

PARISH CHURCH OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST, ADEL, LEEDS
ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL, 2020

AIM AND PURPOSES

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) of the Parish Church of St John the Baptist, Adel cooperates with the Rector of the Parish and its elected Churchwardens in promoting, in the ecclesiastical Parish, the whole mission of the Church – pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. To do this, it aims to make the most appropriate use of the resources available to it: a beautiful 12th Century Parish Church; The Old Stables (used as a meeting place for activities in the Parish); the funds donated to the Church by regular giving, legacies and bequests; and, most importantly, the lay members of our Church, both those who wish to be formally identified by inclusion on our Electoral Roll - 209 at the end of 2020 - and those who, though not formal members, regard our Church as their spiritual home.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

The mission of the Parish Church of St John the Baptist, Adel is:

Through Christian worship, word and action, to celebrate and share the love of God with our neighbours.

Our Vision Statement:

*We offer a warm and sincere welcome to everyone, old friends and new.
We share the love of God with our Church community and neighbours near and far.
We provide care and compassion by loving service for those in need.
We respect and nurture God's environment.*

The PCC carries forward its mission and seeks to achieve its vision by maintaining oversight of our regular worship to ensure that it meets the spiritual needs of as many of our parishioners as possible; by making specific provision for young people to grow up in our Christian family; by encouraging and enabling all parishioners to take advantage of the occasional offices (baptism, marriage, funerals) and welcoming as many as possible to festival and special Services; by facilitating, promoting and organising social events open to all; by making The Old Stables available for the use of groups which benefit the community; and by providing spiritual and practical support for Adel St. John the Baptist Church of England Primary School. To achieve all this, we make prudent use of the financial resources available to us to maintain and enhance our beautiful church, The Old Stables (both Listed Buildings) and the churchyard.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Our Church

For a large part of 2020, the mission of the church was made more difficult than usual as the COVID-19 pandemic swept the world. At a time of widespread isolation, loneliness and fear, our church was instrumental in uniting the community of Adel with a collective feeling of optimism, hope and faith that better days lay ahead. As a community we sought out those who may be suffering or facing new challenges, both within Adel and beyond, and did all that we could to offer both practical and spiritual help and support.

There can be very few Adel residents who don't walk through our churchyard. During lock-down it became a meeting place and focal point for many people. When Government restrictions allowed, opening the church for private prayer also extended into conversations, usually outside the door, with people who just needed to talk. The church became a lifeline for those living alone, be it a chat with a friend on the path, a place of reflection and prayer, and the meeting of new people. Friendships were made, and support offered at a time when we all had to view our lives so differently, all as we watched the changing seasons. Seeing

the Spring flowers and Autumn leaves, and even the snow in Winter has caused us to reflect that whatever is happening in the world, God's creation lives on, and one day, all will be well.

The church quickly established an Ideas Group in order to find activities that could safely be enjoyed by all at significant moments in the church year. We started with Harvest Festival and encouraged people to leave food bank donations on the church step. Our community responded incredibly well.

The realisation that the churchyard was being enjoyed by many on a regular basis, gave inspiration for outdoor events to be organised for Remembrance Sunday, Advent and Christmas, the highlight of that being the two days when the nativity was acted out in gazebos and in church (with social distancing) by church members and families. This was enjoyed by many who normally don't come to church, but like most people in Adel, refer to it as 'Our Church'.

A second food bank collection, with toys and gifts for children, was also organised and well supported. Christmas Angels were distributed to the schoolchildren at both primary schools, the two nurseries, Adel Care Home residents and approximately sixty parishioners both inside and outside the parish boundary.

The church has extended farther than even could have been imagined, by the use of on-line services, via YouTube and Face Book. At a time when communication has been difficult, the people of Adel responded to the new way of worshipping, and many contributed with readings and prayers. Junior church met fortnightly using online technology. Many families new to church engaged with this and, due to the nature of online meetings, the Junior church had a much more intimate feeling with so many people actively contributing. The Junior Church leaders made a huge effort to make this work and they were very successful in their achievements. Often, models, paintings, poems and prayer created by our children were displayed outside the church, and on Facebook.

Long before the pandemic, there had been a vision in church to find a way to involve slightly older children who maybe had other commitments on Sunday mornings such as Sports, dancing and music lessons. This led to the founding of 'Ace'. It is for youngsters in school years 4 - 8; with older young people acting as leaders. We have had 4 fantastic young leaders, and up to 14 youngsters attending. It is very much a church group - with faith discussions/short services as well as lots of silly games.

The response to communicate with the elderly was taken up by lots of the families with young children and the cards, phone calls and visits were so appreciated, especially at a time when it was so difficult for grandparents and grandchildren living miles apart to see each other.

One of the ways in which our Social Committee ensured that we reached the house bound was by arranging some extremely popular quiz nights and online quizzes. Our Social Committee, quite fittingly, made great use of Social media as a means for lifting the spirits of our community.

