



## **The Parish of St John the Baptist, Stamford Bridge and All Saints' Catton St John the Baptist Stamford Bridge**

### **Annual Reports 2018 -2019**

#### **Associate Priest's Report**

When I think back over the last year I realise what a lot has happened since the APCMs in 2018.

Last May we said farewell and thank you to the Rev Fran Wakefield who moved on after nine years as the Rector of The Stamford Bridge benefice to become the half-time Vicar of St Hilda's in Tang Hall, York. We also lost her husband, the Revd Dr Gavin Wakefield, who had become a highly valued friend and priest. After a moving celebration of Fran's ministry a large number of the church family gathered in the Old Station Club for an enjoyable lunch in appreciation of their valuable work amongst us.

Since the benefice went into vacancy very many people have worked tirelessly to maintain God's ministry and mission in these parishes.

Over the summer a considerable amount of time and effort was spent putting together a Parish Profile which properly reflects the demographics of the villages as well as the work of our three churches. The Rector's post was advertised and interviews were held in September but no appointment was made. The post has now been re-advertised and we are hoping and praying that a good appointment will be made after the interviews scheduled for early May 2019.

Over the last ten months we acknowledge that there are things we would like to do but have not yet been able to achieve, but I think we should be proud of how well the work of our churches has continued and flourished. With the help and support of visiting clergy and our Readers we have covered the weekly Sunday services. We are blessed now to have two Readers in our benefice – Lucy Lawson has been joined by Wendy Macfarlane who was admitted and licensed as a Reader in York Minster last November. We have appreciated their involvement and leadership in many services, especially the All-Age services and 1<sup>st</sup>@4. The vacancy has been an opportunity for our RPAs to take more responsibility and I have been very grateful for their support and help. Wendy Macfarlane has taken school assemblies and maintained our link with the SB Primary School and Judith Hewitt, the Reader from Dunnington, has taken our monthly services at the Beaumont Nursing Home for which we are most grateful.

We have celebrated the Christian festivals throughout the year but for me the highlight was Remembrance Sunday when a good congregation gathered at Catton for their service and then a huge

crowd gathered at the war memorial in Stamford Bridge for the laying of wreaths and about 300 people squeezed into St John's for the Parade service. A very special occasion indeed.

It is encouraging that we are receiving many requests for occasional services (Baptisms, weddings and funerals) as they provide great opportunities for mission to the wider community. We look forward to welcoming a good number of families to church over the summer when they bring their children for baptism.

I hesitate to name individuals in this review as so many church members have been involved in so many different ways and I would hate to omit anyone. As we read the different reports we will appreciate all that's going on and we can thank God for everyone's commitment to ministry. However I must thank our church wardens, Chris Whitaker, Andrea Palin and Pat Smith who have worked unstintingly on behalf of the two parishes this year despite each facing personal difficulties. We are very honoured to have such dedicated people at the helm.

We are praying that a new Rector will be appointed in the coming months and we should be looking forward to the future as we seek new opportunities to serve God and share his love in these parishes.

Revd Maggy Ellison

#### **Church Wardens' Report – St John's Stamford Bridge**

We are almost one year into our vacancy. This APCM is a great opportunity to thank everyone who has worked so hard this year. Thank you to the members of the PCC and to everyone else, too numerous to mention, who has been busy in the background. This has often been a job quietly done without any fuss and at other times a public relations initiative, which has been a case of being in the right place at the right time.

This year has been underpinned by many but a special thank you goes to Revd Maggy, Wendy, Lucy and David who have stepped up to take both regular and special services in school and in church and to all the visiting clergy who have supported us. Without their continuing work, we would certainly have struggled to keep all our regular Services, our many Baptisms and funerals available to all who request them.

Fundraising has been limited this year. We were unable to fit in a St Crux day as the building was out of use for a period whilst undergoing major renovations. We did have a fun quiz night in September with proceeds divided between Fikelela and the church.

Everyone has contributed to the work and upkeep of our church with regular financial support, through weekly plate collections or regular direct debit. Thank you. You will see when you look at the accounts how vital this is. You will also see how our weekly income needs to increase so that we can continue to maintain our building, pay our running costs and most importantly share our Christian message with our community.

So a huge "Thank you" to everyone and we hope that we will soon be welcoming a new Rector to live and work in our thriving and happy Benefice.

Andrea Palin and Chris Whitaker

## **Church Warden's Report – All Saints Catton**

Whilst we have been in vacancy we have been very lucky that Maggy and other vicars have covered every service, for which we are very grateful, and numbers, if anything, have increased a little.

With the church's friends we have had a busy year fundraising to keep the church going, but the theft of the lead has thrown us somewhat and we need to re-group and battle on with fundraising. We hope to have the roof covered in felt to give us some breathing space for a year or so. Thanks go to members of Stamford Bridge for their prayers and support.

Pat Smith

## **St John's Fabric Report**

There is work required externally and a faculty was raised and approved in November 2018. The work, which is at high level on the bell tower and roof, requires lime mortar so cannot be started until all threat of frost has gone.

