

THE PARISH CHURCH OF ST MARY MAGDALENE PRUDHOE



ANNUAL REPORT 2023 Part 1

Annual Reports and Accounts by the P.C.C., and their recommendation to the Annual General Meeting signed on behalf of the P.C.C.

Vicar: Rev Daniel Freyhan
Church Wardens: Viv Forster and Eileen McElearney
Acting Secretary: Lilian Maxwell

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING SUNDAY 12th May 2024, 11.30AM IN THE PARISH HALL

Contents: Agendas for the Annual General Meetings
Minutes of last year's AGM
Parish Reports for 2023
Legal and Administrative Information

***PLEASE REMEMBER TO BRING YOUR COPY OF THE REPORT TO
THE MEETING!!***

**ST MARY MAGDALENE
THE PARISH CHURCH OF**

PRUDHOE

MISSION STATEMENT

A loving community in the centre of Prudhoe

with Jesus at the heart of all we do

To enjoy God's love and worship Him

To serve Him in and out of the Church

**And to make His powerful, life changing love known in
this world.**

PRUDHOE PARISH OF ST MARY MAGDALENE

Sunday 14th May 2023, 11.30 AM in the Parish Hall

ANNUAL VESTRY MEETING MINUTES

1. ATTENDANCE: Ann Bolam, Alison Traill, Rev Daniel Freyhan, Christine Shortland, Viv Forster, Michael Thirtle, June Rose, Moira Elliott, Arthur Pratt, Ann Pratt, June Chilton, Jayne Metcalfe, Peter Metcalfe, Barry McElearney, Joan Russell, Eileen McElearney, Anabelle Ellison, Lionel Weetman, Jeff Rowell, Maureen Newman, David Archer, Anne Dodd, Peter Nicholson, Melvyn Charlton, Mary Summerson, Susan White, Julia Cooper, Kate Wright, Stephen Haywood, Lilian Maxwell, Ian Hart, Chris Minton.
2. APOLOGIES: Liese Weatherspoon, Richard Reed, Sandra Pattinson.
3. WELCOME AND OPENING PRAYER FROM DAN: Dan gave a reading from Romans and answered a question posed to him this week – what is his vision for the church and where is God leading the church? Dan talked about the greatest commandment and the great commission and what this means in terms of the support we give each other as a family and to our neighbours. He reminded us of all the internal good work done (coffee mornings, Lunch Club, prayer groups, fellowship groups) and the need to always look outside and how thankful he is for the outreach events (Ukraine, Warm Hub, Toddlers Group) and that we continue to have vision, for the church to continue growing, meeting new needs and supporting those who need us.
4. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES: Agreed as true and accurate. Proposed by Michael Thirtle, seconded by Ann Bolam, all in agreement.
5. MATTERS ARISING: None.
6. ELECTION OF CHURCH WARDENS: Viv Forster and Eileen McElearney have been duly elected.
7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS: None

PRUDHOE PARISH OF ST MARY MAGDALENE

Sunday 14th May 2023, 11.45AM in the Parish Hall.

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING MINUTES

1. **ATTENDANCE & APOLOGIES:** As above from the Annual Vestry Meeting minutes.
2. **MINUTES OF LAST ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING HELD ON 1/5/2022:**
Available to read in the report. Approved and agreed as true and accurate, proposed by Ann Pratt and seconded by Ann Bolam, all agreed.
3. **MATTERS ARISING:** None.
4. **APPROVAL OF ANNUAL REPORTS:** Reports reviewed;
VICARS REPORT All reports available to read - on the website or paper copies at the back of church. Dan's highlight was the inclusion of the photo of his son Levi.

SECRETARY REPORT Alison is resigning and was given a bottle of prosecco and thank you card. Dan thanked her for all of her hard work and contributions to the PCC.

CHURCH WARDEN REPORT Thank you to Lillian who has helped Viv as a deputy when Mark retired from this role and also Eileen who has helped in preparation for this role. Thank you to Viv for continuing her work, she is doing a great job, particularly in her pastoral role.

Reminder of the volunteer board and jobs that need filling!

BUILDINGS COMMITTEE Thank you to all those who help and support even if not on the committee eg Ernie Harrison who has been helping with painting in the parish hall. The quinquennial report is due soon by Sarah Harrison – special attention is needed for review of the church roof.

Thank you to Peter for all of his hard work.

SAFEGUARDING Jayne does a brilliant job and we are very lucky to have her; please support her and complete the required forms when needed to help keep our young and old people safe. Dan confirmed different levels of training are needed, depending on the various roles.

HALL SECRETARY Claire works flexible hours but is committed to being available on Thursday and Friday in the hall. Please contact her on the mobile number and she will get back to you. Claire has been very helpful in organising all of the building work in the hall and organising the Warm Hub status. Dan thanked her for all her work.

MORNING PRAYER Thank you to Viv and Chris, prayer is very important and we are very grateful. Please use the prayer board if you can't attend in person.

YOUTH GROUP This has been re-formed through the guidance of Alex and Thomas, thank you to all who have been involved with this group. No plans at present for a youth group with younger children, but could possibly occur if we manage to secure a paid youth worker in the future.

YOUNG CHURCH It is acknowledged the challenges which the leaders have met and it is a sacrifice for them to come out of church and volunteer in this role – they do an excellent job and Dan gave his thanks. At present we have plenty of leaders and need more children, let's pray for this.

LITTLE TREASURES TODDLER GROUP The hall is full every week and it is wonderful; not just mums but also dads and grandparents with the children. The storage inside and outside is great and there are good quality toys available. We are very grateful to Hayley for her work.

