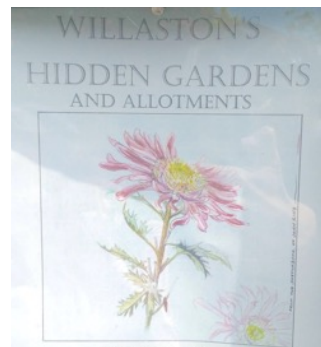


Christ Church Willaston 2019 Annual Report



For the Lord is good and his love endures for ever;
his faithfulness continues through all generations.

Psalm 100:5

Love God
Love Others
Make Disciples



Vicar's Report

For the first time we are holding our annual meeting this year in October and online due to the pandemic. Given that our next Annual Meeting should be in April 2021 I have asked people to focus mainly on the events of 2019 as we will be reflecting on 2020 soon enough.

As much as 2020 will stick in our minds, 2019 was a very significant year, giving us much to thank God for. At our last annual meeting in April 2019 we thanked Ted for his time as Warden and gave him a small token of our appreciation in June. So Viv Ley took Ted's place to stand with David Compton as Wardens together with Lyndon our Assistant Priest and myself as Priest in charge, our leadership team at Christ Church.

Vision

At the end of April we began the very important task of reimagining our vision as a church. It was important as we needed to be reminded of our priorities, but it was equally important in helping us to envision what the re-ordering of the church building was for. It is important that the re-ordering is as forward looking as possible, as such a big investment and material change needs to be effective not just for our generation but for those who will follow us. So the vision process began with the input of Martin Smith and Lyn Weston from Chester Diocese and continued as Lyndon and I reflected on who we are as a church and how we could move forward. This allowed the PCC to establish our new mission statement:

Love God, Love Others, Make Disciples

and a set of key values for our church:

- Living our whole lives for God
- Building Community
- Loving, caring and promoting justice
- Trusting God in prayer
- Proclaiming Christ
- Growing as Disciples

We also held a PCC away day to help us reset and reinvigorate our meetings, as well as thinking about how we could work more effectively together. As a church we had a series of sermons reflecting on our values and with your help we continue to try and make them a reality.

The fruit of our vision

I hope that the fruit of our vision will be felt by all who join us, and those we reach for Jesus, as together we seek to love God, love others and make disciples.

Tangibly the vision process gave us the clarity we needed to restart the re-ordering process (which you can read more about later) and the confidence to make big decisions along the way.

Our new vision also caught the imagination of some of our members who wanted to try some new ideas. That included Wendy Hill who used her gifts to form an all age community singing group called Christ Church Community Voices or CCCV (you can read more about it in her report). The vision also united a group of people who were keen to experiment with a fresh expression called Cafe Church. This was a wonderful way to worship in a very informal setting, creating the ideal format to speak and discuss things together. We spent six weeks looking at our vision and continued to follow the lectionary from there. A family who joined us at Cafe Church later went on to have their son baptised in February 2020, a real highlight for us all.

Sending

We also had the joy of joining Elaine White at Chester Cathedral for her Ordination as Deacon, the final stage before starting ordained ministry at St Mary's Liscard. It was wonderful to hear from Elaine and Alex and pray for them at the start of June, as well as show our appreciation with some flowers and a gift from the church family, our loss is St Mary's gain.

Thankful

As a family 2018-19 was hugely significant with Joanna suffering with Chronic Fatigue, also known as ME. However after much prayer and doing the Lightning Process in March Joanna was fully healed, something we cannot thank God for enough.

I could mention lots of other things like Bishop Peter's retirement, the Tour of Britain, the Churchyard work parties, social events, small groups and more but I will let you read the report to hear about some of these things.

In closing though I want to say thank you to everyone who has contributed to the life of Christ Church. I am very thankful for your generosity, in giving your time, talents and money. I am so pleased to see how our love for God continues to flow into a love for one another. I pray that the Spirit would continue to equip us to reach others and for all of us to know and grow as disciples of Christ!

With love in Christ

Rev Stephen Bazely - Priest in charge

Cafe Church

On Sunday the 8th September we began Cafe Church, sitting round tables, with a drink and a snack among

friendly faces. It was a wonderful way to learn about God together, it truly was church with a difference.

