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**Annual Report**

**on Activities**

**2023**

**Vicar’s Report for 2023**

This has been a year of returning to a more normal pattern after several years of uncertainty and instability. Our Lent, Holy Week, Easter, Harvest and Christmas services were well attended and had a lovely, celebratory feel. Our 4pm Children’s services have gathered a small but regular group of families and we have enjoyed two good Parade Services with the children from our uniformed groups.

This stability has enabled us to begin to look forward once more rather than reacting to external pressures. Our PCC held a planning day using the material produced by our facilitator and Deanery Mission Enabler, Revd Dr Rae Caro. Several themes emerged from this day such as more focus on engaging with children, young people and young families alongside a greater lay involvement in the core ministry of our church. The PCC set aside extended time at two of its meetings in the Autumn to think through these two themes as we look to incorporating these into a wider Mission Action Plan.

I am very grateful to all who have supported the ministry of Holy Saviour’s over the year; those who serve on PCC, our Altar Servers, Sidespeople, Deanery Synod Representatives and especially our Churchwardens, Janice Torpy and Ruth Day. I am also indebted to our Curate, Rosemary New for her service to Holy Saviour’s. Rosemary had to make a difficult decision in the Spring to defer her ordination as priest due to the uncertainty around the ‘Living in Love and Faith’ process in the wider Church of England. Despite this, Rosemary has continued to serve the congregation in pastoral support and in public ministry. It was good to welcome Helen Young on Placement with us as part of her training for ordination and to enjoy her ministry over six months. I am also pleased that John Pearce has decided to offer himself as an Authorised Lay Worship Leader. I hope that John will be able to start his year of training in 2024.

In the Spring we were able to join in the national celebrations for the Coronation of King Charles III with a special service and an Afternoon Tea. It was good to have a full social programme throughout the year (see the Social Sub-Committee Report). It is difficult to pick a highlight from an excellent programme, but the day trip to Holy Island, which culminated in a service in St Mary’s Church next to the Priory, was well received.

While the year has been more stable than recent times, we have still faced some significant issues. The day-to-day management of the Village (formerly Parish) Hall has been a challenge without a Parish Administrator to look after bookings and invoicing. We have also struggled to find and retain a cleaner for the Hall. While this goes largely unnoticed by the majority of the congregation, those charged with daily management have found the situation a distraction from our core ministry as a church. I am hopeful we are moving towards a better solution to this issue.

It has been a sadness that we saw the closure of several groups long associated with Holy Saviour’s. Our Rainbows and Guides groups ended after many decades of service to the girls of Tynemouth and HoHo, the Hard of Hearing Group, held their final meeting at the year’s end. The issue with all these groups has been the lack of people willing to volunteer and commit to leadership roles. Our other uniformed groups are also facing uncertainty due to issues with succession in leadership.

The Hall Refurbishment Project has taken some steps forward. We agreed to fund the next stages of planning which will get us to the point where we have Local Authority planning consent and be able to put the various aspects of the plan out to tender. This will assist us in more targeted funding applications for discrete aspects of the project. We have received some funding from the RW Mann Trust and promised funding from other trusts. We have also been successful in the first stages of a major government levelling up fund. However, we are still a long way from having sufficient funds to start the work and I am hoping that we can attract some significant funding in the next year.

Looking beyond our own congregation to the Deanery, in July the Deanery Development Plan was published. This is a five year plan which looks at many aspects of our shared ministry across the Deanery and how we might work in a more collaborative way in mission. Just two of the areas considered in the plan are engagement with the large number of new houses being built and work with the 62 schools in our Deanery. The plan also looks at staffing and a reduction in the number of clergy, with parishes working in partnership. Not surprisingly, the plan links Holy Saviour’s with our neighbours in the North Shields Team; something I have spoken about over the last couple of years. This is now becoming a more pressing matter as we look to implement the plan and with the imminent retirement of Canon Glyn Evans, Team Rector for North Shields. Though no doubt unwelcome, we will have to become accustomed to sharing clergy across a number of churches. I am hopeful that in our case we will have a small ministry team of clergy and lay leaders who will minister in Tynemouth and North Shields.

