

Holy Rood Church

Packington

LE65 1WL

(Woodfield Team of Churches)

Annual Report

1st January – 31st December 2023

Woodfield Team Prayer

“God our Father, you long to draw all people into your love; increase in number your church at Holy Rood, Packington and throughout the Woodfield Team, deepen us as followers and learners of Christ and give us courage to share the good news of your kingdom. We pray this in the power of your Spirit, to the glory of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Vicar’s report

On the 7th of March 2020 Debs and I arrived at the vicarage to begin our ministry here in the Woodfield team, bursting with energy and ideas for our mission here, not knowing what was to come.

On the 16th of March I was licenced as team vicar in the Woodfield team, feeling that we were beginning something different than I expected with no refreshments or handshakes.

We were still made to feel very welcome although the Bredon hill group of people from my curacy churches weren’t able to be with us.

Then came complete lockdown raising many new challenges for us all, church services suspended, no mixing or meeting people, giving us a new challenge getting to know people and our communities we are here to serve.

i am now beginning my 5th year of being team vicar in the Woodfield team, and there have been many changes and we have lost some good stalwarts of our church family.

the retirement of Viven has been challenging especially as after 2 years we weren’t able to fill the vacancy and now minster community is back up and running for us it doesn’t look like we will fill the vacancy.

I have been able to conduct many weddings this year across the team and numerous funerals and lots of joyful baptisms,

We have some great events this year with the work on St Johns forging ahead

This year saw my 2nd chance to play a part in Snarestone panto as one of the 7 dwarfs

After 2 years things are starting to look normal. we have had some changes in church wardens across the team so I would like to thanks those who have taken on the roles across the team and those who have remained in post. the churches wouldn’t function without the dedicated members of the church so I big thanks to all who contribute to the running and upkeep of the churches.

I give big thanks to the ministry team for their dedication in maintaining the worship of our churches and their support without which I wouldn’t be able to operate.

And I would like to thank Debs my wife for her continued support as it's not easy being a vicars wife

I hope to continue to get to know people better and as we move forward grow the churches in numbers and understanding of the love of God for us all.

Blessings

Revd Rick

Report from Retired Minister with Permission to Officiate.

Inevitably, as in the previous year, one of the factors dominating our church life in 2023 has been the absence of a Team Rector and the consequent resulting gap in our leadership and reduction in the number of Services held in our church. Last year we had high hopes that this situation would be resolved when, in the Autumn, the Archdeacon informed us that, finally, we would be permitted to advertise the post of Rector. As you know, despite two sets of advertisements being released, there were no applicants for the post and we were subsequently told that we would not be permitted to advertise again. The process however, involved many meetings, of course, and debates by PCCs, as profiles were drawn up and the advertising package completed, and we are very grateful to our representatives, Christine and Anne, for the part they played in all this.

It is, I think, not unjustified to speculate that one of the reasons for the lack of applicants was the many uncertainties as to the future which have stemmed from another factor dominating church life, namely the ongoing restructuring taking place in the Diocese in the form of the creation of Minster Communities. Again, this has involved many time-consuming meetings at different venues, lots and lots of discussion, lots and lots of questions, some of which still remained unanswered, and a great deal of angst. To be fair to the Diocese, once we had withdrawn from the original pilot scheme, which had provisionally placed us in a MC with the churches centred around Coalville, they recognised that individual churches were better able to determine those groupings of churches at a local level which would be the most effective for them in terms of relationships, sustainability, and mission, than would be the case under an edict from on high. Whilst it was interesting to meet with representatives from other churches across a wide area, comprising more than 2 deaneries, and to hear their stories of their own church life, how much these exercises contributed to the final decisions about groupings is perhaps questionable. However, that is now in the past. Churches were allowed their individual say and here in Packington we held a special meeting after Morning Worship one Sunday, just into January 2024 in fact, which involved members of the congregation and not just those serving on the PCC, giving them the opportunity to express their views as to our strengths and weakness in various areas of church life e.g Finance and Generosity, Discipleship and Mission and to consider what we should like to achieve and what support we needed. Whilst we retain our very real concerns about the reduction in the number of stipendiary posts which the MC system enables and the effect which that will have on the viability of individual

churches, our participation in the process of formation of the MC does mean that we shall be in our preferred grouping which links us with the churches in Ashby and surroundings. Again, thanks are due to all those who have given of their time and efforts engaging in this process.