Through activities, discussion, songs and crafts, people of all ages discovered more about Jesus. We created prayer stations, giant art work, things to take home, as well as listening to the Bible together, singing and making music. I am very thankful to those who put their imagination, gifts, time and energy into making Cafe Church such a great service. A picture of Cafe Church top left on the front page.

"(Cafe Church) has helped me verbalise my ideas connected to the bible and faith."

"I have received so much from the past 8 weeks. I have rediscovered my love for Jesus and life has once again taken on a new perspective."

Child Protection & Safeguarding

I want to start by thanking Claire Bannon for acting as Safeguarding coordinator for over 7 years, she diligently fulfilled the role and gave me a great deal of confidence that we were both aware of Diocesan policies and that all of our volunteers working with children had the necessary DBS. Claire also helped to make sure we have a thorough safeguarding policy as a church. With that in mind it is important that we find a replacement to act as our new safe-guarding coordinator. The good news is that with all the things Claire put in place very little needs to be done.

The responsibility for the safeguarding of our children and vulnerable adults remains with the incumbent and at least one Safeguarding co-ordinator (appointed by the PCC). There is help available and Claire has plenty of experience so would be able to advise on the role if necessary.

Christ Church Community Voices

During the summer of 2019, Stephen and I came up with an idea of trialling a weekly all-age singing group to echo the vision of our church as being one family.

It was launched in September and ran for seven weeks in church. Refreshments were served on arrival and the session began when the drum beat started and all would assemble in a circle ready to sing.

How wonderful it was to see young and old enjoying themselves together. The age range was from 9 months to 80yrs which was interesting.

The children danced with ribbons and played their percussion instruments and the adults participated in rhythmic ball games and action songs. The older members supported the children in their singing and

the younger members certainly improved the memory and physical skills required in some of their songs! Yes, we even did a conga around the church. We sang a mix of old and new songs and often would introduce our newer songs to the congregation at Cafe Church the following Sunday as a means of expanding the church repertoire. Thank you to all who supported this venture.

The 'CCCV' experience was enjoyed by many and although a year has passed it will certainly be remembered!

Wendy Hill

Deanery Synod

The first meeting of 2019 was held at St Mary's, Eastham. Our Rural Dean, the Revd Beth Glover, had invited the new Dean of Chester, the Very Revd Dr Tim Stratford, to speak to us. He was keen to take back with him our ideas of what a cathedral is for in order to inform future planning.

St Mary and St Helen, Neston was the venue for the second meeting in June, when Beth led a discussion on Diversity in the Church and encouraged us to find more ways of embracing diversity in our own churches.

In October, in Prisons' Week, Deanery Synod members, lay and ordained, came to Christ Church, Willaston. Viv Ley, one of our Churchwardens, outlined the incredible work the Diocesan Committee for Social Responsibility (Outreach) is doing to raise awareness of and tackle social justice issues in our parishes and beyond.

Deanery Synod meetings are informative, sometimes challenging and always forward-looking. If you would like to act as a representative from our parish, you will find it an interesting experience.

The March meeting of Diocesan Synod and the Farewell service in July were times to say goodbye to the Bishop of Chester before his retirement in September. We thanked him for more than twenty years' service to the Diocese of Chester with a gift, which included a contribution from our parish.

Electoral Roll

Our roll stands at 120 members this year.

Hospitality and Social Events

Our first event in 2019 was the ever popular Fish and Chip Supper held on Friday 22nd February. Simon Le'Barber entertained us with his guitar playing and

songs which were known to us all! This was, as usual, a sell out with quite a few of us happy to go on dancing all night!

On 9th March we had our Soup Lunch which was very well supported and thankfully we did not run out of soup or desserts. We get a lot of support from our soup makers and people making a great variety of wonderful desserts too.

This was followed on 9th June when we hosted the Pentecost service on the Green with a lunch for Christ Church and our friends at the Methodist Chapel. This was a happy event and well supported by both churches when it came to providing delicious food for us all to enjoy.

On Sunday 30th June Christ Church and the Methodist Chapel joined together in arranging the very popular Open Gardens event. It is wonderful to hear the very enthusiastic remarks made by visitors who visit from quite a wide area. The Memorial Hall is very busy throughout this event providing tea and cakes and a chance for people to catch up with friends they haven't seen for a while.

