



St John the Evangelist, Whittle-le-Woods

## **Annual Report 2018**

Charity Number 1134259

**The Annual Report on the proceedings of the  
Parochial Church Council  
And the activities of the Church  
To be received by the Annual Parish Meeting 25 March 2019**

Received and adopted by the PCC on 11 March 2019

Rev Philip Venables, Chairman

Lyndon Wright & Gill Menhennet, Churchwardens

## Legal and Administrative Information

The full name of the church is St. John the Evangelist, Whittle-le-Woods.

We are a Church in the diocese of Blackburn of the Church of England, with two worship centres, the Parish Church (St. John's) and Clayton Brook Community Church. Each worship centre has a group of ministry co-ordinators who are responsible to the Parochial Church Council, which keeps one set of accounts. This Annual Report covers the activities of the Parish during the year 2018, referring to the parish as a whole with its two congregations and including the parish accounts.

Incumbent: Revd Philip Venables  
The Vicarage  
Preston Road  
Whittle-le-Woods  
Chorley PR6 7PS

Correspondence Address: Mr Lyndon Wright  
42 Clover Field  
Clayton le Woods  
Chorley PR6 7RR

Parish Church Location: Preston Road  
Whittle-le-Woods  
PR6 7PS

As a church in the Diocese of Blackburn, we are a charity excepted from registration with the Charity Commissioners. Charity number 1134259

Bankers: The Royal Bank of Scotland Plc  
56 Market Street  
Chorley  
PR7 2SD

## **The Parish of St John the Evangelist PCC Report**

The vision of the Church is as follows:

We Seek Revival through:-

**Speak Out**

**Reach Out**

**Gather in for Christ** .

During the year 2018 the following served as members of the PCC:

Rev Philip Venables – Vicar & Chair

Rev Andy Meeson – Curate (to October 2018)

Lyndon Wright – Churchwarden

Deborah Green – Churchwarden (until April 2018) Deputy Churchwarden from April 2018

David Barlow – Reader, Treasurer & Secretary

Kathy Bigio – Reader

Tony Cliffe - Deanery Synod Rep

Diane Jones – Reader

Les Jones – Reader and Deputy Churchwarden from April 2018

Gill Lancaster – Reader

Gill Menhennet – Churchwarden from April 2018

Roland Orr – Reader

Nick Brake (seconded from November 2018)

Stuart Cross

Chris Dawson

Janette Digney (to April 2018)

Jamie Dixon (to April 2018)

Frances Grieve

Peter Grieve

Anne Harris

Cath Orr – (from April 2018)

Susan Parkinson

Julie Summers

Chris Watts (from April 2018)

Val Whittle (from April 2018)

Throughout 2018 the PCC met six times. A co-ordinator report from each church was given at the meetings and a report from the various PCC teams as applicable. The Standing Committee, consisting of Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Churchwardens and Deputy Churchwardens, were required to meet five times throughout the year to make necessary decisions before the next meeting of the PCC.

### **Electoral Roll Report for 2018**

After deletions and additions, the final number of names on the Electoral Roll for 2018 was 250. There were 213 resident in the parish and 37 non-resident.

## Vicar's Report for 2018

I should like to begin with a huge THANK YOU. Of course we say thank you, above all, to God. Without him, this would be a blank page. But I want to thank all of you who are reading this, too. These are very approximate figures, but during 2018 we were involved in something like 250 church services, 60 school assemblies, 40+ Café Life sessions, 35 Friday Clubs and after-school Pathfinder Clubs, a dozen luncheon clubs, 40+ Beehive and Tots sessions, 40+ church and grounds cleaning sessions—and then there are music practices, growth groups, junior church, flowers, banking monies, and more. I'm bound to have failed to mention something (for which, forgive me). We are not a large church, but what a lot of service is going on in the Lord's name and for his glory. Thank you.

Thank you, too, to those who shoulder particular responsibilities. We are blessed with very able and gracious churchwardens whose oiling of many parts of 'church machinery' makes an unbelievable difference. We are blessed with Readers who work with such selfless dedication and to whom we should more often show our appreciation. Others work so hard to serve us musically, to serve our children, to reach out to those outside the church. We thank God for all of you.

