



St Andrew's Psalter Lane Church

An Anglican Methodist Partnership

St Andrew's Psalter Lane Church

THE ECUMENICAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF ST ANDREW'S PSALTER LANE CHURCH

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2019

The members of the Ecumenical Church Council (ECC) have pleasure in presenting their annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2019.

Structure, governance and management

St Andrew's Psalter Lane Church is an Anglican-Methodist Local Ecumenical Partnership established in 1998.

Ecumenical Church Council (ECC) All regular Anglican Church attendees are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and they, together with Methodist members, are able to stand for election to the ECC. Clergy, Readers, and Methodist Local Preachers are ex-officio members of the ECC. The ECC is responsible for setting the overall mission and vision of the Church, for ensuring that money is spent wisely and appropriately, for employing staff and for looking after all Church property, including Shirley House, together with their repair, maintenance and insurance. This includes the moveable objects of the Church.

The ECC met five times during the year.

Volunteers

The church is very grateful for the services of numerous volunteers who cover a wide variety of jobs including Church Stewards and Wardens, Readers and Methodist Lay Preachers, ECC and other Committee members, Welcomers, readers and intercessors, Working Party Members, and many other roles. The church could not function without the generous gifts of their time and talent given by all these volunteers.

Overview

There have been a number of developments over the last year. In September we started our Sunday 2 services, designed to form one congregation of all ages on the second Sunday of the month and to combine a time of breakfast together with our morning worship. This has been a very positive experience over its first few months. We have also had the use of our new screens for some time now, and although we are still exploring how best to use these, they have already made possible a much greater variety in the visual dimension of our worship, as well as being helpful for other events.

Late in the year, we looked at creating a new post of Church Coordinator, partly to take on a number of major roles previously fulfilled by church members on a voluntary basis. We were unable to fill this post as originally designed, but instead we created three new paid roles: Church Administrator (slightly different from the previous role of this title); Property & Liaison Officer; and Policies & Communications Officer, with a (voluntary) Volunteer Coordinator. We feel that this will cover many of the major responsibilities we have as a church and relieve the pressure on volunteers.

We have been delighted to welcome a number of new friends in our congregations over this last year. I use "congregations" in the plural, because the Wednesday Communion group, while still a fairly small gathering, has nonetheless grown significantly in recent times. In terms of our overall fellowship, the main change has been the very welcome arrival of a number of members of Broomhill Methodist Church, which sadly closed as a place of congregational worship in the summer. Among our new former Broomhill friends are several active or "retired" Local Preachers. Indeed, we are richly blessed as a church with our retired clergy (both Anglican and Methodist), our Readers and our Local Preachers, whether active or no longer taking appointments; to say nothing of the tremendous and wide-ranging gifts among our congregation as a whole.

The life of the church continues in good hands, with each aspect of our ethos, activities and structure looked after with commitment and expertise. We always seek to maintain our emphasis on inclusivity, support for our communities and social justice. A number of SAPLC members participated in the Inclusive Church Network's "Radical Welcome" course which we ran in conjunction with the other Mission Partnership churches. Care of our church members and opportunities for fellowship are combined with regular events that reach into the local community. We value all the partnerships and links that remind us that we are part of something much larger; among these, our close connection with Clifford All Saints School as one of the two link churches alongside All Saints Ecclesall continues to be important, as the school grows in its identity as a through Primary School. And alongside all these things, we rejoice as ever in our ecumenical identity within the developing strategies of both our denominations.

Church membership

Total church membership is 123, made up of 57 Joint members, 18 Anglican-only members and 48 Methodist-only members. 26 people are registered as Friends.

Worship

Our activities and community involvement as a church have at their heart, as always, our Sunday worship and other opportunities for reflecting together on our faith. While we value the particular character of our worship, established after the creation of SAPLC as a Local Ecumenical Partnership, we are always willing to explore new developments such as the Green Communion service, and to update our liturgies to make them ever more suitable.

Our main Sunday Service is at 10.30 am - Holy Communion on the 1st, 3rd & 5th Sundays; Morning Worship on the 2nd and 4th Sunday. Other services are:

- Sandcastles, a service for younger children and their parents/carers, at 9.15 am on the 2nd Sunday, was replaced in September 2019 by a service for all the family and the whole congregation, and the 10.30 am service that Sunday no longer took place. The cafe style service, called Sunday 2, which starts with breakfast, has proved popular, attracting many of the regular congregation and many new families.
- Holy Communion at 9.15 am (using Common Worship and the Book of Common Prayer) on the 4th Sunday
- Holy Communion at Southcroft, at 6.30 pm on the 2nd Sunday
- Wednesday at 10.00 am - Holy Communion or Meditation, when we reflect together on a piece of spiritual writing. This may be from one of the Christian traditions, or sometimes from another tradition of faith.
- Taizé prayer, quiet reflective prayer with repetitive singing, at 7.00 pm on Wednesdays during Advent and Lent, and occasionally at other seasons

Property developments

Property and Finance Committee met 8 times during 2019.