A new heater has been installed in the vestry to replace the existing obsolete unserviceable unit.

The churchyard is maintained by the ERYC and is kept very neat and tidy during the growing season. The notice board has been renewed and the information will be updated when our new Rector is appointed.

David Osborne



## **Deanery Synod Report**

David Millican thanked Revd Fran for all the hard work she has put in over the past 5 years as Rural Dean. On her resignation she was presented with a Robert Fuller Painting.

To raise the profile of the South Wold Deanery as a local network of churches is to inspire, influence, and lead. We need to focus on direction telling the good news of what is happening right here supporting and reaching out to neighbours and friends.

Bishop John, before he was taken ill, asked us to consider 3 good reasons why *we find faith in Christ persuasive*, identify *one struggle issue*, are we here for others and not for ourselves.

Bronnie Broadhurst and Ken Townley were appointed in York Minster as deacons to work in the South Wold Deanery

In 2018 Karen Berry, Tesco Community Chaplain introduced "The Peoples Pantry" which has an open policy for those on benefits or struggling to feed their families. This was first established in Market Weighton All Saints Church and is now held at Pocklington's Community Centre & Holme on Spalding Moor's Old School Room.

Freewill offering is a subject that keeps raising its head. Many churches struggle to raise their quota and members of the congregation are oblivious to this problem which has been addressed in many of the church services within the deanery of which St John the Baptist is a member.

South Wold Deanery organized a very successful Ceilidh at Bishop Wilton Village Hall to focus on the local network of churches within our deanery, inspiring new growth and leading mission aiming at the 20-40 year olds. Our mission is to share the same purpose, experience new life and face certain problems as we work together and encourage new ideas.

Betty Dickson Synod Representative

### **Safeguarding Report**

The Diocese of York is part of the Church of England, whose Archbishops, Bishops, clergy and leaders are committed to safeguarding as an integral part of the life and ministry of the Church. Safeguarding means the action the Church takes to promote a safer culture. This means we will promote the welfare of children, young people and adults, work to prevent abuse from occurring, seek to protect those that are at risk of being abused and respond well to those that have been abused. We will take care to identify where a person may present a risk to others, and offer support to them whilst taking steps to mitigate such risks. (Diocese of York website)

As a benefice we have to comply with the national church's policies and guidelines for the Safeguarding of those in our care. Over the last year we have been updating the DBS certificates for people with roles within the church that involve children or vulnerable adults. Furthermore, the majority of these volunteers have completed safeguarding training to the appropriate level.

In addition, as part of our commitment to Safeguarding, we should also be following the C/E guidelines for Safer Recruitment. This applies to virtually all volunteer roles in church as well as **any** paid posts. We have started to address these issues but a considerable amount of work remains to be done over the coming year.

We thank you for your understanding and cooperation with these important matters.

Claire Godwin, Parish Safeguarding Representative, and Revd Maggy Ellison

## Children and Young People's Reports

### Sunday School

Sunday school is an enjoyable session for children to become familiar with Jesus' teachings and the values of Christian life. These activities usually come from the excellent bank of ideas in the Roots magazine and as a result usually complement the readings in the service that day. These activities involve a bible reading and discussion (often assisted by props or visual cues) and then a practical activity such as the children making something related to the text. These we hope are enjoyable and memorable for the wide age range of children that attend. At present we have one or two regular pre-schoolers who attend and a few children of school age.

There are at present three regular leaders and parents of younger children come to help.

Emma Griffiths

### Free Spirits

During the Summer term we followed the Scripture Union series 'Waste Watchers' thinking about caring for God's creation and transforming our local area. We grew cress and planted flowers in pots outside the Youth rooms. We spent a lot of time outside during our sessions enjoying games and activities (and sometimes ice creams!) during the fine weather. We also installed a bird feeding station which we keep refilled throughout the year and added a butterfly/insect home nearby.



Since September we have been exploring the story of David; including his role as shepherd, musician, friend, outlaw and future king and the youngsters enjoyed making their own Lego models of the story of David and Goliath.



As part of the village activities to commemorate 100 years since WW1 we made poppies to surround one of the silhouettes remembering a soldier from our village who had died during the war.

In December each Free Spirit made a mini Christingle decoration to hang on a tree placed in church over Christmas.



We celebrated Christingle's 50 year anniversary at a special service in church in early December.

We currently have 10 youngsters meeting fortnightly in the Station Youth rooms.

Wendy Macfarlane, Andrea Palin and Fiona Real

## Cornerstones

All the Friday youth groups meet in the youth rooms. We still anticipate that we will be moving out whilst major building work takes place but with a grant led opportunity it is difficult to make speedy progress.

In September the youngsters changed groups according to their age. We have fewer youngsters in Cornerstones than usual but we have enjoyed all our activities.

We continue to join the flower ladies decorating the church for Harvest, Christmas and Easter and renewed our Easter crosses with mixed results as the CDs very unusually kept falling off. Eventually we did manage to overcome this.