There were a few firsts in 2018. We had our first Holiday Club for many years, which was superbly executed, and how good that we are running one again this Easter. We had a few children attend a weekend at Yorkshire Camps and for the first time we had a few church families attend the Keswick Convention together. In the summer we had our first ever wedding at Clayton Brook, and what a joy that was.

There were encouraging signs of personal growth, too. We had a good 'crop' for Confirmation at the beginning of the year. We had record numbers attend the Northern Men's and Northern Women's Conventions. Numbers at growth groups are good and these are a lifeline to many. However, we are not seeing many new conversions and this is something I'd love you to keep praying for—that the Lord will open doors.

I am constantly thrilled that we enjoy such strong relationships as two churches in one parish—or one church in two locations. It is very common for that not to be the case, so we shouldn't take this for granted nor take our eye off the ball. As in previous years, the Clayton Brook Festival was a triumph of mutual cooperation, with a wonderful Saturday outreach and Sunday service. We enjoyed a lovely Lent course together with superb teaching from Andy on the Old Testament. This year's weekend away at Abbot Hall was, for me, our best yet. Our speaker, Andy Robinson, was superb and his teaching deeply touched many hearts. In addition, there was a particularly warm and happy coming together of St John's and Clayton Brook members, and it was worth it just for that. There was good working together for Christmas, too, and I thought that with the outreach events at both churches and the two carol services, it was our best Christmas since I arrived here.

2018 was the year we said goodbye to the Meesons. They brought so much to our church and it was a real wrench to say goodbye. But what a blessing that they are still so close and we are still very much in contact. We thank God for them.

On the buildings front, the big thing was the reflooring of Clayton Brook in January. Les Jones worked tirelessly towards this and it was a real triumph. St John's is still waiting, though plans are slowly chugging forward. Once the Parish Club is sold, that will make a huge difference.

On a personal note, I reached a birthday with a 0 on the end still enjoying good health and strength, for which I thank God. I didn't enjoy anything as exciting as a trip to Kenya this year, but I did enjoy speaking on an Oakhall skiing trip again, and also at the Wellfield Church weekend away. That was such an encouraging time.

In all we do, big or small, *sola dei gloria* – to God alone be the glory.

## **Churchwardens Reports**

### **St John's**

Thanks must go once again to our efficient teams who are committed to help in the smooth running of our Sunday worship. They are an integral part and their enthusiasm and support should be congratulated.

Philip Gill, Les Deborah and I have met regularly during the past year, supporting, praying and encouraging one another.

Our Lent Course led by Andy was at times challenging but a wonderful opportunity to receive Gods word and to be able to share our thoughts with our brothers and sisters each week.

For ten days in May we supported Thy Kingdom Come, where our Churches were open and it provided an opportunity for our communities to share in the prayer tables and to be able to share conversations with one another.

Growth Groups have continued to grow as they study God`s word on a weekly basis. These meet on a variety of days and times in the week, if you are not meeting but would like to know more, please ask as you would be made very welcome.

In June there was a successful Women's event at the Vicarage, enjoyed by all, this will be continued in 2019 so look out for more details.

Throughout the year we have had our outreach meals, providing opportunities to invite friends and neighbours to spend some time in an informal and social atmosphere incorporating a supportive Christian message.

In the summer it was sadly time to say goodbye to Andy Amy and the boys. They have been a wonderful blessing to us all and our thoughts and prayers will continue to be directed in their new Ministry in Leyland.

Once again a very successful Clayton Brook festival was held in July, followed by an open air service held on the Sunday morning. The weather was glorious and it provided a great opportunity for people from Clayton Brook and St John's to join together as a team to serve the local community.

In September certainly the last time for Abbott Hall a good number of church families enjoyed quality time wrapped around a Christian message, with sufficient free quality time to thoroughly enjoy and share in fellowship with one another.

November saw the production of Brothers in Arms which was spectacular in its performance and to see real faith in action was uplifting.

Perhaps on the worst weather day of the year, our Church Adventure exploded into life at St John`s.

It was heart warming to see so many families brave the elements and enjoy a wonderful afternoon of activities and for the experience of animals on the vicarage car park. Without the drive of Nick and Jen and as always without the support of others, these outreach opportunities would not be possible.

Finally our two church buildings have continued to require updating and maintenance.