COFFEE AND CHAT Thank you to Ann and Moira and all those who help out with this group – although important financially to the church bringing in a lot of money, more importantly it provides invaluable support to the community who enjoy this event. It was noted by Joan and Peter how much coffee and chat is appreciated and Chris gave her thanks also to Ann and Moira. It is great to have Redbrick House and Havendene residents come along and we acknowledge the benefit of this.

LUNCH CLUB Different to the Warm Hub – you need to book and reserve a place. It is monthly during the summer and will return to twice monthly in September. It would be great for it to be a weekly event but this could only work if there were more people to join the team and give Ann and Moira time off – please think about this and pray. Thank you to Ann and Moira for all their hard work.

WARM HUB Presently fortnightly, will return to weekly in October. The lunches and entertainment / talks have been much appreciated and been very successful, thank you for all your hard work. Confirmation vegetarian options are always available. There was a discussion about donations or a charge for the meal rather than it being free following on from a question by Peter. Dan explained the importance of the free meal and because there is a collection box for donations anyway, nothing will change. Eileen advised we will hopefully get £500 grant money from Northumberland County Council and she gets a discount from 'Just Meat' in Prudhoe. The PCC has agreed for the church to meet any small shortfalls that occur at times. Lillian suggested a raffle and the money made could be used for the purchase of food.

CHURCH CLEANING Thank you to Joan for organising this team. We have unfortunately lost older members of the team – please consider volunteering as we obviously save a lot of money by not paying for external cleaners.

BRASS CLEANING Thank you to Violet, the team is working well with new members.

ELECTORAL ROLL There are currently 82 registered on the electoral roll.

STEWARDSHIP SECRETARY Thank you to Emma for her vital work – it generated £12,000 via HMRC Gift Aid Scheme and the HMRC Gift Aid Small Donations Scheme. Reminder if you pay tax, please let us know so we can claim this additional money.

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT Available to read, completed by Jason.

5. **APPROVAL OF ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORTS:** Reports were reviewed -of note, the increase in utility costs are not included in the reports as these figures are from before this event occurred. There is an increase in money by £15,000 from all the coffee mornings, funerals and increase in your giving – thank you for this. Expenditure has slightly increased by £349. We had a £6,000 payment break from the Diocese parish share. Please continue to give generously, but not more than you can.

Richard is standing down as treasurer and as he is not present at the meeting, Dan answered questions raised:

Lillian Maxwell queried a comment in the financial report about the buildings fund and the church cottage boiler will need replacing – Dan agreed this is an error as there has recently been a boiler put into this house.

The format for presenting the accounts are not easy to read – Dan advised they follow the Diocese guidelines, but he hopes in the future new Treasurer Simon will be able to present them in a better way for understanding.

What is the reason for the big difference in printing and stationery costs i.e. £2294 this year and it was £596 last year? Dan advised we bought a photocopier for the church hall and pay for the ink and support, in the past we leased it. The new figure now incorporates a different accounting rather than just expenses e.g. carol sheets, vicarage printing, paper, photocopier maintenance. Dan will investigate the photocopier maintenance charges as they are high and consider moving to another provider.

Request that the utility charges are split up for better visibility i.e. gas, electricity, water. Dan answered Lillian's questions about various aspects of the different funds and why money came out of them and not other accounts.

Delayed fee payments for those involved in funerals: Dan agreed they should not have to wait for their money due to accounting processes – this will be re-visited with Simon to ensure there are no problems with this in the future.

Leaway Fund – do the investors take a fee for this financial management? The answer is yes, and Dan will find out what the cost is.

Stephen Haywood queried the income from pre-covid and now – 2018 it was £72,000 and 2022 it was £83,000.

Joan Russell queried about the money for funeral fees – Dan confirmed there is definitely no cash or cheques on the day.

Joan queried if we knew that the last quinquennial report mentioned renewal of the church roof – Dan confirmed we are aware and it will be reviewed in the quinquennial report of 2023.

Dan thanked Richard for all of his hard work during his time as treasurer and advised he has been thanked with a bottle of prosecco.

6. **ELECTION OF DEANERY SYNOD MEMBERS:** Michael Thirtle remains on as our Deanery Synod representative. Ian Hart was duly elected as our second representative.
7. **ELECTION OF PCC MEMBERS:** Due to Richard, Alison and Liese leaving the PCC, there are 3 vacancies. Treasurer Simon Copeland will be co-opted onto the PCC due to him presently not being on the electoral roll. June Chilton and Matthew Price were duly elected onto the PCC. Dan has a bottle of prosecco and thank you card for Liese.
8. **APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT EXAMINER OF THE ACCOUNTS:** Jason Bain is happy to continue with this role. His appointment was nominated by Joan Russell and seconded by Viv Forster, all in favour.
9. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS:** Susan White proposed a thank you to Dan for all of his work, agreement by all. Dan also thanked Sam for all the support she gives him and for the unseen church work she also does.
10. **CLOSING PRAYER FROM DAN.**

VICAR'S ANNUAL REPORT 2023

Dear Friends,

I am writing you these instructions so that... you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in God's household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth.

1 Timothy 3:15

Church is an incredibly significant thing! We are God's house, we are the pillar and foundation of the truth, we act for and with God in his world. Church has so many facets and aspects to it, there are things which are hard, things which are wonderful, things which teach us, things which stretch us, times where other need us and times when we need them.

