



APCM

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL
CHURCH MEETING



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

CONTENTS

| | Page No |
|---|---------|
| Vicar's Report | 3-6 |
| Church Wardens' Report | ..6 |
| PCC Secretary's Report | ..7 |
| Bethany Club Report | 7 |
| Noah's Ark Report | 7-8 |
| Deanery Synod Report—Newcastle West | ..8-9 |
| Parish Safeguarding Report.. .. . | ..9 |
| Pastoral Care Team Report | 10 |
| Parish Youth Group Report.. .. . | ..11-12 |
| Open the Book Report | ..13 |
| Junior Church Report | ..14 |
| Parish Events Group (PEGS) Report | ..14-15 |
| Independent Examiner's Report & Accounts | 16-20 |
| Parish Treasurer's Report | ..21 |
| Electoral Roll Report.. .. . | ..21 |
| PCC Members | ..22 |
| APCM Agenda | ..23 |

The Parish of Newburn, APCM of the PCC on 29th March 2020 in St Michael & All Angels, Newburn at 11.00am immediately following the Parish Eucharist (11.00am Vestry Meeting) and (11.15am AGM)

Vestry Meeting - All Parishioners allowed to vote

1. Opening Prayer & Bible Reading
2. Election of Churchwardens

APCM - Those on the Electoral Roll allowed to vote

1. Minutes of previous meeting – Circulated
2. Parish Elections:
 - Parochial Church Council
 - Sides people – welcome teams
 - Independent Examiner for the parish
 - Parish Safeguarding Officer
3. The Parish Accounts and treasurers report as circulated
4. Reports as circulated in the Annual Report: -
A time for any comments or questions.
6. Issues raised by the meeting – A chance to have your say!
7. Date of Next Meeting – To be arranged

| <u>PCC MEMBERS</u> | <u>ELECTED</u> | <u>OFFICE ENDS</u> |
|--------------------|----------------|--------------------|
| ARMSTRONG, James | 2019 | 2020 |
| ARMSTRONG, Linda | 2017 | 2020 |
| BELL, Janet | 2019 | 2020 |
| BOWERS, Margaret | 2018 | 2021 |
| BROWN, Sylvia | 2018 | 2021 |
| DAWSON, Helen | 2019 | 2022 |
| GRAY, Susan | 2019 | 2022 |
| HARDING, Jamie | 2019 | 2022 |
| HOPE, Elizabeth | 2019 | 2020 |
| HOPE, Sandra | 2017 | 2020 |
| JONES, Jennie | 2017 | 2020 |
| McSTAY, Joan | 2017 | 2020 |
| STONE, Daniel | 2019 | 2022 |
| TAYLOR, Amanda | 2019 | 2020 |
| WAUGH, Celia | 2019 | 2020 |

Vicar's Report

Here we are at the beginning of another year together; I can't quite believe that I am starting my fourth year. I continue to be surprised by all that God does with and through us. So I wonder what God has in store for us as we journey together through 2020. I love that we don't stand still.

A special welcome to our new members and a huge thank you to those of you who have worked so hard to make this year another busy one as we try to respond to the Holy Spirit's prompting. We continue to work together as Newburn Parish, I believe that this is a real blessing.

Leading your Church into Growth (LyCIG)

We launched LyCIG local this year, working through the LyCIG local programme and then putting together our Mission Action plan. Thank you to all those who attended and engaged with this process; I look forward to God using us to put our plans into action. As I write this we've had a very successful first Messy Church, supported by large numbers of volunteers and St Hilda's Trust (who funded our start-up costs).

Start Course

One action arising from LYCIG local was the START course, which we ran in advent. It was lovely to see people who had not been on such a course before and to share our journey of faith together. My hope is that we can start to have house groups in the near future.

Prayer Walk

I was very encouraged by the number of people who joined us for all or part of our prayer walk, or who prayed at home. Although we couldn't go right around the parish, we covered many of the main routes and it was great to see/hear people praying in so many different forms, including alcohol assisted prayer towards the end!

Holiday Club

We had a very successful holiday club during holy week, with a Cops and Robbers theme, and plan to have another one this coming year. So if you're around during Holy Week, and would like to be involved, please let me know – we would be delighted for you to have a role.