On Sunday October 20th we had a very successful Harvest afternoon tea. I wanted to make it as 'realistic' as possible and delighted to see we had plenty of scones, bread and homemade jams together with many delicious fruit cakes and sponge cakes too.

On Saturday 16th November we were very grateful to our friends at the Methodist Chapel who offered us the opportunity to hold our film evening in the Chapel. We showed the film 'Esio Trot' which was very well received with Jim Shaw being the projectionist! We had over 50 people there who enjoyed the sweets and ice-creams in the interval too. It was a very happy event and Jim is very willing to let us use the chapel again.

Jill Lessels

Knit And Natter

Our Knit and Natter group, which is open to all, met twice monthly in the Methodist schoolroom. An assortment of hats for the seafarers mission, blankets for the homeless, hats for premature babies and blankets for children who have little or no shelter on cold nights are lovingly assembled over a cup of tea and lots of chatter.

Kath Walker

Magazine - Willaston Parish News 2020

As for everyone, 2020 has been a difficult year for the Parish News and we were forced to cancel editions for 2 months. A reduction for this next year's advertising has been made in consequence.

As many groups have been compelled to curtail their activities, their reports have been shorter, but this has meant we have been able to include longer articles. We are very grateful to groups who have submitted longer articles and whose activities and ingenuity have been appreciated from comments received.

Also much gratitude must be expressed again to Inneen for her continued diligence in preparing the magazines for delivery and whose pertinent poems have moved many.

Many thanks to the stoic deliverers, Viv and Jill who have managed to keep going throughout.

S.J. Schwab

Mothers' Union Listens, Observes And Acts (Muloa)

This was our theme for 2019. MU is a Christian organisation with over 4 million members in 83 countries around the world working together to support family life. Our branch in Willaston has 38 members, women and men, who meet together every month in fellowship. We support the monthly midweek communion service. Many of our members are in the pastoral care group, supporting and caring for the sick, bereaved and lonely. We maintain links with our local primary school, helping with singing club and listening to children reading and several take part in taking the church to Weatherstones Nursing Home in order to join in worship with the elderly on a Sunday afternoon. We support the Womens Refuge by donating toiletries to help those who may have had to leave home in a hurry without anything, very often with a baby or young child.

We are most grateful to our speakers many of whom were from our church family, Rev Stephen, Ruth and Tim Boulton, Martin Woodhead, Elaine White and Wendy Hill for bringing the years 3 and 4 singing club to our meeting to sing so beautifully. Thank you to you all for inspiring us.

Special thanks go to our clergy, Stephen and Joanna, Lyndon and Claire for their support and loving hospitality over the year (they are all MU members) for inviting us into their homes and gardens, hot cross buns, scrumptious cakes, strawberry and cream scones come to mind!

In December we join up with the church Men's group and the Ladies in fellowship group, Uplift for an

Advent Carol service which has become a very special event in our calendar.

We always welcome new members who support Christian concern for families. Come and join us!

Kath Walker

Pastoral Care Team

The present team is composed of people who are currently stalwart members of our church and actively involved in many of the other church activities. With one exception they are all over working age, and because of that find themselves in the vulnerable group and subject to the current social restrictions, yet despite this, they find themselves puzzling as to how they can best be of assistance to those in need.

Because of the need to respect individual confidences it is not really appropriate to share or relate the way team members have managed to do this but it is clear that help is being given to friends, neighbours and of course, family.

However it should be remembered that the The Pastoral Care team is not engaged in an ACTIVITY . It is not expected to be pro-active. It is a resource for the wider church and the local community to use when they choose. It is there rather like a helpline. Team members continue to have different experiences . Some may be phoned by those needing help. Others, like myself, have never been contacted . Nonetheless, we are all on the end of a phone if someone has a problem they need to discuss.

As a group of ten we represent somewhere between 25 to 33 % of a normal Sunday morning Communion service, so, team members are always available in church but younger people are not represented on the team and there is obviously a need for them to be involved. In all aspects of church life, we should expect and welcome change, and this may be the right time as we reorder our church building that we review what the Pastoral Team does. Until then we should remind ourselves of Paul's encouragement to the Galatians when they were facing perplexing times. *'The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love.'* Gal. 5v6

Ted

Re-Ordering Programme Report

Following the appointment of a programme manager in November (2018), it soon became clear that Christ Church needed to clarify and renew its vision as a church in order to be able to undertake a major programme of change to the building. This was underlined further in meetings with Church House in

January that Christ Church did not yet have sufficient clarity of its own vision to be able to progress with architect selection. A very difficult period ensued as we came to terms with this.