The purpose of church is simple:

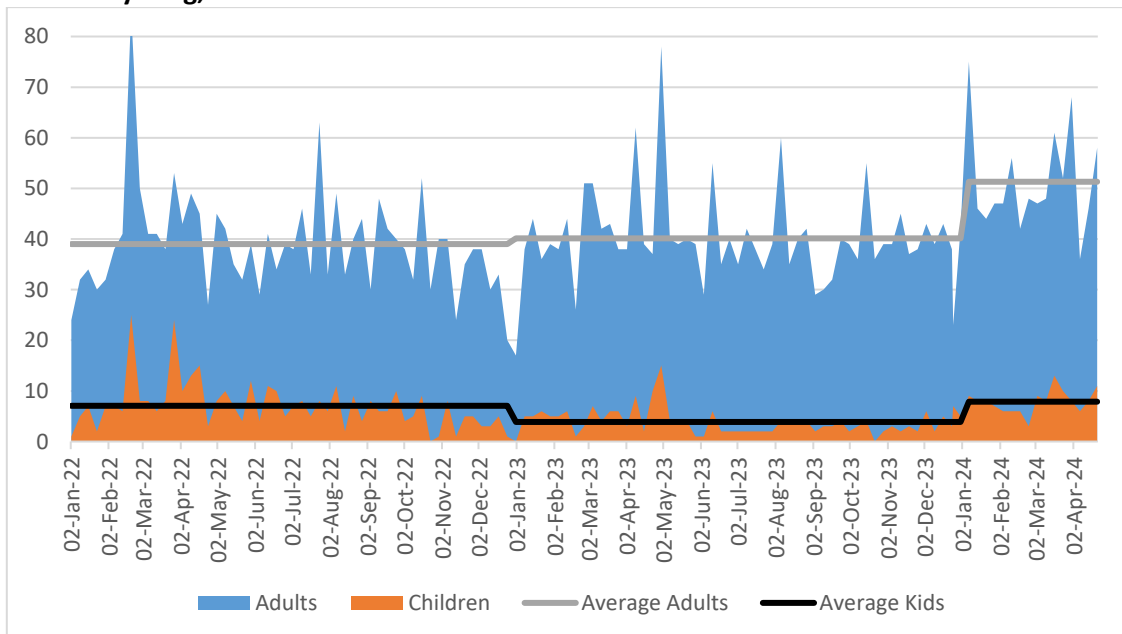
Yet, despite all that, it is simple to explain what church is for: We exist for the glory of God, and we meet together as the body of Christ and the people of God, in order to:

- Love God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength – and be stirred to do so more and more,
- Love our neighbours as ourselves – and be stirred to do so more and more.

Everything the church does can be measured against these golden standards, things which should be at the heart of what we do, things actually, which are fundamental to simply being a Christian. Each church must ask the question: how do we fulfil those commands with the resources and gifts that we have, in the place God has put us? And how do we reach out to others?

This report is to help us to get a sense of how we have done that over the last year, and I hope give us plenty of reasons to thank and praise God as we look back!

Numbers aren't everything, but what are the numbers?



Sunday attendance Graph Jan 2022-April 2024

The graph shows adult attendance (blue area) and child attendance (red area) for 2022, 2023 and the section of 2024 we have already had, on Sunday mornings.

There are lines to show the average for each year (green for adults and black for kids).

Numbers don't tell you anything about spiritual growth or maturity, or about prayerfulness or joy they don't tell us about visitors or special services, but they do give an overall impression of the size of the church. It is *very important* to note that there are some precious and full members of the church who haven't made it along in person very often, or even can't make it along in person! Nether-the-less, the growth from 2023 to 2024 is hugely encouraging. More than 10 extra adults (on average) each week and doubling our average number of children from 4 to 8 represents something like 25% growth and is easily the most marked increase at any point in the last 10 years!

Alongside that, Thursday's communion service has also seen growth and has a wonderful sense of family and togetherness.

Praise God for that! Growth like this brings wonderful challenges to welcome and include people, to provide well for the children and families, to form friendships, to include in serving etc. Challenges which are exactly what we pray for and in which we all share, I hope if you're reading this you will be a part of that process of including and welcoming.

The PCC will also be thinking through what factors we might recognise which helped or supported this growth – noting that we gave out copies of Love Your Church during January and February and invited people to come to book groups to talk through the chapters week-by-week, following a sermon on the same topic.

With this healthy excitement and thanks to God for the start to 2024, there are also plenty of reasons to look back with great thanks to events of 2023:

Some of our activities:

In addition to some of our major activities which have their own reports such as coffee mornings, Little Treasures, Lunch Club and Warm Hubs: Free Food Friday, here are a few things which happened over the course of the year.

- A number of baptisms of people wanting to or already having made a commitment to the church
- Our Holy Island trip,
- Harvest supper,
- Beetle drives (yes more than 1!)
- Baking days
- Experimental young church outreach during coffee mornings
- Joint Youth Group events with other local churches
- Joint events with other churches
 - Holiday Club
 - Christmas Journey
 - Singing at the Christmas light switch on
 - Light Party as alternative to Halloween
 - A very popular joint Christmas card/flyer
- Huge range of services at Christmas and Easter
- Special services for Remembrance Sunday and All Saints day
- Identity courses (exploring the faith)

- A new Wed night prayer meeting has begun
- We have continued our mixed approach to offering communion wine (either drink or receive bread dipped in wine) for which many people are very grateful
- Twice the PCC has taken time out to walk, pray and discuss God's leading of the church and seek his guidance.
- The Quinquennial inspection of the church building by our architect
- CCTV installed in Church which has now re-opened during the day following some tricky moments and small amounts of damage
- And many more things!

We are a busy church!

For our size and for our income we do many more things than you would expect, and those who volunteer, lead and support deserve a huge amount of credit – whilst we give all the glory to God. He is the one who inspires and sustains us, and he too will be the one to reward us, we do it for him!