Parish Outing

We had a fabulous day out to Holy Island in August 2019. Thank you again to St Hilda's for funding the children's places. There were lots of us who walked over the sands and then we got together for a time of worship. This was a really special time.

Finances

A big thank you to Celia for all of her work with the parish finances this year and also to John Jackson our auditor – many thanks John. Janet is our new gift aid secretary and her task has become much simpler because of all of those who are part of the Parish Giving Scheme. If you pay tax and aren't part of the scheme please see me, Celia or Janet: we will gladly give you a form and help you get signed up. Also if you haven't ticked the part of the form to increase your giving each year in line with inflation can I encourage you to do this. With inflation currently running at approximately 2%, if for example you are currently giving £10 per week then an increase in line with inflation would raise this figure to about £10.20 per week. So only a 20p a week increase. This year the churches have been asked to increase their parish share in line with inflation and if everyone in church did this then we would be able to cover our costs without having to find very much extra.

Prayer and Gift Day

Thank you to all of you who came and prayed and who gave and pledged to gift towards our new sound system and screen. We managed to raise over 5000 pounds and as I write this report the PCC have agreed to use some legacy money to complete the project so by next year we should have a the new systems installed in both churches.

Fund raising

Our work together has included a number of successful fundraising events. We have raised money for various charities, including the children's cancer ward at the RVI, The Food Bank, the People's Kitchen, the Children's Society and Tear Fund. We collected a good number of shoe boxes at Christmas. A special thank you to our young people who raised over £800 for the homeless in our sleep over in church in January 2019: we had a great night. Thank you so much to everyone involved for your generosity with your time and money.

Parish Treasurer's Report

This year has been the first full year that we have operated with one set of bank accounts for the Parish which has made it easier to manage and produce year end accounts.

Janet Bell and I have worked together organising the weekly banking for both churches and Janet does the gift aid claim for the Parish.

The account books for the Parish have been examined and approved by our Independent Examiner Mr John Jackson who also produced the 2019 Financial Statement.

The Parish Share of £42,485 was paid in full and although we have paid all outstanding bills we have run at a deficit of £7,760 (excess payments over receipts).

The Parish Giving Scheme works really well and I would urge anyone who pays tax and gives through the bank or envelope scheme to join the scheme as it really helps knowing how much is being paid into our bank account each month and they also reclaim the gift aid tax refund and this is also paid into our account monthly. To join please see Janet Bell at Throckley and myself at Newburn and we will give you a form which is easy to complete.

Celia Waugh

Electoral Roll Report

The revised roll for 2019 is as follows:

The number for St Michael's in 2018 was 49.
Since the last roll 2 members has been added.
2019 Total for Newburn 51

The number for St Mary's in 2018 was 44.
Since the last roll 1 member has died.

2019 Total for Throckley 43

The total roll for the Parish is 94.

Amanda Taylor

Schools

Assemblies continue to be an important method of bringing God's love to children and school staff. In addition to Newburn Manor, Walbottle Village and Throckley Primary, I was very pleased to give my first assembly in Talbot House. Being a governor at Talbot House continues to provide an important link to the community and an opportunity to share something of Jesus with some troubled young people. I have also recently become a governor of Newburn Manor.

Switching on the Christmas Lights

I was invited to join in the switching on of the Christmas lights outside the library this year and took the opportunity to get the school involved, singing carols. The event attracted a large crowd, demonstrating that the community can still get together if the occasion is right.

Newcastle Youth

My longstanding prayer - that we should have the opportunity to invite into the church young people who we do not see at any events – was answered in a most unexpected way. Newcastle Youth contacted me to say that they were no longer able to use their regular venue in Throckley Hall and asked if they could use St Mary's instead. They have been coming along on a Thursday evening. The extent to which I have contact with the young people varies each week, and sometimes I cannot attend at all and am very grateful to those who open and lock the church for the group, but there have been some excellent conversations with the young people.