In April we received assistance from the Diocesan Missioner and Diocesan Christian Giving and Pastoral Reorganisation Missioner, who led a PCC session on 'Developing Vision'. Then after a refreshed PCC, much prayer, and hard work by the leadership team, the PCC was able to agree a new vision in August and began the process of 'bringing it to life' in everything we do. We agreed a new 'Statement of Needs' in November and, in December commenced a process of architect selection, inviting 5 practices to take part. In January (2020), the PCC was delighted to be able to make its selection of Mark Pearce of Kepczyk Pearce Sanderson as architect for this programme as well as to perform the quinquennial inspections.

Tim Boulton

Willaston C Of E Primary School

We are very blessed to be able to work with the school in our community, with Rev Stephen (ex-officio), Ruth McElroy and Anita Mitchell (foundation governors) currently serving on the governing body.

We have the whole school in church at various times throughout the year (Easter, a Leavers Service, Harvest and at Christmas) and last year we hosted a Nativity play performed by the Reception children. Rev Stephen takes collective worship each week and together we worked to help the school select and embed Christian values. Rev Stephen helps with recruitment, training and overseeing RE. We also have a number of church members who volunteer helping with reading and Forest School. Do pray for the wonderful work the staff and children do.

UpLIFT 2019-20

UpLIFT (Ladies In Fellowship Together – Upholding one another as we share the love and joy of knowing Christ.) was formed in May 2016 in order to provide a space for both members and non-members of the church to come together for a time of fellowship and friendship.

The group meets monthly on the second or third Thursday evening and is free to all who wish to come (we only charge for tickets or materials as an event requires). The group is open to all ladies whether they are Christians or not. We have participated in a very wide variety of events including walking, theatre visits, craft activities and a post-Christmas meal together.

The group has continued to grow this year and we

have seen in excess of 30 ladies come to the evenings across the year. The nature of the group is to provide a wide range of activities in order to appeal to as many people as possible. Members are free to come to as many or as few meetings as they feel appropriate.

Since our last report, UpLIFT have continued to enjoy many interesting experiences; in 2019 we had a very informative talk by Bernie Frost of The Charles Thompson Mission in Birkenhead. We went to The Vue in Ellesmere Port to watch 'Red Joan'. We had an excellent walk and talk by the Ranger at the RSPB site in Burton. In July 2019 we had a wonderful summer evening walk from New Brighton to Egremont and back to a cup of tea at the end. In September we listened to a talk about the work of The Prader-Willi Research Foundation and their work with children suffering from this condition. In October, we had a craft night at Gordale and November saw us return to The Liverpool Empire to see 'Priscilla'. Finally, we ended 2019 with a wonderful joint Advent Carol Service along with The MU and Men's Group.

We are now well into our fifth year as a group and despite the restrictions that we are all living under, 2020 has seen us already share a delicious meal at 'The Mouse' in Brimstage as well as take part in a Beetle Drive at Helen's house. Just before the national lockdown in March, we went to the Liverpool Empire to watch 'The King & I'. During the lockdown we have continued to meet online via Zoom. In June, we had an evening where we talked about the positive side of 'lockdown life' and how members had experienced things which they wouldn't have, if life had carried on as normal. In July we had an online chocolate tasting night and chocolate quiz. September saw us welcome Helen Wade from 'Ferries Family Group' to talk online about the work of their charity.

Details about our group can be found by speaking to Helen or Claire.

Helen Heath & Claire Bannon - October 2020

Wardens Report

Firstly, our grateful thanks to all volunteers, whether you be cleaners, gardeners, flower arrangers, toast and tea makers, welcomers, musicians, or open day stewards. Without your consistent help throughout the year, we would be unable to make Christ Church the welcoming place of worship and prayer that it is.

Churchyard

Work parties continued the ongoing task of tidying the churchyard; in particular the whole Bannon family who restored the much overgrown and extensive ashes plots.