Nevertheless, despite these challenges, owing to the hard work and determination of not a few, we have survived and in some areas are flourishing! We have managed to hold a minimum of 3 services a month and have been well-served by retired clergy (not just me) to whom our thanks are due. We have also been supported by Readers, and in that connection particular thanks are due to David whom I know is meticulous in his preparation and puts a lot of thought and prayer not just into his sermons but into designing services, and I mention in this context the Remembrance Day Service in particular. We have been able to maintain at least one Service of Holy Communion a month and from part way through the year, there has also been the option available of attending a mid-week BCP Holy Communion here every month. In addition, we have taken the opportunity of adding some variety in our services, with, for instance, Songs of Praise, which is always popular, a Celtic Morning Prayer, a short informal service on New Year's Day and for the first time for many years, a Lights of Love Service in the Autumn. We hosted the united Team Harvest Service followed by lunch served by Anne and helpers. Then, as well as our expected and well-received Christmas fare, including the Christingle, Carol, Crib and Midnight Services, we held our very enjoyable Toy Service/Instant Nativity when our visiting donkeys were the stars of the show! We have also had some visiting speakers, Sue Richardson informing us about the work of Christian Aid and Catherine Booton on video about the Foodbank, whilst Revd. Liz Rawlings from the Diocese story-told at our Mothering Sunday Service and Vernon Bayliss from Youth for Christ brought his own inimitable style to our Christingle Service.

In terms of occasional offices, we celebrated one glorious wedding and 3 baptisms, and sadly, there were 8 funeral services. We were also delighted that two members of our church family were confirmed by Bishop Saju in Measham Church in October.

But services are only a part of the life of the church and we have been much blessed by events of a more social nature. Our Ladies' Group, as you have heard, grows from strength to strength and our sincere thanks are due to Doreen and the Committee who clearly have managed to hit the sweet spot. Anne's Coffee and Chats, tea afternoons and soup and puddings are fast becoming legendary. She has also made a great start in attracting children and young families with her toasties and crafts at half term and summer holiday drop-ins, which are growing in popularity. And if that were not enough, she is spearheading our efforts as a church to improve our eco-status and has just submitted our application to acquire the A Rocha UK Bronze Eco Church award. We are deeply in her debt.

Unfortunately, it did not prove possible to hold the OGD last year but we did run an outstanding event, in the form of the Heritage Day in September, when we had over 100 people through our doors. We must express deep gratitude to the village History Group and to Robin Boucher in particular who gave a talk, and to Sue Brown for her very professional display. We also pay tribute to the Community Choir for their "slot" which gave pleasure to many, and to Wendy Frear for showing the fascinating film about Revd. Thomas Pestell. The tea ladies were rushed off their feet and deserved a medal!

We have been pleased to open our doors to the Community Choir for their weekly rehearsals this year and the group is thriving. Aimee has done a wonderful job and given a lot of pleasure to a great many people. The choir has already sung at one event and will sing for us on an occasional basis in future, and individual members may augment our own choir on occasion, as has already happened once.

Toasties and crafts grew out of our awareness of the almost total lack of children in our congregation. We continue to nurture our relationship with the school, largely through our excellent Foundation governors, but in addition, Revd. Rick Tett goes into school termly to take assemblies, the school uses the church for some of its own assemblies, and we host their Harvest and three end of term services, here in church. Anne is also gradually building bridges with the school as she seeks to involve the children in supporting our eco church endeavours. In addition, towards the end of the year, we were delighted to welcome the Van Sitterts as part of our congregation and their three lively and enthusiastic children have prompted us to re-start a mini "Sunday Club" during the service, which is held in the Choir Vestry and is where there is some teaching and worship and plenty of craft/colouring activities.