The reordering of St John`s is an ongoing process, centred in the short term around the complicated process of the sale of the Parish Club. Meetings continue to take place and more detailed architectural plans are being prepared for a wider audience.

Our love and support is there for Philip and Caroline next year to continue to unite us all and expound the Good News of Jesus.

We are committed to encourage people to worship in faith and for us all to grow, through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Thanks

God Bless, Lyndon Wright Church Warden

## **Clayton Brook**

Clayton Brook Church continues to be a light in the community and we thank God for His many blessings this year.

In January we closed for the whole month while the flooring in the main hall was replaced and a new kitchen was fitted. We were fortunate to receive a grant from BIFFA Award which enabled us to carry out this much needed refurbishment. This was an answer to prayer and the tireless work of Les Jones to secure the grant monies. During this time we joined the congregation at St. Johns each Sunday to worship and enjoy fellowship with old and new friends in the Parish.

Our growth groups have provided time for us to gain a deeper understanding of God's Word. They have been well attended but there's still lots of room for more people to join us. A number of outreach opportunities have come to fruition this year. The first was an Easter Holiday Club for children aged 5+. The theme was 'The Greatest Rescue Ever' where 25 children investigated the Easter story to find out what Jesus did for us!

The 'Young at Heart' group proved very popular with the older members of the community and congregation. Sadly, we were unable to continue, due to a shortage of volunteers, but we hope to restart the group in spring.

In May we joined in with the global prayer initiative, Thy Kingdom Come, opening our church for prayer sessions between Ascension and Pentecost. The response was disappointing but we were able to talk to those who did come about the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Responding to a need to help families struggling to provide regular meals for their children during school holidays we launched a 'Breakfast Club' during the August and October break. We invited families to eat breakfast at Church then take packed lunches home to eat later. We were blessed with lots of volunteers to man this outreach but despite wide publicity it was not well attended. However, we felt that God brought along those families He wanted us to reach.

Our regular outreach groups have continued to welcome new people. Café Life, The Luncheon Club and Prayer Breakfasts have all sought to show God's love on Clayton Brook. Thank you to the committed volunteers who help make this possible. Our annual festival in July was again, a great success. The community enjoyed a day of fun, manned and organised by a team of brilliant volunteers. We held our first wedding in July, when two of our congregation married. The church was packed as we enjoyed this special service.

In September members of the congregation from Clayton Brook & St. Johns travelled to Abbott Hall in Grange over Sands for a Parish weekend away. From babies to the more mature we enjoyed time together in beautiful surroundings with some excellent teaching from Andy Robinson.

Our adult congregation numbers have remained much the same across the year at an average of 35, with some moving on while we welcomed back old friends and some new faces. During this busy year it is clear that God has guided and blessed us as we continue to reach out and gather in for Christ.

Gill Menhennet

Church Warden, Clayton Brook Community Church

## **St John's – Prayer Report**

Intercessions are offered each Sunday at 10.30am by a small group of dedicated lay people. Tuesday evening parish prayer meetings are held once a month, numbers attending vary between 8 and 16. Individual prayer is offered at our 10.30am service each Sunday. The prayer chain remains faithfully active for urgent or emergency prayers. Thank you to every

member who prays so fervently. Small prayer groups have been meeting regularly. A new prayer group of 6 regulars and occasional others met most Sundays during the first half of the year in church after the morning service to pray for the re-ordering of St John's church and also prayer for individuals as they are brought to our attention. This will be re-instated in 2019. Thy Kingdom Come prayer initiative was held in May, attended by a small number of people each evening

### **Clayton Brook Church – Prayer Report**

This year at Clayton Brook we have taken prayer very seriously. We have prayer at the back of church for anyone who requests it during Communion. We have 2 prayer triplets that meet regularly to pray for people in need, The prayer chain that goes around St John's and Clayton Brook is great for quick prayers that are needed. Our prayer and Praise meetings have been well attended. And a special meeting met when Alex Jones was sick and in Hospital and later in the year for Rachel Walker who was seriously ill in hospital as well. We thank God that he answered the prayers and Rachel is getting stronger all the time. We have a What's App church family that is great, and proving a successful place to pray for church family and their friends and family as well. Thy Kingdom come week was disappointing because the community did not come. God willing it will go better this year.