The youngsters love taking part in the Eastingle and the Crib Service on Christmas Eve and the young musicians enjoy leading the Services when required. Joining with Sparks to paint the Jesus rocks was very successful and we had some sessions of quiz the biblical visitor, which produced some very astute questions. When not involved with activities in the Church we continue to follow "Roots" which this term is based on Paul's world in Corinth.

As usual, we couldn't provide this opportunity for our youngsters without the leadership of the youth Team and the very welcome input from our flower ladies, Evelyn, Jean and Vera. Thank you.

Andrea Palin, Margaret Sharp, Dawn Fearnley and Caroline Cambridge



Cornerstones crafts



Jesus rocks



Sparks building bridges



Easter crosses

## Youth Sport

John Fothergill, with Ellie and Sandara has provided excellent sport sessions this winter. The youngsters really enjoy the opportunity for non-competitive sport where all abilities are welcome and the games are played in a manner that includes everyone. Thank you to John, Ellie and Sandara for making this possible.

## Sparks

Sparks resumed in the spring last year. We meet every other Friday to study the Bible together. To begin with we were a very small group but in September a number of young people moved on from Cornerstones to join us.

We started by looking at the book of Proverbs. We learnt about how this book invites us to live with wisdom and encourages us to make good choices in order to experience the good life. As we explored this ancient book of Hebrew wisdom we saw what it had to say about planning for the future, work, money, gossip and justice.

Ultimately, this book taught us that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. It showed us that we should build our lives on a deep respect for God, choosing to trust in him and make choices in line with his definition of good and evil. We saw that this message is reflected in the teachings of Jesus, particularly in his story of the wise builder who built on the rock and the foolish builder who built on the sand. With this in mind we made newspaper bridges and had a competition to see who had built their bridge with the best foundation. The winning bridge managed to hold an impressive number of Bibles.

At Christmas we thought about how Jesus is the wisdom of God. A wisdom not often recognised by the world as it is revealed in weakness and suffering, in the creator God becoming a fragile baby, in the poverty of the stable and in the message of the cross. This is a hidden wisdom but those who are open to God and willing to seek it will find it. To share this message with our local community we joined forces with Cornerstones and painted images of the baby Jesus onto 70 rocks. These rocks were hidden around the village ready for people to find on Christmas Eve. Many people who found rocks took photos and posted them to a 'Jesus Rocks SB' Facebook page set up for the project, before they either re-hid them or kept them. We hear that there may still be a few rocks left in the village.



In the run up to Easter we are looking at Jesus last supper, by re-enacting a 1st century Passover meal. We've stepped back in time to celebrate an ancient Passover meal together participating in the symbolic foods Jesus would have eaten. Simultaneously discovering what this meal meant to 1st century Jews and how Jesus transforms its meaning to make it speak of his sacrifice for us.

Please pray for us as we continue to explore the Bible together. Many of our young people have big exams approaching and are planning for their futures. Please pray for them in the coming months.

Mark and Emma Robertson

## Mothers Union Report

Thanks to all who have contributed to the running of our Branch - Andrea for organizing our finances, Ann and Chris for the refreshments and also Evelyn for her guidance in making beautiful button holes when we celebrated Prince Harry and Megan Markel's wedding.

Our members enjoyed their annual lunch which was held in the Sports Pavilion. We have been very grateful to Rev Fran, Rev Maggy and also Canon Rodney Nicholson for celebrating Holy Communion with us. Canon Rodney came and spoke about Mary Sumner the founder of Mothers Union. During 2018 our speakers have been very interesting and informative. We heard about the life of a teacher working at Stockton Hall. We learned about keeping bees and the necessary upkeep needed to keep them healthy and to gather the delicious honey along with the equipment needed for protection. We enjoyed the visit of two ladies who came along and entertained us with an amazing sketch of The Yorkshire Dialect. We heard how the Remembrance Poppy first came to Britain and the significance to the fallen heroes. Rev Maggy gave a very interesting talk about her nursing career and her dedication to the priesthood. We had our usual Advent party in December; our members are extremely generous when it comes to providing a Faith Tea, which was followed by a game of bingo, carols and raffle.

During 2018 we collected items needed for the Syrian refugees which involved taking 8 car loads of clothing etc to a distribution centre in Leeds which then sends it to places of need. The AFIA schemes which our members support by providing a food hamper for the residents during the allotted week dedicated to us.

We have a very interesting program for 2019 which will be placed on the notice board in church. All are very welcome to attend.

Betty Dickson

### **Welcoming Team Report**

A very happy band of Welcomers greets everyone with a warm smile at the various services held in St. John's Church. At the 10:30 service, particularly, they are indispensable and I'm very grateful for their help and good cheer.

If anyone feels they would like to help out in this church mission, please let me know.

Karen Dunn

### **Visiting Team Report**

The Visiting Team, a very important part of our church life, continues with a group of very loyal people. They give an hour or two per month visiting those at home, and in the Beaumont Manor, who are no longer able to take part in village life as they used to. Thank you all.

Karen Dunn