Behind all that, there have been wonderful levels of financial giving that have sustained our finances despite us not knowing exactly what was going on for some periods of time (more below).

Some of the challenges looking ahead

There are a number of challenges I want to highlight, and other reports will mention as well the need for more volunteers.

We are currently without a Treasurer. Richard Reed gave us over a year's notice before stepping down at the APCM last year. We initially appointed someone who wasn't well suited and did not really take on the role, so it fell back to Dan and the wardens. Dan has picked up the responsibility with Claire taking on all the bookkeeping as part of her administrator role. We are still seeking someone who will take responsibility and oversight for the finances, but the bookkeeping will continue to be done by Claire.

We also have other roles which we would love to find someone to help with – a social event organiser and planner, a social media and publicity manager, a Christmas fair organiser and possibly even more!

These and other jobs need to be done by someone with relevant skills or interest – and often it will be through chatting to the wardens about how you can best serve the church that the roles are filled.

Please continue to pray for the Lord to raise up servants with the gifts we need, for people to organise and lead activities, and for God to send us a curate and others to share in the teaching and leading ministry alongside Dan.

The importance of prayer

Prayer should be our go-to response in the good times and the hard times. I'm so pleased that there is another prayer meeting and a different time slot and style available to us to pray together as a church (Wednesday evenings). I hope that all you have read here and will read in this report will help you to and move you to pray. May the Lord hear the cries of our hearts, and the petitions we bring before him, and bless us through our prayers.

We have lost some treasured members of our church who have died this year, not least Bernice Archer and Eva Arrowsmith; we do not grieve without hope – for they are now with the Lord enjoying a place of perfect love, peace, joy and rest. However we must continue to pray for and care for their families who are grieving.

We have also seen some wonderful recoveries from ill health this year from some named on our prayer list – it can be hard to understand why God should heal and restore some but not others. But we remember that this life is not all there is, and we trust God to do what is best! Please continue to pray for those who are sick or who ask for our prayers (on the list on the pew sheet).

Thank you for being a part of our church! I believe that every one of us is gifted by God and called to be here among us for our own good, and for the good of others in the church. Please use your gifts!

My prayer is that each and every one of us would grow closer to the Lord in faith in the year ahead, but also that we would feel loved and supported by our church family. I pray that we would genuinely be able to invite people to come along and meet with us, at a service or other event, being confident that anyone who does come would find a loving welcome and have a great time with us, and that the Lord would therefore grow his church, in both size and depth. Please join with me in caring for and reaching out to people, both those who are already part of the church and those who aren't

I want to give my special thanks to Viv and Eileen who have been great friends and wonderful wardens this year, they work hard for the whole church but they also give special attention to caring for me (and Levi and Samantha!) which is part of the job! I'm hugely grateful for their care and generosity!

May the guide us strengthen us, and use us in the year ahead,

God bless, *Dan*

PCC Secretary Report 2023

During the year between June 2023 & April 2024 there has been 10 PCC Meetings, including one Emergency Meeting on position of Treasurer. Discussion on a variety of topics i.e. Solar Panels with Liz Gray & Children & Youth Working Group involving Sue White from Diocese.

The whole of PCC and Church Read the Book 'Love your Church' relating to OT and Jesus' teaching in Gospel & NT scriptures. We had 3 Christian discussion groups in St Mary Magdalene's Parish Church. We found the book helpful in the way we relate to each other. Are we inclusive as a Church radiating outwardly God's love through Lord Jesus to all? Where improvements could be made in Church worship, inclusivity & Community outreach looking collectively at each topic chapter: Belonging, Welcoming, Gathering, Caring, Serving, Honouring, Witnessing and Sending. Looking at ways to encourage growth in discipleship and asking in given situations what does Jesus want us to do? Something to hold in our Prayers to God.

Achievements this year.

- The Silent Soldier moved to relevant site adjacent to Lychgate and Security also installed. A big thank you to Sandra & Rev Dan.
- A big thank you to Lilian & Joan for their Good work & support for Church over the years maintaining and making the Church Garden look beautiful. They have stepped down from this role for a well-earned rest. Julia & David and others TBC taking over to be involved in a Garden that is both sustainable and environmentally sustainable. Something that attracts Bee's, butterflies & insects

- Cherry Tree was removed as its trunk had gone rotten. New Cherry Tree Sapling TBC.
- Children's play Area & Toys
- Warm Hub on Fridays is self-sustaining & free at point of use. Provides a meal of the day i.e. Mince & Dumpling & vegetables FOC & is a valuable Community outreach socially. Something those whom attending look forward to. Thank you to all the Volunteers involved; Eileen, Ann, Moore, Joan, Viv, Michael, Louise & Jeff & everyone I have not mentioned that are involved, you know whom you are.
- The Church Quota of £47K paid in full.
- Need if at all possible to find reliable Treasurer Appointment in coming year on PCC. Claire continues doing excellent work regarding Book-Keeping; a big thank you to Claire. Also big thank you to Church Warden's Viv & Eileen for all their work & also preparing Reports. Leading from the front & doing much work behind the scenes.
- Thanks for Eileen taking on Health & Safety responsibilities which keeps things right in church.
- This past year on PCC implementation of the Parish Dashboard & Diocese Community Hub helps with Safeguarding & outlining people's responsibilities when working with Children & Vulnerable adults. It keeps staff & Volunteers in the picture on Training requirements & a Traffic light system when Safeguarding Certificates are needed or about to expire. Keeping up to date is essential when working with Children & Vulnerable Adults. A big thank you for the good work by Safeguarding Officer Jayne & the PCC.
- All the Church Services on Remembrance Day, Advent Most Popular Carols as chosen by People in Parish & Nine Readings, Christmas & Easter Worship Services were a great success.
- There was the Christmas Journey & two Christingle Church Services this year involving local schools were well supported & attended. Thank you for the Volunteers.
- The Music Group is an important part of Church Worship & something I am actively involved in. A big thanks to Karen, Samantha, Catharine, Stephen, Joanne, Melvin, Jeff, Stuart & Rinke & all involved.
- We have a new Parish photocopier. A big Thank you to Rev Dan whom leads the Church Ministry proclaiming the Love of Christ & the Kingdom of God. For all the work both he & Samantha do in the Parish.