Church Wardens

It is really difficult to thank everyone individually but I want to say thank you to the church wardens for their continued support. Mine can be a very isolated calling and often they are my first port of call when I need some help. Many people think that Church Wardens are there to do everything that no-one else wants to, but they aren't. According to the Archdeacon, wardens are there to ensure services go ahead if there is no vicar and, if there is a vicar, they are there to support them. Thank you for doing this and for working more closely together across the two churches.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF NEWBURN
INCORPORATING THE CHURCHES OF ST MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS NEWBURN AND
ST MARY THE VIRGIN THROCKLEY AND HOLY TRINITY DALTON (CHURCHYARD ONLY)
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2019

STATEMENT OF ASSETS YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2019

| | General Fund | General Fund Parsonage | Newburn Soft Furn | Sound System | Newburn Legacy | Newburn Bell | Throckley Driver Legacy | Dalton Churchyard | Magazine | Other Legacy | Total |
|----------------------------------|--------------|------------------------|-------------------|--------------|----------------|--------------|-------------------------|-------------------|----------|--------------|---------|
| Petty Cash - Newburn | 41 | | | | | | | | | | 41 |
| Petty Cash - Throckley | 28 | | | | | | | | | | 28 |
| Lloyds Bank Current Account | 6,181 | 3,129 | 2,708 | 5,415 | 1,808 | 2,029 | 12,846 | 4,931 | 1,843 | | 18,568 |
| Lloyds Bank Deposit Account | | 19 | | | | | | | | 70,287 | 11,293 |
| CSF Deposit Accounts | | | | | | | | | | | 70,287 |
| Leeds Permanent Building Society | | | | | | | | 21,690 | | | 12,946 |
| CBF - Shares | | | | | | | | | | | 21,690 |
| | 6,250 | 3,148 | 2,708 | 5,415 | 1,808 | 2,029 | 12,946 | 28,821 | 1,843 | 70,287 | 132,833 |

Thank you, thank you and thank you again

Finally, I want to thank again all those of you who have supported the building of God's kingdom through so much activity and so much prayer. The Bible teaches us that the church is a body in which every part has an essential role, and I am so grateful to everyone who has taken on their role(s) with such enthusiasm and cheerfulness. Sometimes the tasks can seem thankless but let us take encouragement from the words of Paul:

"Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labour in the Lord is not in vain."

1 Corinthians 15:58

Revd Allison Harding

Church Wardens' Report

In May we attended the Church of the Ascension Kenton for the Arch-deacon's Visitation where we were sworn in for the coming year. This meant the Parish returned to its full complement of four wardens with Janet Bell filling the vacant role at St Mary's.

Both churches had Quinquennial Inspections carried out; St Mary's in April and St Michael's in May.

We are currently working our way through those priorities identified to be completed within twelve months. Overall the architect found both churches to be in good order with no major issues.

Church attendances continue to fluctuate. In October the first contemporary evening worship service was held and was well received.

We would like to thank everyone who has supported and encouraged us during the year.

Special thanks to Allison for her hard work; particularly introducing new and different initiatives like 'The Prayer Walk' which saw the young and not so young taking part in a circular walk around the Parish; bringing a feeling of 'oneness'.

We continue to try and grow together as one Parish and to bring God's kingdom here to this place.

James Armstrong, Janet Bell, Elizabeth Hope, Amanda Taylor

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF NEWBURN
INCORPORATING THE CHURCHES OF ST MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS NEWBURN,
ST MARY THE VIRGIN THROCKLEY AND HOLY TRINITY DALTON (CHURCHYARD ONLY)
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2019

RESTRICTED/ DESIGNATED FUNDS

RESTRICTED/DESIGNATED FUND RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS

| | 2019 | 2019 | 2018 | 2018 |
|--|-------|----------------|--------|----------------|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Receipts | | | | |
| Sound System | 5,415 | - | - | - |
| Legacies - St Mary's Drive Fund | - | - | 10,000 | - |
| Donations - St Mary's Drive Fund | - | - | 30 | - |
| Interest - St Mary's Drive Fund | 7 | - | 4 | - |
| CCLA - Dividends - Dalton Churchyard | 636 | - | 615 | - |
| Donations - St Michael's Bell Fund | 160 | - | 582 | - |
| Magazine | 1,073 | - | 960 | - |
| Other Interest | 549 | - | 379 | - |
| | | 7,840 | | 12,570 |
| TOTAL RECEIPTS | | 7,840 | | 12,570 |
| Payments | | | | |
| Bells - St Michael's | 404 | - | - | - |
| Noticeboard - St Mary's | 930 | - | - | - |
| Dalton churchyard | 691 | - | 571 | - |
| Magazine | 723 | - | 726 | - |
| | | 2,748 | | 1,297 |
| TOTAL PAYMENTS | | 2,748 | | 1,297 |
| EXCESS OF RECEIPTS OVER PAYMENTS | | 5,092 | | 11,273 |
| Represented by | | | | |
| FUND AS AT 1ST JANUARY 2019 | | 120,839 | | 110,063 |
| Increase (Decrease in market value of shares) | | 3,419 | | -497 |
| Transfer to General Fund | | -5,915 | | - |
| Excess of receipts over payments | | 5,092 | | 11,273 |
| FUND AS AT 31ST DECEMBER 2019 | | 123,435 | | 120,839 |