There are so many people to thank. It is uplifting regularly to hear the bells ringing to call us to worship and on special occasions, so big thanks to the Captain of the Tower and all the team. And then there is the small army of people who do all sorts of jobs behind the scenes – and inevitably I shall miss someone! Geoff and Doreen who faithfully, for many, many years have edited and produced the magazine, our magazine assemblers and deliverers; the flower arrangers; the cleaners; the clock-winder; those who put up and take down the flag; those who work in the churchyard; those who serve coffee; those who help out when there are special occasions e.g. with the children's activities at toasties and crafts and on Heritage Day; the sidesmen and lesson readers; Wendy Jones who carries out the very important role of Safeguarding Officer, which involves ensuring all relevant people have an up to date DBS check, that all relevant people attend the correct level of training, and ensuring that our policies both regarding children and vulnerable adults, are up to date. And then of course Ivan, ably assisted by Faye, who shoulders many responsibilities and does lots of jobs; Carolle who is Warden Emeritus but still gives lots of help in many ways, and the members of the PCC, Jane, our Electoral Roll Officer, our Treasurer, our Evangelists, and a huge thank you too to Noreen who belongs to another church but has graciously agreed to be our PCC secretary for a year – not an easy task especially when you do not know most of the people or how we operate and what are the key issues for us. And I must mention Marian Mugglestone who faithfully day in and day out, year after year, locks and unlocks our church.

On a personal note, may I thank you all for the support which you have given to me during the last year. Despite our apprehensions about the future, I am heartened by the good-will we have engendered as a church, by the knowledge of all those who do help in so many different ways and by new developments beginning to prosper. The Diocese may be being forced to change what it can offer but God does not change in His love for us. If we continue to seek His will for our future pathways here and to trust that His grace will be sufficient for us, then we can be filled with hope and look forward, yes, perhaps to new ways of doing things, but also to seeing God move in mysterious ways.

If anyone has any questions e.g. about Minister Communities, I shall be happy to try to answer them.

Revd. Lesley Birtwistle.

Crosslinks Missionaries.

One very pleasant surprise last summer was a fleeting visit from Nerena Neathercoat, or as I should now say, Nerena Akuwudike, whom we supported through Crosslinks. Nerena and Ugo attended a Morning Service in August and Nerena told us a little bit about life in South Africa and her studies and mission work there. They proved to be a delightful couple and it was a shame that owing to Covid we had not had the opportunity of getting to know Nerena on a personal level, previously.

Of course, Nerena no longer works for Crosslinks and in 2023 our mission partners were Charles and Frances de Roemer. You may recall that Charles and Frances have been serving in Belgium for around 30 years and have founded the Eglise Protestante Evangélique de Binche - a small church made up of around 20 people. Charles preaches most Sundays whilst Frances leads services, teaches in the Sunday school, manages finance and admin. and helps with music.

Binche and the surrounding region have a population of 121,000 but just two other protestant churches. Charles and Frances run a youth group, whose membership is drawn from several churches, reaching up to 20 teenagers each month. Frances also reaches out to the community through teaching English and taking part in walking and art groups.

Whilst the Binche congregation is, I guess, smaller than ours, they do have a Bible Study Group and also a Ladies' Group. I feel that there are similarities with our own position and that there is a sense of struggle to keep the church alive. Their congregation too is predominantly aged and they have concerns about the future.

When we supported Nerena, we regularly received a prayer letter from her. However, the news we receive from the de Roemers is a little more haphazard than that and is often in the form of a short video (which is good, since it helps us to feel we know them a little although we have never seen them in the flesh.) However, I do not always receive notification that another message has been prepared and so have to remember to look on the Crosslinks website to see if there are any updates.

I believe that it would be helpful to meet Charles and Frances and this coming year I will ask whether they undertake visits to their partner churches when they are back in this country. In the meantime, they clearly value prayer support for relationships within their church, for the spiritual development of their membership and for their own ministry. So, as well as our annual donation, this is one simple way in which we can give them our support on a regular basis.

Revd. Lesley Birtwistle

Parish Governance

Summary of Fabric Repairs, Improvements and General Maintenance Work

A range of electrical work including flood lights to ground level and tower roof, also new lights to the north door and tower.

Work carried out by A.C. Electrical

Improvements to the servery including insulation panel behind the worktop.

Work carried out by Richard Babcock

Fire extinguishers serviced.

Portable appliances safety tested.

Church mower serviced.

Spring and autumn clearing of roof, gutters and gullies.