Prayers

Almighty most gracious God as we move forward with New PCC we Pray to be inspired & guided by the Love of Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour at all times & in all ways to find practical solutions to problems. Help us to be learned Christians & to serve you better in outreach, So that Parish Team of St Mary Magdalene's Church is always a Beacon of Faith, Hope & Love to all in the Parish of Prudhoe. We ask this In the Name of our Father, Son & Holy Spirit. Amen.

May God's Blessings surround you each day.

As you Trust him & walk in his way.

May Christ Presence within guard & keep you from Sin.

Go in Peace, go in Joy. Go in Love.

Ian Hart

PCC Secretary

Church Warden's Report 2023

1 Corinthians 12 v 4-6

⁴There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. ⁵There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. ⁶There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work.

Thanks to everyone who uses their time and gifts to make our church a place of welcome and our services special. To all who welcome people to services, lead worship, provide the amazing music, read, lead intercessions, assist with Communion, nurture our children in young church, Little Treasures and youth group and to all our family welcome team, thank you. To all who do little unseen things, or bigger things that no one sees them doing, brass cleaners, garden team and cleaners; thank you. Special thanks to all who bake, cook, serve, wash up and make coffee mornings, warm hub and lunch club much appreciated places of welcome to the wider community as well as church members. Thanks also to everyone for your care for each other and to those who provided extra support and all who came carol singing. Thank you for all the little acts of kindness that make such a difference.

2023 was a more normal year than the previous 3 years. Our services continue to be live streamed and can also be watched afterwards on Facebook. It is heartening when someone we thought had drifted away from church contacts us to ask about a notice from the previous week's service or comments on a song they enjoyed. The arrival of Levi John in March 2023 not only gave us fun guessing his name but has enriched our church family as we watch him develop alongside our other youngsters.

At the APCM 2023, Eileen became a very welcome church warden. At the end of 2023 we both enlisted on a 9 session Worship leader's course. This gives us more confidence when we lead services and also enables us to encourage all who take an active part in reading, intercessions and leading.

We had our Quinquennial Inspection of Church in October which was carried out by Sarah Harrison who is one of the architects recommended by the Diocese. She sent her report out to us in November with itemized action points which will need our attention during 2024, and that of our P.C.C.

Various repairs have been needed during 2023 to the Church and Parish Hall, but all have been small in nature and have been completed in the main by Church volunteers. These are itemized in the Building Committee Report.

Thank you Viv for making my 1st year here as Church Warden so enjoyable. I would also like to say a big thank you to our Church Family for their support during the past year.

This has certainly been a busy time for our Church this year, and looking back there are some wonderful highlights including our special services during the seasons of Easter and Christmas, the Remembrance Service, the naming of Dan and Samantha's son Levi John during one of our services held shortly after his birth, and not forgetting the wonderful day we had on Holy Island. We could fill a whole page and more with happy memories of last year.

We have both been very privileged to have served as Church Wardens in 2023. We hold our Church and all our Church Family in our prayers.

*Viv Forster and Eileen McElearney
Church Wardens*

Buildings Committee Report 2023

During the year since our last APCM various small repairs have been undertaken in the Parish Hall. These include;

Repair to the front door / fire exit door / curtain rail / various small plumbing repairs to the gent's toilets / taps in the kitchen / painting of the interior hall door leading out to the back door / shelving put up in the basement. The Building Committee would like to thank the volunteers who stepped up to take on these repairs.

Larger maintenance jobs undertaken by tradesmen in the Parish Hall include;

Service of Gas Boiler. (The engineer also took out the old broken toilet in the basement and capped this off to prevent unpleasant smells. This was done free of charge).

Outside drain below the kitchen had to be unblocked.

Fire Extinguishers were serviced, also those in the Church on the same day.

PAT testing was undertaken in both the Parish Hall and Church on all plug-in electrical appliances.

Robert Whinham has finished the work on the chimney.

Brian Watson from CAN completed an energy report on the Parish Hall for future discussion by the P.C.C. on ideas for future carbon saving projects. This report was completed free of charge.

Other work undertaken in Church and Church grounds;

Quinquennial report by architect Sarah Harrison. The inspection was done on the 25th October 2023 and the work required to be done from the report will be actioned by the P.C.C. in the coming months.

The carpet around the font in Church was removed as it was deemed to be unsafe. The Diocese was consulted about its removal, and when a decision by the P.C.C. is made on how/what can be used to make good the floor, the Diocese will need to be contacted for their agreement, and possibly a Faculty may be needed.

The damaged cherry tree in the Church grounds has been removed by a local Tree Surgeon. This was in consultation with the Diocese. The Archdeacon ruled that a Faculty was not required as the tree was in a dangerous condition. In the warmer weather it is intended to plant a cherry tree sapling to replace the damaged tree, when a new location in the church grounds has been chosen.