God Bless you all in Jesus's name Julie

### **St John's Junior Church Report**

2018 has been another encouraging year for Children's Work and we would like to give God thanks and praise for the dedicated team of leaders and helpers and the privilege of teaching large numbers of children at both the morning services.

Crèche (0-3) and Bubbles (3-5) continue to meet in the large basement room. This is a great arrangement as we have 4 leaders who help each child participate as fully as possible. The initial singing/worship time is now well established with the children becoming more familiar with the songs and starting to choose what we sing. The children are usually very attentive and we have good variety of props to help us tell the bible story. The craft is always popular, with parents telling me how Daniel has been placed on the Christmas tree or the Queen Esther puppets used repeatedly to retell the story.

Splash (years 1-3) and Searchlight (years 4-5) meet in the School Hall where we learn about the same Bible story. The children are always keen to help act out the story. They are attentive, eager to learn and a joy to teach. Thank you so much to the twenty adults who help lead Junior Church and the further six who lead Pathfinders.

#### **Pathfinders**

Children start Pathfinders at the end of year 5 and it is so encouraging to see them settle down and engage with the bible, learning to listen to God speak to them through any of its chapters. We always have lively discussions with lots of questions. Parents, please continue to engage with your children asking what they have learnt and following up the lesson.

Pathfinder club (Tuesdays 3.30-5.15) continues to be well attended. The children love the combination of food, physical fun in the garden (or hide and seek in the church on a rainy day) and serious bible study where we have more time to engage with their questions. Please keep praying that the Pathfinders learn to love Jesus more and put him first in their lives.

We continue to thank God for every child and every leader and for leading, inspiring and sustaining us week by week. To God be the glory.

- Caroline Venables

## **Clayton Brook Church - Junior Church Report**

The work with our under 18's has continued to be extremely active and encouraging. The structure of our Sunday groups continued with teaching in three age-appropriate groups.

We have a total of 8 leaders (on rota) allocated to Young & Free, our teenage group, Kings Kids, for School Years 1 to 5, and the crèche Sunbeams. Teaching has included lessons from the Old Testament, through to the Missionary Journeys of Paul. Sunbeams (with play and Bible story) has met for most of the year dependent upon need. As always, numbers are variable but typically can range from 10 to 18.

Friday Club continued to run successfully, supported by an extremely committed team of leaders and the prayer backing of the Church. Membership is limited to 35 children with weekly attendance around 20 to 25. We are pleased to report that some children have transitioned to Sunday attendance (some regular, some occasional).

Some special events have been enjoyed throughout the year, letting the children see they are part of the "big family of God".

In February some attended St Johns "Party in the Dark".

In March we hosted the Easter Holiday Club.

In June, 5 of our young people enjoyed a weekend at Yorkshire Camps.

In September, 2 boys went on a taster day to Yorkshire Camps.

In October, Young & Free enjoyed a film and pizza night.

In November, we welcomed the joint churches youth event, Connect.

In December, we celebrated Christmas with our 6<sup>th</sup> Messy Christmas event, and of course a party night! Thanks to the generosity of the congregation, we distributed around 60 gifts to the children on our Friday, Sunday and Tots at Church registers.

Finally, thank you for supporting the children's work in your prayers. It is a privilege to be involved in ministry and witnessing to new and young disciples.

DL Moody said "If I could re-live my life, I would dedicate my entire ministry to reaching children for God".

## **Safeguarding Report 2018**

The Safeguarding Team which oversees safeguarding policy and practice within the parish met twice during the year to consider policy and complete a self-evaluation form for the Diocese.

The team consists of the Vicar, two Safeguarding Children's Champions, two Adult Safeguarding Champions, the Disclosure and Barring Service Administrator and the Parish Safeguarding Officer.

The team's terms of reference are as follows:

- Completing the Parish Safeguarding Self Audit at least once a year,
- Reviewing the safeguarding needs within the parish, at least annually,
- Reviewing the Parish Safeguarding Policy and Procedures at least annually,
- To consider safeguarding training requirements within the parish on an ongoing basis, with particular regard to Diocesan recommendations,
- Ensuring that appropriate records are kept in a safe place,



- Signing off the Annual Safeguarding report to the PCC and Annual Parochial Church Meeting

### Activity

There were no safeguarding incidents during the year.