Most notable of several improvements has been the opening out of the Southern part of the churchyard with the scaling back of the yew trees, plus other pruning under the guidance of the Diocesan tree advisor.

The Directive for what is permissible and acceptable on graves has been updated and published.

Church Building

A leaded window in the Vicar's vestry was replaced after being broken in an attempted break in. Work began on extending and upgrading the external, automatic lighting on the North, West and South sides of the church; for this we have Paul Janvier to thank for donating so much of his time and effort.

A number of minor repairs to gullies and downpipes were also completed but for progress on the major future improvements to our church, please refer to the separate Church Reordering report.

Viv Ley. David Compton - Church Wardens, Oct 2020

Weatherstones

Each month, on a Sunday afternoon, the church travels to Weatherstones Nursing home to join in worship with the residents, led by Rev. Stephen.

Many of our church family take part and it has become a very important part of outreach. Well known hymns of praise are appreciated by all and trigger lots of memories for the residents and for the staff. It truly is a wonderful ministry much appreciated by the residents, staff and the church family.

Sadly due to illness at Weatherstones the services happened less often, however we did have a very special impromptu carol service in one of the residents rooms.

Visitation Services

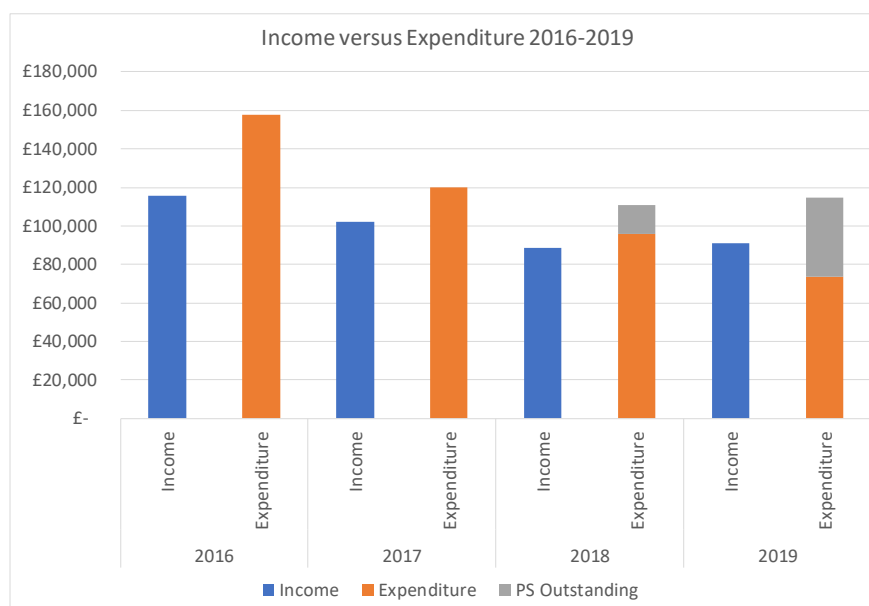
Due to the ongoing pandemic, this year it will not be possible to hold the Archdeacons' Visitation services in church. This is indeed regrettable as we very much enjoy welcoming the Churchwardens into their role in person.

There is, however, still a need to swear churchwardens into post so this year this will be carried out via Zoom. These will be online on one of the following three dates

04 November 2020
23 November 2020
08 December 2020

Finance Report for 2019 (to be read in conjunction with Statement of Account year ended Dec 2019)