Ongoing maintenance of Churchyard, mowing, strimming, hedge cutting etc.

Ivan Bowers
Churchwarden

Church Terrier

Holy Rood has a requirement to maintain the Church Terrier, this is a list of land and all items/property belonging to the church. It is also a log book and detailed record of all the alterations, additions and repairs to the church, its land and contents which enables churchwardens to comply with the law, it is continually updated and stored securely.

Ivan Bowers
Churchwarden

Electoral Roll

At the Annual General Meeting on 8th May 2024, it was reported that there were 53 names on the Electoral Roll.

Jane Hall
Electoral Roll Officer

PCC SECRETARY'S REPORT

A brief report of the proceedings of the Parochial Church Council for the period January 2023 to December 2023.

Meetings: Scheduled meetings were held in February, June, July, September, October and November.

Council Membership: The PCC has a total of 10 members

Ex Officio Members:

Ivan Bowers Church Warden
David and Elizabeth Harrison Evangelists

Other Members:

Stephen Hill, Faye Bowers, Peter Last, Wendy Jones, Anne Wathes, David Manton and Jane Manton.

In Attendance: -

Rev Lesley Birtwhistle Retired Minister Co-opted
Noreen Mewies PCC Secretary from September 2023

PCC Members standing down at the 2024 APCM:
Peter Last and Faye Bowers

PCC Members elected/re-elected at the 2022 APCM:
Anne Wathes, Carolle Melville

Standing Committee:

The Standing Committee last met in May 2023, the members are Ivan, Stephen, David and Anne.

Typical Agenda Items:

- Welcome and Prayer
- Apologies for absence
- Review of Minutes from the previous meeting
- Matters arising from those Minutes
 - Matters arising from the Standing Committee Minutes
- Specific items for discussion or information
- Reports Clergy, Treasurer's, Church Warden and Safeguarding
- AOB and notices
- Date of the next meeting
- Closing prayer

Key Issues, Decisions and Events:

February

Topics discussed included, The History Boards, Eco-Church and the Woodfield Team Leadership

April

Church APCM

June

8th June - Meeting attended and Chaired by Revd Gill Pinnington.

Discussion on Annual reviews and appraisals for the Team Administrator during the interregnum, other appraisals for church activity leaders would be carried out by the Safer Recruiting Officer. Revd Pinnington confirmed she would provide leadership for the Woodfield Team; each PCC was responsible for the direction of its church.

28th June

To discuss advertising the post of Rector of the Woodfield Team and to commit to full participation in the ongoing process of forming a Minster Community.

July

A large part of the meeting concerned an update on the Church Accounts and an update of the progress of Minster Communities

September

Several items regarding fabric, church furniture and churchyard some of which are still ongoing, and services.

October

Update on the position regarding the appointment of a new Team Rector, Minster Communities, History Boards and Services.

November

A detailed financial update, a site meeting and discussion about the way forward with the churchyard, reorganisation of the Vestry, Belfry and Shed and ongoing work in the kitchen area, and further updates on the History Boards, Minster Community and planning for the Christmas Services.

Noreen Mewies (PCC Secretary)







Safeguarding

Safeguarding Provision in our Parish:

A Checklist and Template for Annual Reporting on Safeguarding to the PCC and submission to the Diocesan Office.

1	Requirement: We, the PCC, have adopted and reviewed up to date policies for Child Safeguarding and Safeguarding Adults	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
1.1	- We have adopted the model diocesan Child Safeguarding Policy issued in January 2018 or have our own policy which incorporates all of the model diocesan policy.	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.2	- The Child Safeguarding Policy has been reviewed in the last 12 months. Date of review: 15.03.24	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
1.3	- We have adopted the model diocesan Safeguarding Adults Policy issued in January 2018 or have our own policy which incorporates all of the model diocesan policy.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
1.4	- The Safeguarding Adults Policy has been reviewed in the last 12 months. Date of review: 15.03.24	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
1.5	- Copies of both policies are attached with this report.	<input type="checkbox"/>
1.6	- Safeguarding is regularly on the agenda at PCC meetings as a standing item.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2	Requirement: We have Coordinators in place for Safeguarding Children and Adults (who may be the same person or two separate people)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2.1	- Our Child Safeguarding Coordinator (Child Protection Coordinator) is Wendy Jones	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2.2	- Our Safeguarding Adults Coordinator is Wendy Jones	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3	Requirement: We have a named Safeguarding lead on the PCC (<i>choose one of the following options</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>