PCC Secretary's Report

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF NEWBURN
INCORPORATING THE CHURCHES OF ST MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS NEWBURN,
ST MARY THE VIRGIN THROCKLEY AND HOLY TRINITY DALTON (CHURCHYARD ONLY)
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2019

| | 2019 | 2019 | 2018 | 2018 |
|--|--------|---------------|--------|---------------|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Payments | | | | |
| Church Activities | | | | |
| Missions/relief agencies | | 2,584 | | 4,236 |
| Parish share | | 42,942 | | 42,485 |
| Church running expenses | | | | |
| General (Insurance, Repairs etc) | 18,155 | | 10,124 | |
| Heating and Lighting | 3,736 | | 2,437 | |
| Mission/Evangelism/Outreach | - | | 1,117 | |
| | | 21,891 | | 13,678 |
| Vicarage expenses | | | | |
| Telephone | 669 | | 684 | |
| General Rates | 2,643 | | 2,239 | |
| Water Rates | 381 | | 735 | |
| | | 3,693 | | 3,658 |
| Parsonage Expenses | | | | |
| Insurance | 836 | | 812 | |
| Repairs | - | | 60 | |
| | | 836 | | 872 |
| Clergy expenses | | | | 353 |
| | | | | 872 |
| TOTAL PAYMENTS | | 71,946 | | 65,282 |
| EXCESS OF PAYMENTS OVER (RECEIPTS) | | 7,760 | | 1,324 |
| Represented by | | | | |
| FUND AS AT 1ST JANUARY 2019 | | 11,243 | | 9,919 |
| Excess of payments over (receipts) | | -7,760 | | 1,324 |
| Transfer from Restricted/ Designated | | 5,915 | | - |
| FUND AS AT 31ST DECEMBER 2019 | | 9,398 | | 11,243 |

This year has seen the PCC chaired by Allison and Jennie and discussion of a wide range of issues, many of them arising from LYCIG local. At the end of each meeting we list all the items discussed which have been directly concerned with building the Kingdom of God. At the end of the year Joan has stood down from the PCC - thank you Joan for your service in this area. We have nominations for two new members— Hilary and Roz—which is very good news. If we could find a new PCC secretary that would be even better: I only took on the role because there was no one else to do it and it would be great to have someone who could give more time and skills to the job!

Jamie Harding

Bethany Club

The Bethany Group meets monthly on the third Sunday of the month, numbers range from the 30's to 40's. During our time together we feed the body, mind and spirit. We share God's message of love and hope not forgetting forgiveness and his grace. We share fun and laughter with games and quizzes. We can also share in sad times too.

Thank you to all those who attend and those who support by leading sessions, by making, preparing and serving the food, tea and coffee. Thank you also to those who support us in prayer.

With God's help we pray that we will continue to plant his seed and see people grow on their faith journey.

With love in Christ
Bethany Group Team.

Linda Armstrong

Noah's Ark

Noah's Ark Baby and Toddler Group continues to be a success. At present we have 34 families registered with us and an average of 12 families attend weekly.

The team , Liz Walker, Joan McStay, Margaret Bowers, Ken Ladzrie and Linda Frazer along with help from Celia Waugh provide a caring and creative atmosphere. The input from Allison has been appreciated too.

Allison led our Christmas Party celebration by telling the story of the Nativity as a 'Pass the parcel' game. Great fun was had by all. After our party food we had a visit from the man himself – Father Christmas- or as the children shouted- Santa!