Office Sharing: The Sheffield District Reformed Jewish Congregation part-time development worker is now using desk space in the Church Office. The licence for this was approved by TMCP.

Quinquennial Inspection: The survey of the Church and Shirley House has been carried out, but the report has not yet been received.

Work on new leases for office tenants continued. The new leases will be for 7 years. The service charges to tenants were reviewed and no change was made. The surveyor confirmed that the current rents and terms are appropriate given the market.

Shirley House:

Some offices were rewired and had LED lighting was installed.

A replacement boiler was installed in the Caretaker's accommodation.

Two sections of lead were reattached to the roof and several slates are due to be replaced.

A parcel cupboard was installed at the bottom of the stairs.

The automatic front door still needs attention to the emergency battery back-up.

Church:

The floor covering and damaged work-top in the kitchen were replaced.

A preliminary design of a stairway to provide safe access to the roof space has been discussed with the contractor and Building Regulations and TMCP approvals are being sought.

Two large TV screens were installed in Church and are being used successfully during services to show slides from an iPad or lap top computer. New sockets have been installed to provide power.

A WIFI router was installed.

Grounds:

The regular monthly working parties and the mowing rota have enabled us to maintain the grounds in a satisfactory manner; in fact we have been able to make significant improvements.

We purchased a chipper and are now chipping tree prunings; following the construction of composting bins we are processing much garden waste.

We have planted 5 fruit trees in the orchard area.

Financial Review

Total income for the year ended 31 August 2019 was £149k compared to £139k in the previous year. Letting income increased by £12k to £58k and a special appeal for Clifford All Saints Primary School (CASPS) raised £2k. However, Gift Income fell by £2k in the year to £84k.

Total expenditure was £136k compared to £144k in 2018 a reduction of £8k. Contributions to the Sheffield Methodist Circuit and The Diocese of Sheffield amounted to £64k (2018 £62k). We spent £42k on the upkeep of our buildings (2018 £42k). In addition, we were able contribute £12k to good causes.

Total funds have increased to £82k from £68k, At 31 August our General Fund stood at £69k (2018 £53k).

Reserves have doubled in the last five years to £69k. In order to meet our financial needs and cover for unforeseen costs we aim to maintain reserves of £45k.

On 23 March 2020, due to the Coronavirus Pandemic, a National Lockdown was imposed and all churches were closed. Consequently, since then, our receipts have substantially reduced whilst our payments, which are in the most part fixed, have continued, resulting in a continuing monthly deficit. We are aware of the financial implications of the present situation, and monitor our position taking necessary action. We have carefully reviewed our position and believe that we have adequate income and reserves to continue to operate until restrictions are lifted and churches are permitted to reopen.

Pastoral Care

Under the leadership of Judith Roberts, SAPLC has a team involved in and committed to developing pastoral care, with staff and many others reaching out and offering care to both church members and the local community.

A monthly service suited to people living with dementia is offered at a neighbouring EMI care home and volunteers take Holy Communion to four other residential care homes in the parish. Both clergy and members of the congregation provide regular voluntary support at MHA Southcroft Retirement Living with Care which is situated next to the church. A weekly dementia café, the Tuesday Café, has been offered in church since March 2018; this has been a great success and clearly meets a need in the community.

We provide a monthly Fellowship Lunch, with food and fellowship for about 20 people who would otherwise be alone. There is a weekly Parent and Baby Group which aims to provide a friendly and relaxed atmosphere for new Mums and Dads with their babies to meet other new parents.

Music

There continued to be a large number of musical events and bookings at the church, including:

- The Good Friday service – this was a powerful and moving service
- The Sheffield Carols evening in December 2019 which brought together singers of traditional local carols, local craft artists, members of the congregation and all these people's families.
- The Advent Carol, Christmas Carol, and Christingle services
- Weekly Taizé Prayer services in Lent and Advent

There have also been several Sheffield Music Academy and Sheffield Music Club concerts; external organisations continue to hire the church for concerts and musical events.

Interfaith

We generally hold our own events every month, plus we host Sheffield Interfaith 'Food & Friendship' bring and share dinners most months. The committee met in March and September 2019 and February 2020. Our programme included:

- several Food and Friendship events
- 'What we wear- clothes in faith' show and tell about special clothes for faith groups.
- My Unitarian Faith Journey
- Interfaith Barbecue Lunch with separate grills for each dietary requirement
- 'Sounds of the Spirit (4)' (part of Nether Edge Festival)
- Interfaith panel discussion on 'Prayer – how do you do it?'
- Symbolic foods – Show and share
- Winter Party – 'The Hat Game'. Bring and share party snacks and drinks
- Talk on Bevis Marks Synagogue by Kath Lawrence
- Presentation by 'Nothing Special' Zen meditation group