	<p>EITHER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Safeguarding Coordinator (or one of them) is a member of the PCC <p style="text-align: right;"><i>2nd option overleaf</i></p> <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Safeguarding lead on the PCC is 	
4	<p>Requirement: We are clear about what activities are taking place with children, who is responsible and where and when they take place (choose one of the following options)</p> <p>EITHER</p> <p>The list of activities with children is stated in Appendix 1 to this report</p> <p>OR</p> <p>The list of activities with children is as stated in the Child Safeguarding Policy</p> <p>OR</p> <p>We have no activities with children and/or young people</p>	  
5	<p>Requirement: We are clear about what activities are taking place specifically for adults who may be considered to have additional needs, who is responsible and where and when they take place (<i>choose one of the following options</i>)</p> <p>EITHER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The list of activities with adults with additional needs is stated in Appendix 1 to this report <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The list of activities with adults with additional needs is as stated in the Adult Safeguarding Policy 	 

	<p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We have no activities specifically with adults with additional needs 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
6	<p>Requirement: We make clear our commitment to safeguarding by displaying the policies and helpful information</p>	
6.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Child Safeguarding and Safeguarding Adults policy statements are posted on a church noticeboard 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
6.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The safeguarding poster with the Childline phone number is displayed in places where children can see it 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
6.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Relevant information about help for adults (eg in relation to domestic abuse) is available 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
6.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contact details are displayed for the Safeguarding Coordinator(s), Churchwarden(s), any other local leaders as appropriate, and the Diocesan Safeguarding Team 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
6.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A hard copy of the Diocesan Safeguarding Handbook is available 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
7	<p>Requirement: We know who is working with children and/or vulnerable adults</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
7.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The number of people authorized to work with children and young people is 13 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
7.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The number of people authorized to work with vulnerable adults is 13 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
7.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The list of those authorized to work with children/young people and/or vulnerable adults is attached as Appendix 2 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
8	<p>Requirement: We ensure that everybody who is eligible has a DBS check</p>	
8.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We are registered with thirtyone:eight for online DBS checks 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
8.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The lead recruiter is Wendy Jones 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
8.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We have a record of DBS checks 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
8.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - DBS checks are renewed every 3 years in line with Church of England policy 	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

9	Requirement: In addition to DBS checks we use safer recruitment for everybody we recruit to work with children/young people and/or vulnerable adults, both paid staff and volunteers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
9.1	- It is clear who is responsible for making the appointment decision	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
9.2	- All new appointments are subject to a recruitment process which includes a role description, application form, references, interview/conversation, and confidential self-declaration	
10	Requirement: We ensure that all people who work with children/young people and/or vulnerable adults attend safeguarding training	
	- The list of those who have attended diocesan safeguarding training in the last 3 years is attached as Appendix 3 (or included in Appendix 2)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
11	Requirement: We ensure safe working practice in work with children/young people and vulnerable adults	
11.1	- Consent forms are in place for all under 18 groups	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
11.2	- The number of current authorised leaders and helpers is sufficient and the OFSTED staffing ratios are maintained	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
11.3	- Adequate insurance and a risk assessment is in place for all activities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
11.4	All volunteers and paid staff have received the relevant safeguarding policies and the Pocket Guide to Safeguarding Children	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
11.5	The number of leaders and helpers who are qualified First Aiders is 0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
11.6	- Volunteers and paid staff are advised on appropriate use of social media, mobile phones and texting	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
11.7	- Texting to under 18's/social media is used in the following contexts: N/A	<input type="checkbox"/>