I am very grateful to all who support Holy Saviour’s through regular donations. 2023 has been a better year for our finances with increased income from lettings of the Village Hall and Parish Centre and the savings from employment. I am pleased we were able to support two external charities with grants and offer an additional £10,000 to the Diocese in Parish Share. I believe we should be a generous church and I am looking to organise a Giving Sub-Committee in the next year. However, we can never be complacent with our finances with the continued rise in the cost of living. At the start of 2024 our energy contract expires and we will be faced with doubling of energy costs, so we need to be as efficient as possible with our energy use for the sake of our coffers and the environment.

It would be impossible to mention our finances without paying tribute to our dear friend Karen Bilton who was so diligent in serving Holy Saviour’s as Treasurer. Her untimely death is greatly lamented by us all and we will be forever grateful for the grace and enthusiasm which marked her ministry among us and the wider community. My thanks to David Bilton for taking on the task of holding our finance in the latter part of the year.

We have also said our farewells to several other long standing members of the congregation who were stalwarts of our fellowship; Clare Brown, Brian Rayner, Len and Barbara Walker and Myra Patterson. May they rest in peace and rise in glory.

Finally, I am deeply grateful to all who are a part of the community of faith we call Holy Saviour’s; for your forbearance with the issues we have faced together and the cheerful and prayerful attitude you bring to the worship and ministry we share together. Thank you.

Revd Steve Dixon

**Condition of the Church, Parish Centre and Village Hall for 2023**

At the beginning of 2023 communion was reintroduced at the rail but to continue with tincture only at this time. The Parish Centre has been used on occasions during the winter months for Wednesday morning and Sunday evening Services. This was done to hopefully keep the heating costs down in church. We continue to offer our Live stream service for those wishing to watch at home.

We started the year without a Parish Administrator. A number of PCC members volunteered to help out with some of the office tasks to see if the church could manage without an administrator. Over the course of the year it became apparent that help was still needed despite measures being put in place to quicken some of the tasks in hand. A proposal was put to the PCC for a new administrator and accepted. Our website has been updated and changed to a cheaper and more efficient provider. The information on Google and Google Maps for the Village Hall has been corrected and the post code on the website has been put right. Sky is now our new phone provider after PlusNet stopped supporting businesses.

The PCC agreed to essential work being carried out on the Church Drainage System as the Quinquennial Inspection believed blocked drains were beginning to cause problems to the church fabric. Two problem drains not connected to the main drainage system and possibly a failed soakaway were identified. We received an acceptable quote from Rapid Response of £725 + VAT to install a chamber and try to unblock the section of soakaway. If this can’t be unblocked a new soakaway will be priced up on site. Permission was sought from the Archdeacon to carry this out.

All annual checks and servicing have been undertaken on our boilers/alarms/CCTV/electrics. The organ was checked for a couple of problems and the annual maintenance carried out by Lightbown.

We had a visit from two Ecclesiastical Insurance Assessors in March. There were questions asked of the vicar and churchwardens and an inspection carried out inside and outside church and at the Village Hall. The Risk Management Report was received in June and in essence most of the requirements needed had been carried out or were already in place. Two new Risk Assessments were asked for (1) Slips and Trips and (2) Work at Height. Both have been attended to and records updated.

The Parish Hall has been renamed Church of the Holy Saviour, Tynemouth Village Hall as indicated by the new signage. We said goodbye to TVDC on 6th Jan. A working day was organised for 27th Jan to clean and do repairs in the hall. A big Thank You to the small taskforce of volunteers who turned up to do this. The hall was found to be short of tables and an appeal was quickly answered allowing the purchase of 17 new tables. Thank you to those for their generosity and Clare Brown’s legacy.

The Church and Parish Centre are in a good state of repair and we have had several church fund raising events e.g. Colle Voce Choir, Brothers Gillespie Concert, a Murder Mystery and a grand Christmas Raffle.

The churchwardens would like to thank all those who help keep Holy Saviours up and running, looking loved and cared for and keeping us a part of our Community.