Our church magazine, Adel Bells, was produced every month; for three months it was not printed but only made available in a digital edition via the church website. From August onwards we did have it printed and distributed to our subscribers, to the delight of those who were not able to access the digital version. Before lockdown the editor had entered the magazine for a competition run by the Association for Church Editors. She was delighted to learn that she had received the top award, the gold award, and was presented with a crystal plaque to keep forever and a silver shell to be used at baptisms and kept only for one year.

As the government guidance allowed, the church was able to open for regular, albeit restricted, services. Social distancing, hand sanitiser and face coverings were necessary, but did not prove to be a barrier to our fellowship. Attendance in church had to be pre-booked using an online system, but, again, this proved to be a great success with all of those who wanted to attend worship able to do so. Once more, even under these circumstances, the church was able to welcome families to worship who were visiting the church for the first time.

The Old Stables

This listed building provides an excellent resource to support our Church's outreach into the community. In times without social restrictions, the main room is used every Sunday - during the 10.00 a.m Service for our Junior Church and after it to provide refreshments and the opportunity for fellowship for the whole congregation. And both downstairs rooms are regularly used throughout the week by up to a dozen different community groups, ranging from a parents and toddlers group to activities for older people.

The PCC and some of its committees also meet in The Old Stables. It has a fully equipped kitchen and, in normal times, our Social Committee arranges and runs a series of events throughout the year, some associated with the church's Festivals and others, such as regular coffee mornings on Saturdays, talks, quiz nights etc., which are aimed at - and attract - people from the wider community. These events always include refreshment, which acts as a lubricant both for fellowship and for outreach.

We ensure that hirers of The Old Stables, who are not members of our church family, have adequate public liability insurance, so that the PCC would not itself be liable if there were a claim against the church.

We did not have many weeks of normal usage before the first lockdown. From September to end October we had a few classes and we established a good and COVID safe environment for our users, but unfortunately we had to close again after that for the rest of the year

Safeguarding

Safeguarding is everyone's business. We are all conscious of our responsibility in the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults. Safeguarding meetings are held biannually with the Rector, the parish Safeguarding Officer and the Child Advocate.

All appropriate DBS checks have been carried out for those involved in the provision of services to young children. In addition, Confidential Declaration Forms are completed annually. All those involved are actively encouraged to undertake Safeguarding training, a process which is ongoing.

The Diocese continue to use the booklet "Promoting a Safer Church" setting out the Safeguarding Policy Statement of the Church of England. This is an abridged version of their more detailed document. This is now displayed next to the Church's Safeguarding policy for all to read.

There have been no Safeguarding incidents to report during the year.

We are conscious of our responsibility in safeguarding children and vulnerable adults, and those involved have attended Diocesan trainings and adhere to our Safeguarding Policy

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) of the ecclesiastical Parish of St. John the Baptist, Adel is a Registered Charity which administers the activities of our Church in the Parish. So its policies and procedures are controlled not only by Church law - in particular the *Church Representation Rules 2011*, the *Churchwarden's Measure 2001*, and the *Parochial Church Council (Powers) Measure 1956 (as amended)* - but also by the criminal and civil law of England and Wales and in particular the *Charities Act 2006*.

The policies and procedures of the PCC are formalised in our Governing Document (last updated in January 2015) which, in accordance with the legislation listed above, defines the mission, structure and organisation of the PCC. It commits the PCC to providing a safe environment for all church members and visitors to our premises by implementing all relevant Health and Safety legislation and by adopting and implementing Diocesan and national Church policies and guidelines for the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults. The Governing Document includes annexes which lay down the rules for the conduct of

the Annual Parochial Church Meeting and PCC meetings and gives details of the purpose and procedures of the permanent committees of the PCC.

The PCC has a Standing Committee and 6 other permanent committees:

- Worship Committee
- Mission and Outreach Committee
- Fabric Committee
- Finance Committee
- Social Committee
- Health and Safety Committee

The Governing Document defines the purpose of all 7 committees, their membership, the minimum number of meetings they should hold and the arrangements for reporting back to the PCC. Most of the committees also have oversight of Teams, under the leadership of a coordinator, to carry out particular functions – e.g. Eucharistic ministers; Junior Church leaders; churchyard conservation.

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

The Parish Church of St. John the Baptist is situated at the junction of Church Lane and Back Church Lane in Adel, north Leeds. The Parochial Church Council is a Registered Charity no: 1133876; during 2020, its members (i.e. trustees) were:

Rev'd Alison Battye		<i>Chairperson and Rector</i>
Lucy Best-Shaw)	<i>Churchwardens</i>
Alison Howarth)	
Bruce Buchan)	<i>Deanery Synod Representatives</i>
Mark Seaward)	
Lesley Walton		Marjorie Cole
Allan Dawson		Helen Hallett
Bob Holloway		Jenny Jones
Sarah Johnson		Andy Neal
Margaret Perkin		Marissa Clayton
Tina Gledhill		Mary Larner
Susan Smith		Carole Smithies
Loveday Loveridge		Paul Barker

Andy Neal,
PCC Secretary
468 Otley Road, Adel, Leeds, LS16 8AE