12	Requirement: We ensure that any information/disclosures/concerns about possible abuse are passed on to the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
12.1	- All volunteers and paid staff have received instruction and/or training in what to do if they receive information or have concerns about possible abuse	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
12.2	- All information known to the leadership has been passed on to the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser	
13	Requirement: We ensure that any blemished disclosures are passed to Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser	
	- All blemished disclosures have been passed to the DSA (or there have been no blemished disclosures)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
14	Requirement: We ensure that information about convictions and about people who may pose a safeguarding risk is passed to the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser	
	- All concerns or information about offenders in the congregation or people who may pose a risk have been passed to the DSA (or there are no such instances)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
15	Requirement: We keep information safely and maintain appropriate confidentiality	
15.1	- All personal records (consent forms, recruitment information, safeguarding records) are kept locked away	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
15.2	- Where necessary, computer files are password protected	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
15.3	- Shared email addresses are not used for correspondence on confidential matters	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
16	Requirement: We ensure that external bodies who use church premises have appropriate safeguarding arrangements in place	
	- Hire agreements for church premises contain the appropriate provisions and arrangements made by hirers are verified.	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
17	Requirement: We act to improve safeguarding arrangements and to respond to new and revised policies and guidance	
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

	<p>- The PCC has no action plan but the Woodfield Team meet regularly to response to any gaps identified by this report and all new requirements identified from Promoting a Safer Church.</p>	
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Appendix 1 – Not used

Appendix 2 – Rev. R. Tett

Rev. L. Birtwistle

Mr. D. Harrison

Mrs. E. Harrison

Mrs. W. Jones

Mrs. M. Mugglestone

Mrs. F. Maguire

Mrs. J. Smith

Mrs. A. Wathes

Mrs. N. Morris-Chapman

Mr. R. Morris-Chapman

Mrs. C. Stewart

Mrs. C. Baker

(DBS pending)

Appendix 3 – Mr. I. Bowers

Once completed and agreed by the PCC, return a copy to:

Safeguarding Administrator
 Diocese of Leicester
 St Martins House
 7 Peacock Lane
 LE1 5PZ

Wendy Jones
 Safeguarding Officer

The Year at Packington C E Primary School

It is with great pleasure I report on another interesting year at our village primary school where we are celebrating 18 months of focused work to review and refresh our [Vision and the Values](#) which you can now read more about on our school website.

Knowledge empowers us. Faith gives us courage to act. Add love, and we can change the world!

**“To give rather than take. To put others’ needs above our own. To ‘Go and do likewise”
 Luke 10.37**

Our Christian values of “Perseverance, Hope, Courage, Kindness, Honesty and Forgiveness” have been discussed and agreed with a range of stakeholders including staff, parents, and

pupils. The children have created pieces of beautiful artwork to celebrate these more publicly around the school.

Our vision is rooted in the parable of the Good Samaritan and celebrated within our strapline “At Packington we CARE” where C is for community, A for Achieve, R for Respect and E for Enjoy. You will read about the school’s termly CARE award to be awarded to pupils who demonstrate these values in action in the Parish News.

Discussion and analysis of our SATs results together with other information, shape our priorities for our annual development plan. This plan is part of our Strategic approach to school improvement. Staff are focusing on developing writing skills across the school, including teaching grammar and developing vocabulary, not to mention writing in different styles. Maths has been taught in a different way this year, to enable children in mixed year groups to focus on appropriate steps in mathematical fundamentals, reasoning and logic. The impact of this has been significant and will continue next year. The curriculum has been reviewed and re-shaped with reading, writing and maths at the core, but with foundation subjects “blocked” in a rolling timetable, so that children engage more deeply with their learning and retain more of that learning. So far this is working well and is under continuous review. Other key focus areas are developing leadership across the school, embedding the new behaviour policy, embracing diversity, including learning about world faith as part of a multicultural society, and reviewing assessment to ensure consistency across the school for all learners. Collective Worship is developing with termly class assemblies held in church. These are created and led by the pupils and are in addition to our usual festival celebrations such as Harvest, Christmas and Easter. The recent “Easter journey” was a definite highlight. Children, staff and volunteer guides all benefited from the range of activities on offer and the conversations that arose from them. A tangible celebration of our Christian foundation, as is our ever-popular School Nativity.

This year has brought both joys and challenges – such as the arrival of Miss Carter’s beautiful baby girl, who has already visited the school. Miss Carter is on maternity leave and her Owls class have been left in the capable hands of Mrs Carr.

