish Safeguarding Officers are Dr David Stevens and Mr Peter Rigby.

Risk Assessments relating to COVID-19 have been carried out (see Clergy Report).

GDPR (Data Protection)

Test and Trace procedures were put in place when churches re-opened after the first lockdown ie. QR Code poster in the church porch and sign-up list in church. A diary system ensures that sign-up lists are shredded and electronic lists are deleted after 21 days.

Review of the Year - Clergy Report

2020 began optimistically as the initial work around the mission and vision of Christ Church, Derry Hill had begun and we were looking forward to moving to the next stage of formulating an action plan. However, as the effects of the coronavirus pandemic took hold, other priorities came to the fore. (Ironically, the APCM for 2019 took place on the Sunday before the first lockdown.) Despite the benefits of technology, which meant services and PCC meetings could continue (albeit in a different format), it was clear this would not be the best medium for the kind of discussion and interaction required to do justice to producing

an action plan. In addition, the pandemic is revealing that necessary changes, not only in many areas of everyday life, but also the ways we worship and how we work out a model of sustainable ministry, are inevitable. We will therefore need to revisit our earlier ideas. My hope is that our approach will be to seek the new opportunities which may now be open to us.

Immediate action was taken by Christ Church in mid-March 2020 to set up the Derry Hill Community Support Group. This involved establishing a small group of co-ordinators (Carol Rigby, Richard Aylen, Ian Liddle and Richard Gribble) and a large bank of volunteers, with the aim of providing practical support to those who needed help with shopping and prescriptions, for example, as well as offering prayer and a listening ear. Thanks to the generosity of willing volunteers the group was formed quickly, leaflets were delivered and communication via email and websites were set up. The efforts of all involved in this enterprise were recognised at the highest level in October 2020 via the Lord-Lieutenant of Wiltshire, Mrs Sarah Rose Troughton (HM the Queen's Representative).

In terms of worship, 2020 has been incredibly challenging. As I have already mentioned, we have had the benefit of online services and while many of us are now conversant with Zoom and Teams, there are folk who do not have access to the internet. The lack of receiving bread and wine, and meeting in person has been deeply felt by so many. Weddings and baptisms have been postponed. There is much work to be done to reconnect with families and build up relationships (more opportunities). On the positive side, we have tried new ways of engaging the local community eg. Carols in the churchyard and All Souls open church for candle lighting were very well received, and should give us confidence to be creative in the future. In addition, school Acts of Worship via Zoom have been taking place on a weekly basis with children taking part from school and home.

Much of my time during 2020 has been taken up with getting to grips with legislation, Government and Church of England guidance, carrying out multiple risk assessments and learning how to use technology to keep everyone connected. There have also been many more telephone conversations to keep in touch with parishioners. Preparing and delivering services live and virtually across the Team is at once stimulating and exhausting, while planning for the future continues to be challenging. In addition, the financial impact of COVID has highlighted the need to consider our giving as a question of discipleship.

Having said all this, perhaps a consequence is that we will begin to focus on what is really important. Or should I say, who is really important? More than ever, how we stay connected, how we serve our community, how we notice those who are not in the centre of things, how we show the love of Christ, are the things we need to focus on.

Finally, I want to thank all of you who have been a huge support and encouragement to me and to each other throughout this extraordinarily difficult time. Whilst things will continue to be very testing for some time, I look forward with hope that things will not go back to the way they were, but will be so much better for everyone.

Reverend Linda Carter