Church Cottage;

The annual inspection of Church Cottage was undertaken in April 2023. This was completed with the agreement of the tenants, who were expecting the visit. They had one or two areas of concern, mainly the boiler and the mixer taps in the kitchen which were broken. The boiler was serviced earlier than the scheduled service to sort out the problem of the pressure dropping, and the mixer tap was replaced with the tenant's choice of design by our usual plumber John Baron.

Work was completed by The Northumberland Water Company to the drains outside of the property of Church Cottage during 2023, which has improved the drainage to Church Cottage and other properties in the immediate neighbourhood.

Eileen McElearney

(On behalf of the Buildings Committee)

Safeguarding report 2023

The Church of England is called to share the good news of God's salvation through Jesus Christ. The life of our communities and institutions is integral to how we address this task. The good news speaks of welcome for all, with a particular regard for those who are most vulnerable, into a community where the value and dignity of every human being is affirmed and those in positions of responsibility and authority are truly trustworthy. Being faithful to our call to share the gospel therefore compels us to take with the utmost seriousness the challenge of preventing abuse from happening and responding well where it has.

'From 'Promoting a Safer Church', The Church of England's Safeguarding Policy Statement

Parish dashboard

Parish Dashboards is an online system that gives assurance to parishes that they are complying with statutory requirements and Church of England policies, or else it explains what actions need to be taken. It also enables dioceses and the national church to oversee compliance, and to focus their support on the areas of greatest need.

Our dashboard is currently up to date; it is 98% complete at the time of writing the report.

Safeguarding Hub

A Safeguarding Hub has a suite of tools to help a parish with safeguarding. The first three tools help with safer recruitment and people management.

Stage 1 helps parishes to keep track of DBS checks and safeguarding training.

Stage 2 helps parishes to create Role Descriptions and Person Specifications.

Stage 3 helps parishes with safer recruitment and people management.

We have just started using the Hub; so far we have completed stage 1. It is time consuming to input all the information but it should make monitoring DBS checks and training easier in the future.

Responsible Caring Committee

With PCC approval we have now reformed a Responsible Caring Committee. As a busy parish it has become necessary to have more people that support the decisions made around safeguarding, the committee meets monthly and reports directly to the PCC.

Jayne Metcalfe

Safeguarding Officer

Hall Secretary Report 2023

The hall continues to be busy with regular bookings most mornings and evenings. We are still getting lots of one off and party bookings on a weekend too. The hall has also been used in school holidays by both Prudhoe Youth Project and Karbon Homes to provide free activities for local families. Our Warm hub and coffee mornings continue to thrive- thank you to all who volunteer to keep these events going. It is also great to see Little Treasures Toddler Group so popular as well.

The meeting room has also seen a rise in activity this year, it has been great to offer a smaller space to those who don't need the whole hall. We have had everything in there from Italian lessons to local businesses holding staff meetings.

Thank you to everyone who helps me keep the hall running smoothly but in particular a big thanks to Eileen, Viv and Joan who are all a huge support, Rosie who cleans the hall daily and to Lilian who maintains the floor.

I look forward to another busy year in the Parish Hall!

Claire McKinnon

Hall Secretary

Morning Prayer Report 2023

On Tuesday a small group meet in church to say the offer of Morning Prayer, changing with the church calendar. We end by sharing prayers from the board.

Chris Minton

Youth Group REFORM'D

Youth group has continued this year, if slightly less frequently following Levi's arrival, which made the use of the vicarage a little more complicated.

Samantha has stepped back from being one of the leaders, but June, Viv and Rinke have continued and their wisdom and fun is much appreciated.

We have really enjoyed having a few new faces among the young people, and continue to both study the bible, deal with tough questions, and this year we have met together in church to play Christian hymns and songs. We are hugely grateful to the music group who have given their time and skills to make that happen.

Topics covered this year include

- Comparing different church's approach to singing and worship
- Infant baptism
- The OT law and how it applies today
- The obligation of the Christian to fight sin in their life

The ideas and creative guidance for how we spend our time is still coming from within the group and we're grateful for the kids enthusiasm and faith, do pray for us in the year ahead and feel free to ask any of us what we've been up to.

Daniel Freyhan

Young Church Report 2023

It has been a pleasure to be involved with Young Church – we meet during the Sunday morning service in the Parish Hall, providing ‘church’ in a way that is more accessible for our young people. We currently have 2 young people who attend regularly with occasional visitors. We continue to use material produced by the Blackburn Diocese which follows the lectionary and provides a good range of activities – from science experiments to crafts, games and biscuit decorating (always popular!).

We haven’t been able to arrange a trip for our church families this year but it is something we would like to repeat and will look to do in the coming year.

We are very grateful to be part of such a good team of leaders and helpers who commit their time to preparing and helping with sessions. Without them, this important part of church wouldn’t happen. Going forwards we continue to pray that God will use us to demonstrate and teach his message of hope and love to our young people and that our church family will grow.

*Ann Pratt
(On behalf of The Young Church team)*

Little Treasures Report 2023

This year we have been working hard to get across what our toddler group is all about and why we are different to all other groups. We are what I like to call an outreach toddler group. By this I mean all adults who walk through our doors learn that we aren’t just there for the children but for them also, if they need help or to chat in confidence they know they can come to us and we will help as much as we can. We currently have a worry monster in place so if anything is troubling anyone they place that worry in a bag and I personally pray over all things in that bag. Personally I myself have seen a huge growth in the amount of people who are talking to me about their issues, my faith, prayers, healing and I hope this continues more and more.

Going into this year we thought Little Treasures was going to be quieter as we had had lots of children leave as they were starting nursery after Christmas. Oh how wrong were we. We are having between 25–30 children in most weeks and have done so since our first week back in January which is amazing.