The children have enjoyed trips to the Space Centre and Twycross Zoo and had great fun supporting Red Nose Day and World Book Day. Parents’ evenings remain well supported, with Governors continuing to host refreshments, as have additional sessions to learn about how we teach reading and sessions for new parents to find out more about their child settling into school.

Sport is still popular including table tennis and badminton but especially our intrepid cross-country runners, who have completed many courses, despite the rigours of wet and muddy terrain. Several children also had an amazing experience when their parents enabled them to run a mini-London marathon, crossing the actual finish line and being awarded a medal and a T shirt.

The Parent School Association (PSA) have provided wonderful support through the year with a range of events and activities. They are contributing to funding for school trips, which are becoming increasingly expensive, especially where travel is required. Future projects include

the continuing improvement of the school grounds and the reflection garden. We already benefit from a mud kitchen and development of our outside learning spaces.

One of the year's challenges has focused on admissions. Some of our classes are up to capacity, and we have not been able to accept children into them who have moved into the village. This has caused frustration, due to having to abide by the Local Authority policy. Numbers are down overall on previous figures, so it is important we celebrate our school within the wider community and encourage others to join us, especially where we have places in our Early Years unit. We currently have 90 pupils on roll.

And back to the joys - we are blessed, not only with the quality of our teachers but also our experienced, positive, and competent classroom support team – they add such value to how we all experience the school, as do all our supervisors and volunteers. Mrs Burton is very keen to expand our volunteer team so please do consider or encourage others to get in touch with her to see what opportunities could be managed.

On the Governance side, we welcomed Mr Pilbro to our Board in September. Unfortunately, Mr Cash resigned recently as Chair of Governors. We thank him for his leadership and commitment, but we do now have 3 Governor vacancies:

- a foundation Governor, in lieu of the Ex Officio role that Lesley Birtwistle held for many years.
- a parent Governor to replace Mrs. Tice and
- a co-opted Governor to replace Mr. Cash

The Trust Deed for our school allows for a full complement of 12 Governors. You will see the advert for the Foundation Governor in the May edition of the Parish News. The other 2 posts will be advertised within school and Packington Post etc as appropriate. Please do consider who you know who could contribute to our Governance team and encourage them to contact Mrs Burton to visit the school.

On the plus side, we welcomed Mrs Gillies to our full governing body meeting in March. She is a very experienced clerk and is helping enormously, given our depleted resources. In April, we nominated and voted for 2 Co-chairs and 2 Vice-chairs to steer us into the new Academic year. Mrs Carlisle and I have agreed to act as Chair, and Mrs MacDonald and Mr Pound as Vice-Chair. We are fortunate that the Local Authority are supporting us through this transition period. The Governor page on the school website has been updated accordingly.

And I shall finish as I did in last year's report, as it is so apt: "The pupils at Packington school continue to thrive due to the care and dedication of the staff. In fact, we all strive to be the best we can be, and we are grateful for your support and prayers along this journey."

Nia Sutton
Foundation Governor and Co-Chair

PARISH ACTIVITIES

Ladies Group

Looking back over 2023 we have continued the long tradition of varied and interesting meetings, which have been well supported.

We started the year with the informal coffee morning which gives the opportunity for a chat in the New Year. The morning raised £60 towards the 2023 charities.

The first meeting of the year was Dave Andrews, who took us on a trip through the archives of '100 years of the BBC', including snippets of remarkable speeches. Many we remembered. (we look forward to a return visit from Dave Next month).

Talks included 'Love Your Clothes' when Sallie Butt from Leics. County Council told us what we can do to reduce our own Environmental impact around clothing. April saw a return visit from Jo Carter, who took us on a journey of bygone holidays.

To celebrate the Coronation of King Charles we enjoyed a 'Royal Afternoon Tea' prepared and served by the committee. This afternoon included a quiz and how past coronations were celebrated in the village.

In June we welcome Jonathan, a 'biker' from Leics & Rutland Blood Bikes. He told us about their valuable work transporting blood, plasma, vaccines and other medical items to hospitals.

During the year we heard from 2 specialised crafters. Angela Dewes, a sheep farmer, told us how she transformed fleeces into various types of wool fibres before knitting scarves, hats and gloves. The 2nd crafter was Maggie Cooper, a 'Willow Basket Maker' from Castle Donington. Maggie showed us different types of willow baskets she had made. Her work includes life sized horses and an impressive stag's head.