We try to provide a different craft activity each week as well as play dough and the selection of toys. We also provide a healthy snack for the children and a hot drink and biscuit for the carers. *Linda Frazer*

Deanery Synod Report

The focus throughout the year has been very much on how as a diocese we bite the bullet and realise that the financial constraints on parishes, dioceses and the national Church mean we have to think and pray very radically about the future. Some parishes are struggling so much to try to meet their Parish Share and Diocesan and Deanery Synods continue to address this.

Bishop Christine's address at one Synod was very direct and she asked us to look positively at how the Church's ministry would need to change - that anxiety about money was playing too big a part in diocesan life.

She quoted Isaiah 43.19

'Watch for the new thing I am going to do. It is happening already, you can see it now! I will make a road through the wilderness and give you streams of water there.'

We are not just balancing books, our goal is to work with God's mission, not doing more of the same with less, but doing something different.

We worked in small groups to see how we might resource the future and many radical ideas came out e.g. if we have to lose even more clergy, and we do, then maybe we could group parishes and communities differently. In our group we asked that there might be some consideration of deregulation of strict rulings – DAC, quinquennials, etc. all very costly, and for more trust in the experience within parishes to get things done. There was really radical thinking going on and it was being shared very positively.

One outcome has been the initiative Authorised Ministries, training courses of some 12 weeks in aspects of ministry. A good group of us went to the Open Synod earlier in 2019 where this was introduced and in Newburn we have been involved in the Pastoral Care and Leading Worship Groups.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF NEWBURN
INCORPORATING THE CHURCHES OF ST MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS NEWBURN,
ST MARY THE VIRGIN THROCKLEY AND HOLY TRINITY DALTON (CHURCHYARD ONLY)
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2019

GENERAL FUND

UNRESTRICTED FUND RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS

| | 2019 £ | 2019 £ | 2018 £ | 2018 £ |
|---|-----------|---------------|-----------|---------------|
| Receipts | | | | |
| Regular voluntary receipts | | | | |
| Tax efficient planned giving | 3,364 | | 18,843 | |
| Other envelope giving | 7,423 | | 8,127 | |
| Other collections | 3,665 | | 3,939 | |
| Parish giving scheme | 27,379 | | 10,735 | |
| VAT refund | 526 | | - | |
| Income Tax | 9,014 | | 11,286 | |
| | | 51,371 | | 52,930 |
| Other voluntary receipts | | | | |
| Donations/Grants | 485 | | 1,634 | |
| Charities | 2,584 | | 840 | |
| | | 3,069 | | 2,474 |
| Receipts from activities for generating funds | | | | |
| Social/general fund raising | 2,280 | | 1,455 | |
| | | 2,280 | | 1,455 |
| Receipts from church activities | | | | |
| Fees (Net) | 1,175 | | 3,464 | |
| | | 1,175 | | 3,464 |
| Other receipts | | | | |
| Interest | - | | 2 | |
| Parsonage | 6,291 | | 6,281 | |
| | | 6,291 | | 6,283 |
| TOTAL RECEIPTS | | 64,186 | | 66,606 |

Independent Examiner's report to the P.C.C. of Newburn Parish

I report on the Accounts for the year ended 31st December 2019 which are set out in the accompanying pages.

Respective responsibilities of the P.C.C. and Independent Examiner

The P.C.C. consider that an audit is not required for the year under section 144 (2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to

Examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;

Follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners section 145 (5) (b) of the 2011 Act; and

State whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of Independent Examiner's Statement

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission.

An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the P.C.C. and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanation from the P.C.C. concerning any such matter. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in a full audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the accounts.

Independent Examiner's Statement

In connection with my examination, no matters have come to my attention.

Which give me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements
to keep accounting records in accordance with s.130 of the 2001 Act;
or
to prepare accounts which accord with these accounting records have not been met;
or
to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

John Jackson

1 North Side, Stamfordham, Northumberland NE18 OLA
2nd February 2020

Another big issue has been the Environment and Climate issue. General Synod have asked us all to recognise the escalating threat to God's creation from global warming and climate change, and the suffering caused, particularly to the poor; develop Shrinking the Footprint (StF) to enable the whole Church to address the issue of climate change; and to call on every Diocese to have an environment programme with a designated member of the Bishop's staff team to lead and advocate for the programme.

A group has been created across Newcastle diocese to look more closely at the impact on parishes and how we might be able to contribute to this massive concern.