We have worked hard this year using all funds to replace old toys and build up new areas of fun for the children and adults (who enjoy toddlers as much as the children do). I’m very pleased to say that we now have an amazing selection of toys and crafts for the children to do. Hopefully now we won’t need to do any big spends but instead just use funds to replace broken toys, buy crafts for each week and treats for birthdays and special occasions.

We are hoping to raise enough money to have a summer toddler’s day trip out somewhere, possibly the beach.

Team wise we now have a team of 6 but with health etc it is very rare all 6 are in. If ever anyone has any suggestions for us I am always happy to listen and we would love to see some of you come and have coffee with us and experience what toddlers is like.

I have enclosed a few pictures of toddlers for you all to see how busy we get and how much the adults enjoy it as much as the children. I’ve also enclosed a photo of our worry monster and the words that sit with him every week.



Hayley Langston

(Team Leader)

Coffee and Chat Report 2023

These sessions continue to run every Thursday and Saturday morning. They are pleasant social events during which friends and visitors can meet and chat within the welcoming ambience of the church hall. Everyone who comes into the hall is assured of warm welcome. The volunteers who help with the mornings are amazing, giving their time willingly and they are a vital part of the success of the mornings. However we could always do with more helpers so if anyone is interested and can spare a little time, just let me know.

Residents from Redbrick and Havendene are regular visitors and we enjoy their company. Food products are available from Greggs on Thursday mornings, thanks to Joan and John for collecting the food each week. In May 2023, we hosted the 'Big Brekkie' during Christian Aid week. This was a popular and successful event. The RSPCA shop has held two charity events, a Christmas and Easter Fair. Joan runs her bric-a-brac stall and raffles and these add a buzz of interest for our guests. A recent development is that a bereavement councillor from Tynedale hospice is coming into the hall (every second Thursday of the month) to offer sessions. They operate on a drop in basis and offer a safe, comforting space to come together. It is an opportunity to meet others and share a cup of tea or coffee in the company of others who understand.

I would like to thank everyone who contributes to the organisation of these mornings, (the behind the scenes tasks), people who bake cakes and scones, set up tables, bring in biscuits, sweep the floors, cleaning and sorting cupboards, fixing the cooker, washing tea towels and donating ingredients for baking to name a few. You are all very much appreciated and you make the coffee morning function smoothly. The bakers are brilliant and left over cakes are stored safely and used for Sunday morning coffee after the church service. There are never any left!

Finally, during the last financial year we have raised approximately £6,000.

Ann Bolam

Luncheon Club Report 2023

We are into our third year of running a luncheon club meal. This year we are providing a meal on every second Wednesday of the month (to make it easier for people to remember). Numbers of guests coming for a meal remain fairly consistent at approximately twenty per session. The Christmas meal was very popular and we catered for thirty people.

The two course meal remains at a cost of £5 per person. Also included are drinks on arrival as well as sweets, tea or coffee to finish off the meal,

The meat is purchased from Grants butchers for which we receive a discount and the added bonus that it is delivered to the door. The turkey for our Christmas meal was sourced for us by Russ at the Miners Lamp. Fruit and vegetables are bought locally from Threadgolds. Grateful thanks to these sources of food products.

We have many willing helpers to make our meals run smoothly. The cooks, volunteers who set up tables, produce lovely flower arrangements, prepare vegetables, the greeters and people who serve drinks and meals and all who wash dishes, fill up the dishwasher and clear up afterwards. A sincere thank you to you all.

Everyone is welcome at our meals and we cater for a variety of dietary needs.

Ann Bolam and Moira Elliott

Warm Hub Report 2023

Our Warm Hub has again been very successful this year, although we have had to make a few changes due to staffing, particularly in the kitchen. We decided to have our hub fortnightly rather than weekly as our volunteer pool became smaller after the winter months. The numbers using our hub have not decreased because of this change, in fact some of our Fridays have been better attended. Due to planned surgery, I was unable to cook or help in the kitchen for 3 months and was very grateful to John Gaut who put his chef's hat on and successfully provided meals of a high standard while I was away. We now share the cooking, each providing a meal fortnightly, and this works well giving our customers a good variety of meals. Jane Johnson one of our town councillors has also helped out with cooking, and helped us out at our Christmas meal, which was particularly successful, with Roast Turkey and all the trimmings, wine, and everyone had a small present to take home. I must thank the ladies from Prudhoe Community Choir who gave us a wonderful medley of Christmas Songs and Carols, and we all joined in.

We intend to make a roast dinner for Easter, and Jane is taking the lead in the kitchen for this. We will also hold an Easter Bonnet Competition on the day.

We intend to keep our Warm Hub going as long as we are able, and we have had some generous donations of money from local people and organisations, and I take this opportunity to thank everyone who has helped us with cash donations large and small. They really make a difference to us, not just with providing a good meal, but we have also been able to purchase additional kitchen equipment which has helped with preparation in the kitchen and setting up the hall.

We continue to be grateful to the P.C.C. for the use of the hall and their continued support for our Warm Hub.

Finally I would like to thank all our volunteers who help at each warm hub, doing any job they are asked to do without complaint, and sometimes when we are really busy, without their own dinner!

One of our team deserves a special mention, as she holds our warm hub together! Joan has been with me from the start of our warm hub. Without her support we would not be the success that we have become. She works hard getting the hall ready for our meal and organising “who does what” on a Friday. Behind the scenes she speaks to our volunteers through the week, puts the banner up, keeps the accounts, buys the bingo prizes and keeps me on track! Well done Joan Russell!