The team has met twice during the year and reviewed the safeguarding policy (based on the one recommended by Blackburn Diocese) and procedures. The policy remains unchanged from 2017. The website includes the parish approach to safeguarding and the names of both internal and external contacts.

There was one parish safeguarding training event in December, facilitated by a Diocesan Safeguarding Team member, at which most of the PCC attended together with several people who lead in children's and young people's work in both churches. This was in addition to the training courses offered directly by the Diocese.

The team completed the Parish Safeguarding Self Audit in 2018 which was signed off by the PCC.

## Social & Outreach Team

We have a great team . . . but evangelism is always difficult. We had some good events again this year, including two outreach meals, prayer breakfasts, an excellent and moving women's evening in June in the vicarage garden, the week of Thy Kingdom Come (which involved some very hard work and beautiful displays in church), the Brothers in Arms production to coincide with the Armistice, the Holiday Club and the Christmas outreach. It would be so encouraging for us to see more of our congregation supporting these events—ideally, every one of us reading this page. In addition, we still have an unfulfilled aim of visiting our parish and making contact with those who otherwise would never come our way. Pray that our Lord Jesus would set before us an open door which no one may shut (Revelation 3:8).

## Fabric and Finance Report

Over the past year we have kept a 'weather eye' on both church buildings and surroundings. *At St John's,*

The Friday team have kept paths and cremation pot areas free from weeds and spring plants put in the garden areas, bushes trimmed. The inside of church is cleaned and polished every Friday. The cleaning days organised by the Church Wardens were successful.

The west wall ,wall/ roofing coping stones and roofing gully have been surveyed by Cassidy Ashton and plans have been costed up and are in place to repair these areas during 2019.

(Costs are not given due to coming tenders for this work)

Most of the jobs highlighted by the Quinquennial report have been completed, however we are still concerned about the church ground walls ( pointing,erosion,missing stones).

The Drains and roof water systems are being checked out, work has begun on the foul drain from the downstairs toilet.

The main porch door is in very bad condition, this has been priced up to replace, but no action taken yet! (Approx £1500-1700)

A ramp was designed and price up, at present we are using a fold away temporary ramp.approx(£ 700-900)

*At Clayton Brook Community Church.*

The beginning of the year (January) saw the completion of the Kitchen and Hall flooring. We were very pleased with the completed project. Also very thankful to BiffaAward for the community grant.

We have maintained the ground areas by employing a local gardener, who cuts the grass, hedges and keeps the car park and pathways clear of weeds and pot holes.

The rear of the roof was badly eroded by rain and the roof frame was compromised. A new dry verge and gully channeling has been fitted as well as new batons and roof tiles in that area.

It became clear that we could not keep the rooms clean ourselves as the church rooms are used nearly every day at some time. A cleaning firm now comes twice per month and professionally clean all areas of the building.

Planning is in the early stages to seek grants to replace all gas heaters and a boiler system install radiators in all rooms. To re fit new low energy ceiling lighting and wiring. To replace all lower windows with new PVC frames and D/glazed units.

### **St John's - Pastoral Team**

There are 4 members on the pastoral team & over the past 12 months we have continued to identify those who are ill, bereaved or have been missing from church, contact them by phone & follow up with a visit if requested.

Some people are quite happy to receive a phone call & a chat is all they require.

We have, however, administered communion on a monthly basis to 15 house bound members of the parish. Three elderly ladies are now living in Residential Care so we take communion to Willow Bank, & Arrowsmith Lodge. A further 2 people were either visited in hospital or seen shortly after their return home, given communion & visited or contacted regularly until they were well enough to attend church. One couple have moved out of the parish & unfortunately during the course of the year 3 people we visited have died.

We continue to visit the local care homes, (Highcliffe & Brookside), alternate months where we offer a short communion service. The residents take part by reading the Bible & singing a song or hymn they are familiar with. The co-ordinators of both these homes are very supportive of this ministry. The vicar takes the service the month's in-between.