Jennie Jones

Parish Safeguarding

Safeguarding continues to be a central focus of all activities within Newburn Parish. This year Safeguarding has been on the agenda at all PCC meetings.

The Parish website has been updated and complies with all safeguarding requirements. Safeguarding information on the notice boards in both churches continues to be updated in an ongoing way.

A new roles and responsibilities document has been created and updated to reflect all activities and groups which are part of parish life. This has been used to inform people of their training needs.

A code of conduct has been created for all volunteers to agree to and sign. This now needs to be shared with all those who volunteer. A Parish training session took place in November which was well attended and helped to raise the profile of safeguarding as everyone's responsibility. Any safeguarding incidents have been dealt with appropriately, relevant support and guidance has been given where needed and information has been shared with the DSO.

Past Case Review 2 has been completed and all relevant information has been shared with the diocese.

Roz Cant

Pastoral Care

Over the last year the Pastoral Care Team has developed. Some of the team have attended the Pastoral Care strand of authorised ministries course which ends in February 2020. Those who have attended the course have been approved by the PCC and will be authorised by Allison in a service on a Sunday morning, in the near future. The course has given us confidence in our understanding of pastoral care and how to be more effective in relating to and caring for all of God's people.

As part of the team Mary Weatherall takes most of the services at Rosewood Villas each month. The team also takes communion into Lindisfarne on a monthly basis, although this hasn't been as frequent whilst the activities co-ordinator has been on maternity leave.

We went into Denecroft with a number of others from the parish to sing carols at Christmas. We also went into Rosewood, but were unable to go into Lindisfarne because of a sickness bug, so the home was not allowing visitors.

We have a monthly rota for visiting the house bound with Home Communion, we go in twos, this is very well received by those we take communion to. Sadly this year a number of those we were taking communion to have died.

If the team are aware that people are ill and would like a home visit or hospital visit they are very happy to do so. The team are Sandra Hope, Mary Weatherall, Roz Jones, Joan MacStay and Molly McGovern. If anyone feels that they have the necessary skills to be part of the Pastoral team please see Allison, we would love to welcome you onto the team.

We are all called to show practical love for others and to reach out to those in need with God's love, support and fellowship so together let's keep looking out and loving those in our midst.

Sandra Hope and the team

The next PEGs event will be shortly after Easter, keep your eyes on the parish magazine and weekly sheet. The group will initiate other events throughout the year, but if you have an idea for a social occasion, share it with us, we can help you carry it out, we'll cover publicity, and anything else requiring wo/man/-power, washing up, moving chairs and tables. Teamwork at its best!

Jennie Jones

Thank you to everyone who has continued to support us this year, we couldn't do what we do without you all. The coffee morning is still going in Newburn Parish Hall on a Saturday morning from 10am until 11.30am, everyone is welcome, our numbers are not high but those who join us enjoy the conversation each week.

We are also still running the Tea Dance on a Monday afternoon, the numbers are steady for the dance and it is very much enjoyed by all who attend, it runs from 1.30pm until 3.30pm, newcomers are very welcome to join us, it is mainly sequence dancing with a little bit of ballroom and occasional line dances.

Even though our numbers are low we have still managed to give some money to charity including the RVI Children's Cancer ward, Bottom Village and St John's Ambulance to name but a few, we have donated over £1,000, much of this raised at the Soup & Bun with Carols in December, and the ongoing copper collection, it is amazing how much we raise just with the copper a lot of people just throw away!! We have also given the church over £200 by selling items from our 2nd hand table, donations for the table would be greatly received, all money from the selling of the items on the table goes to the church funds.

A reminder that we still collect old unwanted spectacles to pass on to developing countries, a much needed item for those who have no other way of getting the items they need. We also still collect used stamps for charity.

Jackie Thompson

Junior Church

Junior Church continues to meet in the Grange on the first and third Sundays in the month. Numbers are still low, averaging 4 children at each session.

We are now working from “Sunday School in a tin” Book 2, having found that Book 1 was very good and different from our old material.

Each session there is a Bible story or reading which usually matches the readings in church. There is also a relevant story but told from the perspective of someone who was actually there. Hopefully it helps us to imagine that we were there too and picture the events as told in the Bible reading. There is also a game or activity and usually something to make.