**Work Executed During January – December 2023**

Church Interior - The Electrician was called to fix the Transept and both vestry lights on the consumer unit and in a separate incident, replace a faulty socket in the vestry, which had caused a short on the system. Safety covers were added to the doors in the Parish Centre and a valve replaced in the disabled toilet.

Repairs to Roof –Rightway Roofers cleared the church gutters and re-felted the choir vestry roof. The Parish Centre guttering was checked where they discovered someone had attempted to steal the lead. There have been several loose tiles replaced on the Parish Centre due to high winds, this is an on going problem.

Parish Hall - The roofers also cleared the hall gutters and sorted the soffits. The chimney at the rear of the hall was repointed and the lead down pipe on the right of the hall’s front door repaired.

Churchgrounds – We would like to thank our ‘Garden Angel’ Jack and his company who cut back the hedges and treated the moss/algae on the paths free of charge this summer. Jack and his fiancée were married at Holy Saviours in September.

Janice Torpy and Ruth Day

**Mothers Union**

We continue to meet once a month. We have 28 members with an average attendance at meetings of 18. We do not have a branch leader so are committee led.

In 2023 we enjoyed various speakers including Chris Million from The Mission Aviation Fellowship, Helen Cooper on the kneelers at Howick, Rev Anne Marr on "Trees in Tribute",

and Joan Hoult from Walking With. We continue to support the baptisms at church by donating baptism books.

We have also held in - branch celebrations for the Coronation and Mary Sumner Day. A Coffee Morning to raise funds for Action and Outreach within the Diocese was also organised.

We would welcome new members. Why not come along?

Cathy Duff

**Holy Saviour’s Social Sub-Committee Report for 2023**

We have enjoyed a busy programme of events during 2023 including concerts by Colle Voce, Musica Johannis (Lent and Christmas), The Brothers Gillespy (in aid of the Hall Refurbishment project) and the Vermont Big Band. We held an Afternoon Tea to celebrate the Coronation of King Charles III and enjoyed an excellent day trip to Holy Island. As the Autumn nights drew in we held a Quiz Night and Murder Mystery Night and ended the year with a Christmas Raffle. Though the remit of the Social Sub-Committee is to coordinate and organise social events for Holy Saviour’s Church where we can have fun together and invite family and friends, we also raised over £5,000 for church funds.

Thanks to our members, Liz Parr, Carol Davidson, Maureen Rayner and Don Charlton and to

Chris and Linda Benneworth who recently re-joined the committee. Also thank to all who assisted the Committee through their help at various events.

Revd Steve Dixon

**W3 (Woman Warmly Welcomed) March 2023/March 2024**

We have continued our friendly monthly meetings offering a diverse programme of meetings and activities.

Meetings in the parish centre have included a talk about the life of the Westminster choristers both in school and the abbey, to a beetle drive and making Christmas cards. Outdoor visits included; the jam jar cinema, a visit behind the scenes of the Victorian New Tyne theatre in Newcastle and a very cold and windy visit last June to Tynemouth Priory.

As usual we gave charitable donations this year to Nite bite and Holy Saviour’s Church.

Wyn Portway

**Knitting and Art Group Report for 2023/24**

We meet alternate Mondays in the Parish Centre except Bank Holidays. Dates for meetings are issued in advance and can be found on the church notice boards.

The painting group usually number 3 or 4. Joan Kean assists anyone who needs help and guidance whilst the knitter numbers can vary up to about 9 people including members from churches in the Willington Team, Wallsend and members of Tynemouth community.

The knitting group continue to make prayer shawls for distribution to those needing comfort, for example due to illness, as well as bringing along their own projects. At the moment we are collaborating to make a blanket by each making individual squares which will be sewn together.

The group held its first exhibition of work in February which was very well attended. Pictures by the artists were available to take home for a donation to church funds and as well as donations received for tea and coffee over £300 was raised.

Anyone can join our group and would be most welcome, even if only to drop in for a drink and a chat.

Clare Dixon and Joan Kean