### **Clayton Brook Church - Pastoral Team**

Our Pastoral team have continued to offer practical and spiritual support to our congregation throughout the year. The needs of our congregation are varied but we have endeavoured to care for everyone, whatever their situation. We have kept in touch with those we haven't seen in Church for a while in order to maintain contact, if required. We identified a need for older members to meet up during the week, for fellowship and support. In response, we held some taster sessions of Young At Heart where some came along for a chat over tea and cake while others played board games. It proved very popular but sadly due to a lack of volunteers we

were unable to continue. We are hoping to restart this group when the warmer weather arrives.

Every fortnight we visit Marjorie, one of our congregation, who now lives at Meadowbank. We also arrange for her to have regular communion.

Each Sunday we give the flowers out to someone who is in need of encouragement or as a thank you. We also send cards to those celebrating a special birthday or other important events in their lives.

We thank God that He has asked us to be His hands and feet in this place and pray that He will guide us throughout 2019.

### **Mission Team Report**

The Mission Team works on behalf of the PCC to make decisions about how the 10% tithe of church income should be distributed. The Mission Giving Strategy focuses on three main priority areas for financial support:

- Word Mission (ministries that take the gospel to people all over the world);
- Need Mission (ministries that directly respond to the teachings of Jesus to care for the poor and those in need);
- Targeted Mission (a Mission Fund that people within our two churches may apply to for support for their own mission related activities).

The 10 ministries that we regularly support are Barnabas Fund, Churches Ministry among Jewish People, Church Missionary Society (CMS – Alf and Hilary Cooper in Chile), Crosslinks (Paul Hunter in Tanzania), Compassion (through individual sponsorship), Open Doors, Street Pastors, Tearfund, The Salvation Army, Wellfield Church in Leyland. These were selected on the basis that they are on the whole well-established, working alongside local churches worldwide, and that we have advocates within our churches willing to speak out and pray on their behalf. Intercessors are asked to pray for our mission partners regularly throughout the year. We have a dedicated noticeboard outlining the work of each ministry at the back of St Johns and a portion of noticeboard at Clayton Brook where information about the ministries is rotated on a regular basis.

In 2018 we had a visit from Alf and Hilary Cooper our CMS partners in February, and a visit from Paul Hunter (Crosslinks) in April, both preaching in Sunday services. We held one service dedicated to mission in November (theme: Suffering Church) with John Chitham preaching, and we welcomed Jonathan Milton Thompson as a speaker for World Mission also in November. In June a Grab and Go (coffee and croissant) Fellowship Breakfast was held at Clayton Brook with speakers Jane Moxon and Robert Sakr from the Churches Ministry among Jewish People (CMJ) and in October a (fully cooked) Prayer Breakfast was held with a speaker from the Prison Christian Fellowship. Both were well attended and informative. We had two applications to the Mission Fund to support Christian ministry (Street Pastors outreach, Acorn International) from members of the congregation. In November our growth groups discussed two studies on mission using Crosslinks material to raise awareness and interest. Also in November we took part in Operation Christmas Child supplying 94 shoeboxes to children in the Ukraine. We support a local food bank at Living Waters Church in Chorley and collect stamps for the Leprosy mission. This year as usual our harvest produce was donated to Fox Street mission in Preston, and any monetary gifts were donated to the Bishop's Harvest Appeal focussing on Sierra Leone (Kids in Kailahun) and the Brazilian Quilombola community (brazil nut providers from the Amazon).

We thank everyone who has supported Mission within our two churches over the past year, and encourage everyone to get more involved. Please see our mission leaflet for more information about the individual ministries we support (available at the back of each church).

## **Communications Team**

### Key activities 2018

#### a. Website

1. Improved photography on home page - this now includes a combined church 'people' image
2. History of St John's added to the website (similar content for Clayton Brook Church is 'pending')
3. Improved News and Blog content included.
4. Website guidelines for maintenance and improvement created (Ed Lillie)
5. Ministry support and links updated on site
6. Contact Us form improved to include GDPR opt in consent (to use email address for future activities)

#### b. Facebook (and other) promotion

1. Facebook regularly used to promote outreach and church events (including Christmas ADVENTure)
2. Total number of Facebook 'likes' increased to 202 people across the year
3. Free, boosted Facebook posts have increased the number of people in the local community who receive our communications. The following are our more popular posts:
  - a. Christmas Services (notification of dates, times etc) – 1,591 people reached in local community
  - b. Christmas ADVENTure – 1,333 people reached
4. Mail Chimp email software tested for communications to church members (roll out in 2019)