We aim to return to church in time to join the congregation for Holy Communion.

At the end of the service the children have the opportunity to share what they have been learning and finish with a prayer.

Jane Allen

Parish Events Group (PEGS)

This has been the Parish Events Group’s first year, arising from the LYCiG work which has been going on and the wish by many people to really work hard as one parish when putting on events. The major event was the Christmas Fair in November which was planned well in advance, attracted a lot of parish help and contributions to stalls and was really well-attended on the day. People had listened to what people said they liked at Christmas Fairs and all the stalls did really well – it was great fun, even if a little tiring – and with an excellent result! It was really worth the effort, thank you to everyone who helped make this so successful.

In October Margaret Ledger masterminded the Big Quiz for Tearfund, thank you, Margaret, another fun evening with a pie and pea supper. PEGs are very grateful to those who helped with setting up and clearing away and to Doris Coulton who kindly came in to oversee the heating of the pies!

In December PEGs supported the Carols, Soup and Bun event for the RVI to support Doris and team in raising funds for the Children’s ward at the RVI and also the ‘Leftovers’ Party’ in early January at which Janet Bell stretched our minds to bring in the New Year, with a fascinating quiz – thank you, Janet, a highly competitive evening!

Parish Youth Group

This has been our first full year as a parish group, meeting once a month or so on a Sunday evening in St Mary’s. The ‘Grow’ group has ceased as Sunday teatimes seemed a difficult time for the young people to meet, but all our meetings have a session of teaching and discussion throughout the year as well as the fun, games and quizzes. The group has also taken part in other parish events and we cover a gloriously wide age-range from 9 to mid-teens. Carla Turner and Dan Stone have joined Margaret Bowers and Jennie Jones on the team which is great.

The sponsored sleepover in St Mary’s was about to happen as this roundup was written last year. It was a great night with films, an hour of sport with Mark Oliver, whose work with Scripture Union and Ambassadors Football is to work and share with young people about how their faith is so much part of their sporting lives, and how they all as young Christians are part of Jesus’ team. They played ‘Blanket Tennis’ and other games without damaging anything in church! A big thank you to Allison for pulling this night together – a fulfilment from a conversation at our Vision Day. The young people had chosen ‘Changing Lives’, a charity for the homeless – once known as the Cyrenians. Jamie Harding spent some time talking and discussing the causes of homelessness and as they spent a night of fun, learning and sleeping (quite well, actually!) the youth group raised £752 for Changing Lives.

Just Desmond went to the diocesan youth camp event ‘Staying Alive’ in the summer and hopefully more will go in 2020. The group joined in the parish trip to Holy Island with their families and had a great day. They took part on Christmas Eve and with parents to help ran the Toy Tombola at the Christmas Fair.



George has helped with the sound at an Ask 7:7 event and enjoyed it. We had a great Epiphany Party again. Carla and Dan came up with great games, how about eating an Oreo, without using your fingers, and getting it from your forehead to mouth – or leaping up and down to the 12 Days of Christmas, depending on which month your birthday is!

Takes concentration!

Some picture from our events...



We have started having our 'snack time' at the end of the session, sitting round a table together and it is incredible how many good, and sometimes, deep conversations happen – a really enjoyable time. As we've said before it is not always easy to prepare programmes for young people who with their families have busy lives and who are a whole range of ages, and we really pray for them that they might draw closer to Jesus as they enjoy their time together.

Jennie Jones

Open the Book

Three years into this ministry and the Open the Book team are there each month in Newburn Manor Primary, Throckley Primary and Walbottle Village Primary. After three years, it is suggested the team start to present the cycle of bible stories again so every child at least hears the basic stories from the Bible. The programme is really welcomed in all our three primary schools with children eager to take part.

We have gathered such a good wardrobe and props it becomes increasingly easy to put each month's presentation together. There is a considerable commitment for those involved – it is part of four mornings each month, and we have a great team.

Fifteen of us went down to the Gala Theatre in Durham last summer for the 20th anniversary of Open the Book, an incredible evening sharing with other teams – what a lot of us there were.

If you ever felt like joining us – it doesn't have to be every month – do just speak to one of us.

Sandra Hope, Margaret Ledger, Jennie Jones – OTB Coordinators

Jennie Jones