1. Thank you to all those who assist me in my role as Treasurer: -
 - Our Churchwardens, David and Viv and also to Ted for banking the open-plate
 - Joy Watson and Gordon for their role in liaising with HMRC to claim our gift aid
 - Charles Elphick for auditing our accounts and producing our end of year statement. This includes getting the booklets printed; copies available in church
 - Andy Smith who has continued to offer his highly professional support; particularly welcome at year-end.
2. Income versus expenditure: -
 - As with 2018, no particularly major items of expenditure in 2019
 - Our primary source of income comprises donations from parishioners, most of whom attend church but some who do not or cannot. This income is boosted by the Gift Aid we claim back (~£12k in 2019).
 - Other sources of income include PCC fees and the occasional legacy. We held occasional fund Rising events including a Soup Lunch in 2019 where funds raised were shared with the Methodist church.
 - Sales of the Parish Magazine almost covered the cost of printing (£4,389.50). We pass on our gratitude to Sue Schwab for her diligent and continued support editing the Parish Magazine, Inneen Taylor who despite difficult circumstances continued each month to receive and sort the magazines for the distributors whose support is also so important and who help collect the subscriptions. Lastly, we must thank the contributors and the advertisers that paid. (It is worth adding that had all the advertisers paid their contribution, the magazine would have made a reasonable profit rather than a small loss of just £69.50).
 - We are also required by the diocese to pay Parish Share (PS) at a rate amounting to 1.35 PS (£84,825 or £7,068.75 per month). We were again unable to pay our full Parish Share and during 2019 we built up arrears of £41,320. This is in addition to arrears of £14,689.02 from 2018 i.e. a total of £56,009.
 - The chart below illustrates our income and expenditure for years 2016 – 2019: -

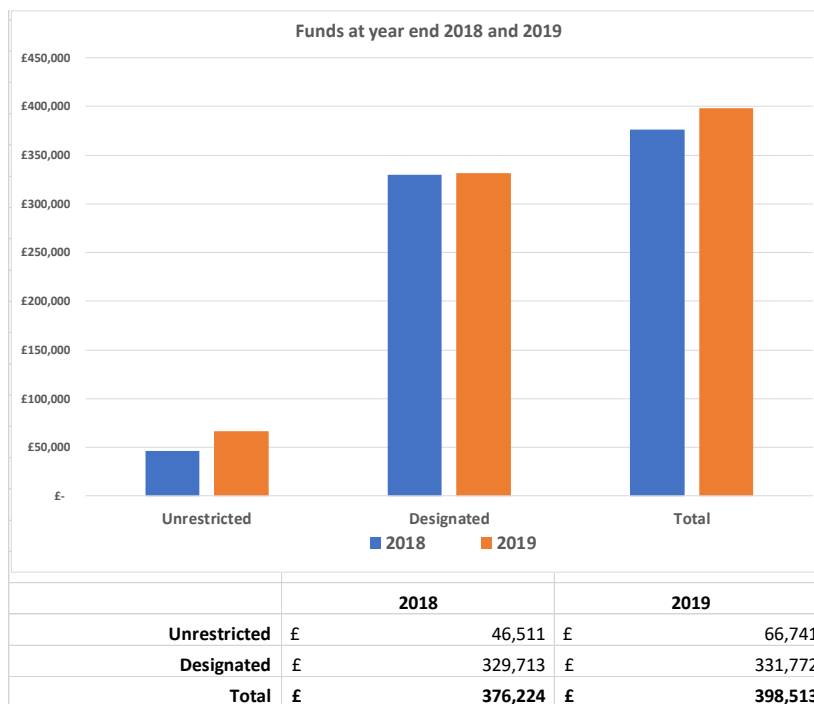


	2016		2017		2018		2019	
	Income	Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Income	Expenditure
Income	£ 115,730		£ 102,359		£ 88,537		£ 91,047	
Expenditure	£ -	£ 157,796	£ -	£ 120,195	£ -	£ 95,928	£ -	£ 73,570
PS Outstanding	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 14,689	£ -	£ 41,320

- Expenditure for (2019) is calculated on our paying PS to the diocese at £2000 per month for the first 3 months, £4,000 per month for the next 6 months and £4,500 for the remaining 3 months.

3. Unrestricted and Designated Funds

- This slide below illustrates the value of our Designated funds compared with our General or Unrestricted funds in 2018 and 2019. Designated funds increased marginally; these sums being ring-fenced for the re-ordering work.
- If at the end of 2019, we had paid off the Outstanding Parish Share (£56,009) we would have had only £10,632 as Unrestricted Funds which would have been an untenable situation.
- It is also relevant to highlight that although our investments performed relatively well in 2019, we note that the value of our CCLA Share Account value will have dropped in 2020, due to the Covid-19 effect on investment markets.



- Finally, I should like to add that we rely on the very generous donations given by so many of our parishioners; thank you very much to all who give to help the mission of Christ Church Willaston.

Tim Ley

Treasurer, Christ Church- Willaston

12th October 2020