## **Parish Gazette**

The gazette continues to maintain its content and quality and produces 16 A4 pages per issue. It is a good source of communication and information for the parish. The poor quality of some photographs has now been resolved. The Sept-Dec editions were distributed to each new child in the infant department of both church schools. This enabled their parents to be informed of services and activities in both churches. Thank you to the schools for helping with this. A double edition was produced for July & August and again for December & January. There was one advert in the Gazette last year from professional businesses. This brings in much needed revenue to help the Gazette to be more cost effective. The Gazette is currently being offered free of charge and almost all copies are taken each month, however many people are still donating money to the cost of printing. Thank you to all who do this. One large print copy was produced each month for a lady with poor sight. This was much appreciated. The Parish Gazette is now available on the church website in colour, and to individuals who request it by email. Thank you to everyone who has contributed articles throughout the year.

## **Café Life Report**

This ministry takes place at Clayton Brook Community Church every Monday from 9am-2pm except during statutory holiday periods.

We were closed throughout January as the kitchen was refurbished.

There is a team of 7 volunteers who work in pairs to offer a friendly welcome to whoever walks through the door. It is a place where people can come for a friendly chat. We offer a selection of beverages, soup, bacon sandwiches & cakes at low prices just to cover costs. Our aim is to offer a safe space with a friendly smile & show the love of God. Although attendance varies on a week-to-week basis we have a regular clientele which has grown steadily over the past year.

### **The Luncheon Club**

The luncheon club recommenced in March last year after refurbishment of the Clayton Brook kitchen. We then met every month apart from August. Led by Leigh Cottam a small team of volunteers provide a nutritious 3 course meal to an average of 12-15 persons at a charge of £5.00. Service begins at 12.30pm on the third Thursday of each month when all our sexagenarian + clients have gathered. Usually at the end of the meal we enjoy a short talk or thought for the day while tea or coffee is served. Some folk often stay on to chat or knit together or sing along to some well known classics or play board games

### **Ladies Fellowship**

The Ladies Fellowship met every month during 2018. There were a variety of speakers including Jim Atkinson (showing slides), Eric Bell and Caroline Venables. Dedra Moss gave a demonstration of flower arranging and we had two meals out at Leyland Golf Club. As the Ladies Fellowship has fewer people who are attending, it has been decided to end it, except for the meals out.

### **Tots at Church**

For preschool parents and their carers, we meet every Tuesday morning 9.15-10.30 term time only. Our group includes play and social time for parent and children where we provide toast, juice, tea and coffee. followed by an age appropriate bible study for the children, with songs to finish.

In 2018 we had approximately 20 children each week, with roughly 10 carers. After loosing a few to school we have topped it back up to approximately 20 again.

The tots group has been lead by Amy Meeson until she relocated in July. Since restarting In September I (Charlotte Calvert) have taken over the group. We have actively tried to tie the group in with things the church is organising, informing parents of activities within the church with the use of flyers and the private face book page. We had a good number attend Christmas activities.

Amy held a mums bible study on being a Christian parent. With the help of volunteers holding a “crèche” whilst the group was in session we had 4 mums attend and encouraged 2 of our mums and their families to our Sunday congregation.

### **Beehive Report**

This year the numbers of children coming to the Beehive have fluctuated somewhat since the Nurseries introduced 30 free hours for 3yr. olds upwards which resulted in us losing a number of children therefore reducing the income each week. At the moment we have between 15 to 25 children who come with their parents/grandparents etc. Also the rent at the Village Hall was increased this year making it difficult to cover the rent each week which soon depleted our funds. We applied for 2 grants which were accepted, one with the Co-op Society which is ongoing and the other from Eric Bell (Whittle Council) which has been a great help towards the running of the Beehive. We praise God for His provision.

Highlights of the year were:-

March – The children enjoyed an Easter Egg hunt and various Easter Crafts followed by a party lunch.

June - We had a Teddy Bears picnic on the play area next to the Hall which was enjoyed by all.

July - We had another fantastic trip to Windmill Farm which was thoroughly enjoyed by everyone. Also we had our annual Leavers Party and the theme this year was Pirates and Princesses.