Family and Children's Ministry

- Mission Partnership - The Mission Partnership Children's Work group continues to meet and plan events. In this year we have had a Pancake Party, Messy Church at Pentecost, a Halloween/Light Party, and a Covenant Service. These have been well attended and brought in many families who are not part of our regular church communities. It has been very good to share resources and ideas and work cooperatively together.
- Clifford All Saints - the school has now become a through primary on two sites, at Psalter Lane and Ringinglow, and has adopted its new name and logo. It has input from both ourselves and All Saints Ecclesall. The assembly rota involves both churches. The school will continue (as a whole) to come to SAPLC for services from time to time such as Ash Wednesday, Harvest and Christingle, though growing numbers mean that we have had to manage the services differently
- Junior Church - this continues to happen when there are children in church, though numbers are low.
- The ECC took a decision that Sandcastles which used to be at 9.15 am on the second Sunday of each month, would be replaced by a service for all the family and the whole congregation, and the 10.30 am service that Sunday would not take place. The new cafe style service, called Sunday 2, which starts with breakfast, started in September 2019 and has proved popular, attracting many of the regular congregation and many new families. A good team of volunteers has helped to organise it. The original proposal was that it would run for a year and be reviewed in August 2020.

Peace and Justice

This report brings together a number of activities within the church under the broad heading of Justice and Peace. There were many more actions at an individual level, along with a number of grants to organisations engaged locally, nationally and internationally in the cause of justice and peace.

Refugees and asylum seekers – In October we were delighted to receive the news that one of our church members, Patricia Simeon, had finally been granted indefinite leave to remain in the UK after a 7 year battle. To celebrate this we donated 4 toilets to the toilet twinning project by Water Aid. In November we hosted a recital by Margaret Fingerhut in aid of Sheffield City of Sanctuary raising £1500. A number of church members are involved in activities to support and campaign for the rights of refugees including ASSIST and City of Sanctuary.

Poverty - the church continues to collect food and other materials to assist the work of the food bank at St Cuthbert's where some members of the church provide support. Some individuals are involved with work at the Parsons Cross initiative as well as the wider Sheffield Foodbank Network.

Baby Basics – the church continues to collect new and recycled items for Baby basics and church members are actively involved in the work of sorting and preparing items for this service.

World Church/Development – Through All We Can we are now working on a project in Ethiopia and several events have been held to raise money. There were a number of collections for disaster emergencies.

LGBTQ – the church continues to be a member of Inclusive Church and to support the development of Open Sheffield at St Mark's Church, Broomhill. The church supported the annual Pride celebrations.

Charitable Giving

The ECC aims to support a number of charities each year. A budget is set by the ECC for support from general funds and recommendations for the distribution are made by an appointed group of ECC members. In order to ensure that the annual allocation of such funds is predictable, transparent and generous the ECC has agreed to allocate an agreed fixed percentage of the income of the Church. Members of the church support Fir Vale Food Bank and Baby Basics (King's Centre project) with regular donations of foodstuffs and baby equipment; members take part in Christian Aid Week door-to-door collections in the locality. The Christingle service raises money for the Children's Society, and collections on Christmas Day and the following Sunday are sent to Action For Children. There are frequent collections during the year in response to emergency appeals.

Eco-Church

In a sense, this has been a year of consolidation.

- We have sought to clarify which aspects of church gardening fall to the eco-group, and which to the monthly working parties and other volunteers. Our aim has long been that the garden should be managed on eco lines, and that those should be behind wider thinking on our land – e.g. that is why our mowing is organised so that some areas are left for wildlife. Last summer's efforts to grow wildflowers were not particularly successful, but we aim to learn and plant again.
- A lot of progress, with work from both groups, has been done on the compound behind church: setting up and filling compost bins, clearing the ground there more generally etc. Our shredder has earned its cost! Many thanks to Anthony, who is the person from the Eco group who has done most of the work. We are sorry other duties have led to him resigning from the group, but we are very grateful for all he has done to spur us on; and indeed for his on-going physical effort in the church garden!
- Our 2019 Environment Weeks' event was on Greener Holidays, with a quiz, facts and information about greener ways to take holidays (e.g. train journeys). And last May we also held another Green Communion.

Deanery Synod and Methodist Circuit Meeting

Representatives of the church are members of the Deanery Synod and the Methodist Circuit Meeting, reporting to the Annual Church Meeting.

Trustees of the charity

The trustees who have served during the year were as follows:

Revd Gareth Jones
Mr David Body (Chair)
Mr Kweku Ackom-Mensah
Mr Bill Atherton
Mr John Boler
Miss Imogen Clout
Dr Caroline Cripps
Dr John Cripps
Mr Joseph Dey
Mr Rodney Godber
Mrs Alison Gregg
Professor John Harding

Dr Anne Hollows
Mrs Mary Kenward
Ms Clare Loughridge
Mrs Janet Loughridge
Mrs Judith Loveman
Mrs Chris Lowry
Mr Peter Mitchell
Mrs. Rachel Morris
Mrs Judith Roberts
Mrs Muriel Roberts
Mrs Katrin Hackett

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David Body
Chair