Eileen McElearney
(Warm Hub Leader)

Church Cleaning Report 2023

This is still only a very small group of volunteers consisting of Joan and Rosie and Viv working with Ann Mabire and Sandra Mackinnon. We do aim to clean every week but sometimes that is not possible and any extra help would be very much appreciated.

The job entails dusting and hovering the church and vestry. This includes all surfaces and the bookcase at the back of church and tidying the papers on the table behind the sound system.

There is a new cleaning rota at the back of church for names. It need only take 1 – 2 hours (depending on the chatter) at any time to suit you – avoiding any funerals and the 10am Thursday service.

Anyone wanting more information please see Joan or Viv.

A massive Thank You to all the current cleaners and those over past years. I mentioned last year we might be able to resume the Big Summer Clean. That unfortunately did not happen – but you never know this might be the time.

Joan Russell

Brass Cleaning Report 2023

A huge Thank You to the members of the brass cleaning team who are still maintaining the brasses in church. The members prior to 2023 have been Violet (who is the team leader), Sandra Pattinson, Sandra Mackinnon and Joan. During 2023 we have been really pleased to welcome 2 new members; Margaret Hughes and Barry McElearney. This year 2024 we have been absolutely delighted with 2 more volunteers – Judith Thompson and Alison Trail. We usually try do the clean every 2 months or so and especially before the Christmas and Easter celebrations. Any future offers of help will be very much appreciated. We have a supply of Brasso and Cloths in the vestry.

Joan Russell

Electoral Roll

The Electoral Roll has been completed and there are currently 74 registered on the roll. The number of registrations impacts directly on the permitted number of PCC members and Synod Representatives.

Claire McKinnon

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Name: The Parochial Church Council of The Parish of St Mary Magdalene, Prudhoe.

Governing Documents:

Parochial Church Councils (Powers) Measure, 1956

Church Representation Rules, 2020

The PCC is a charity exempt from registration with the Charity Commissioners.

Location of Church: Kepwell Bank Top, Prudhoe

Correspondence Address: The Vicarage, 5, Kepwell Court, Prudhoe, NE42 5PE.

Names of those on the PCC:

Rev Daniel Freyhan	Vicar
Viv Forster	Church Warden
Eileen McElearney	Church Warden
Christine Shortland	Vice-Chair
Ian Hart	Secretary and Deanery Synod Rep
Michael Thirtle	Deanery Synod Rep.
Kate Robinson	
Jayne Metcalfe	
Ann Bolam	
Sandra MacKinnon	
June Rose	
Matthew Price	
June Chiltern	

NB.

1. Clergy are ex-officio members of the PCC
2. Churchwardens are ex-officio members of the PCC, having been elected at the Annual Vestry meeting
3. Deanery Synod Representatives are elected for 3 years and are thereby on the PCC (but only have one vote even if they are also ex-officio members of it!)
4. PCC Members are elected at the Annual Meeting and serve for 3 years

Office Holders:

Chairman- The Vicar

Vice-Chair- Christine Shortland

Treasurer- Vacant

Secretary- Ian Hart

Electoral Roll Officer- Claire McKinnon

Safeguarding Officer- Jayne Metcalfe

Bankers- Barclays Bank plc

Independent Examiner- Jason Bain

Quinquennial Architect: Sarah Harrison RIBA Unit 5, South Acomb Farm, Bywell, NE43 7AQ.

THE AIMS OF THE PCC

The PCC (Powers) Measure 1956 states the PCC 'is to co-operate with the minister in promoting in the parish the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical'.

THE ORGANISATION OF THE PCC

The affairs of the PCC were carried out by the Council as a whole. The reports of the activities outline what has been done.

The PCC has the following sub-committees:

1. Standing Committee. Membership: The Vicar, Vice-Chairman, Churchwardens, Secretary, Treasurer. The role of Standing Committee is to advise on matters of urgency that arise between normal PCC meetings and any other matters delegated to it by the PCC.
2. Buildings Committee. Membership: The Vicar, Eileen McElearney, Peter Metcalfe. The role of the Buildings Committee is to be responsible for overseeing the maintenance of all Church property, being the Church, Church Hall, Church Cottage, Churchyard and all health and safety matters. The work of this Committee has been as a Working Group, see below.
3. Other Committees / groups: Other committees are formed as needed.

STATEMENT ON FINANCE & RESERVES POLICY

St Mary Magdalene's PCC budgets each year to cover main items of expenditure from its regular income. The members of the congregation are encouraged to review their personal giving each year. Those coming to special services and Occasional Offices are encouraged to use Gift Aid envelopes. Special items of expenditure are often 'fund raised' for, with resources coming from a wide range of sources.

The PCC, as part of reviewing its Finance and Reserves Policy, noted that the Charity Commission recommends that we hold 3-6 month's running costs in reserve, and we are looking to build up to that amount again. This is not felt to be excessive in view of the amount of buildings we have to maintain and also in view of the fact that our income is entirely dependent on voluntary donations and support which may fluctuate from year to year. The PCC has agreed that the Leaway Fund should be used for major significant capital items of repair / replacement. The Building Fund should be used for major items of repair and maintenance on the Church, the Hall or the Cottage.

STATEMENT ON RISK MANAGEMENT

The PCC has policies in place on Health & Safety and Safeguarding. Buildings and Health & Safety are a responsibility of the Churchwardens and of the Buildings Committee. Safe guarding is the responsibility of the Vicar, Safeguarding Officer and the PCC as Trustees. These are regularly reviewed on paper and in their implementation. The aim of this is first of all, to ensure the safety and well-being of people who use our Church and its facilities and who participate in its activities. And secondly, to minimise the risk that PCC takes in undertaking its work.