During the summer holidays, the Mums, Grandparents etc. met in various Parks around the area instead of the Beehive.

October - Caroline gave a visual talk for our Harvest Morning followed by a party lunch.

December – The children all took part in our Nativity Play and we ended the year with our usual Christmas Party when the children received a book from Father Christmas.

We have a wonderful team of helpers who ensure the Beehive runs smoothly each week and we praise God for His continued blessing and provision for all our needs.

## **Deanery Synod Report**

I have attended all three meetings in 2018 and there have been key areas as a diocese The Diocesan Vision continues to be the main theme. Key areas are.

Making Disciples: 2019 focus is on “Sharing the Vision of Christ” in words and deeds. Part of this will be the Bishop’s Bible challenge for Key Stage 2 students, with one being developed for adults too. Also Discovering Pathways to Prayer, The Diocesan Conference and a DVD based resource “Generosity, Gift and Grace”. A Leading Your Church into Growth course will also be available.

Resourcing Vision: Teaching people about giving, growing spiritually and ensuring we know how much a parish costs to run.

Being Witnesses: Can we cooperate across parishes to deliver Alpha or Christianity explored. Giving leaflets to new housing development offices.

Growing Leaders: Being all in for God. Growing our own church leaders, there is an Occasional Worship Leaders course available

Children and Young People: I am inviting people from other parishes to events to ensure young people can get between parishes for events.

Messy Church is a fantastic gift for primary age children. There is also Messy Science for years 7-8. We are encouraged to make connections with non-church schools in our area. Possible use of “Open the Book” resource.

## **Treasurers Report – 2018**

Thank you again to all those who have contributed financially over the year, with some 80 people now giving regularly either by envelope or standing order, and a substantial number also gift aiding their donation. This allows us to claim an additional 25% from the HMRC (over £16,800 in 2018) which goes a long way to pay our bills. Thanks to everyone who does gift aid and to Tracey and Martin Edge for their very efficient work in making the claims.

Thanks also to all those people who continue to regularly help with the Church finances whether counting the collections, banking or reclaiming Gift Aid. Particular thanks to Mike Green who has done a great job again this year.

## Income

Giving remained in line with 2017; thank you to everyone who does contribute regularly and particularly to those who were able to increase their giving in the year. As a church over 96 % comes from you in the form of weekly giving, donations and gift aid.

It is hoped that further major work at St Johns can start in 2019, including one further major repair to the west wall of the church.

We had a deficit of some £14,000 in 2018 the major element of this being two substantial items of repair at Clayton Brook, which after 30 years or so is starting to see areas of the fabric which need addressing.

The PCC have agreed a deficit budget for 2019 of some £10,000 which leaves us with reserves of just under £16,000 at December 2019.

We anticipate that money may remain tight and continue to be a test of our faith. However we worship a generous God and praise Him we have always been able to pay our bills and have of course repaired St John's roof and tower in recent years and undertaken new work and repairs at Clayton Brook.

We will be undertaking a number of sermons and teaching on financial responsibilities in 2019 as part of a wider range of teaching on discipleship.

## Expenditure

The largest areas of expense were again:-

- Our Parish Share to the Diocese was over £59,494. The Parish Share paid for Philip and Andy together with modest support for the Diocese.
- Heating, lighting, utilities and services were over £20,000 covering electricity, gas, oil, water, council Tax, and insurance.
- Repairs at St Johns were minimal this year but we had two major items of expenditure at Clayton Brook, a new pump and part of the roof needed repairing at a joint cost of over £12,200 partly offset by the Clayton Brook rental income which is now restricted to fabric repairs.
- Ministry and outreach spend was some £6,700 and admin costs were low at £800, including bank charges of £300.
- Finally the church remains committed to giving 10% of its income to charity which this year amounted to £9,800.

The church has balanced its books again and continued to raise funds for the roof repairs and building work. Please consider your giving again for the coming year; as we know God (and the Church Treasurer) loves a cheerful and generous giver.

## Gift Aid

If you do make regular or one off donations and are a tax payer, and do not gift aid, please give serious consideration to doing so. The scheme is confidential. If you do gift aid already but make one off donations to the church (flowers etc) please indicate on your donation and we will then be able to reclaim the tax.

## Independent Examiner's Report

### Accounts