Outings were The Dower House, garden at Melbourne and the 1620's Donington Manor House and garden, both with superb garden tour guides. We enjoyed tea and cake after both garden tours.

We had a well-attended open charity evening (although a power cut 20mins. before we were due to start). Anna-Louise Pickering talked about her life as a wildlife photographer, with her mother on her many expeditions. The evening raised £350 for charity.

The year ended with 38 ladies and our friend, Rev Barry Dryden enjoying Christmas lunch in the Memorial Hall. Thanks go to the hard-working committee who prepared and served the supper, also thanks to the ladies who helped serving tea and coffee.

Over the year we have donated £425 to charity. A varied programme is planned for 2024; the year in which we celebrate 60 years of the group (is it really 10 years since our Golden celebration in the Memorial Hall!) To mark the 60 years, we have special events in September (18th & 28th more details later)

Membership has grown during the year and we look forward to continuing friendships in 2024. As I conclude my 25th Annual Report I would like to thank the committee, without their help I couldn't continue, also thanks go to everyone for supporting the meetings.

I hope and pray that we will continue to provide the opportunity for friendship in Packington, Normanton and the surrounding area within the life of the church and village.

Doreen Gasson

Coffee Mornings

Wednesday Coffee Mornings continue to be popular and well attended with numbers averaging high twenties. Most people use the book and jigsaw swaps. During school holidays children and their carers attend from the Phoenix Childrens Charity. Weather permitting, we provide cake and drinks for a picnic otherwise they join us in Church.

Donations for the year 2023 were £466.89 less expenses of £72 leaving a total of £394.89.

Soup and a Pudding, Afternoon Teas and the family Toasties are also well supported.

Anne Wathes

Other catering events

2023 was very busy with various additional catering events. It started with New Years Day Soup and alongside soups, teas, and Toasties there were the special occasions of the Coronation, Heritage Teas, and Harvest Festival.

Anne Wathes

Holy Rood Church Bell-ringers.

I was overwhelmed with the response from the village about learning to bell ring and we now have a good group of fully fledged ringers, including 9-year-old Sophie who has only recently learned with her mum Sarah, and both ring on a Sunday for the services. We have enjoyed ringing quarter peals on a Monday night with various methods - difficult to get your head round but easy when you know how. We were honoured to ring a full peal (3 hours solid method ringing) with muffled bells for the passing of our Queen.

We are all so grateful for the money the church invested in the bells, luckily now we have the wonderful Dave Gammon who is able to provide a good level of maintenance on the bells so we don't have to keep asking the church. It's great to have our own set of muffles as well, it would be lovely to use them for funerals but it isn't very popular just yet. The majority of ringers for the upcoming wedding are Packington residents which is great.

I have received many positive comments about the bells ringing again and I am especially happy to hear them frequently, and of course ring them as well.

On behalf of all the ringers, we do hope the village enjoys them as much as we do - everyone and anyone is welcome anytime to join our Monday evening practice. Dave has asked if Mondays bell ringing practice 7-9pm can be put on the calendar of events please.

Caroline Stewart

Open the Book

Re-establishing the links with each of the seven schools has been a slow process. We have been in to six of the seven since Covid, but visits have been more spread out. The children are as keen as ever to watch the presentations, but changes of head in several of the schools seems to have slowed down our access to the schools. David Harrison has come alongside me to help coordinate our activities.

We have the same team as before with the addition of Dawn from Donisthorpe. It would be good to have some new members of the team, should anyone be interested in joining us. We find it very rewarding when we see the enthusiasm on the children's faces.

New materials will be used from September. This is all part of the new membership package. The idea appears to be to streamline everything both here and abroad.

Norma Morris-Chapman

North West Leicestershire Deanery Synod Report

Revd. Gillian Pinnington was licensed as Area Dean in 2020, following the resignation of Revd Tim Phillips as Assistant Area Dean in 2023 Tim has been replaced by Revd. Laura Jackson.

Representatives to Deanery Synod may stand for two terms of three years effective from July 2021, the current representatives are all eligible to stand for a second triennial.

Key note speakers at each Synod in 2023:

March

Diocesan Finance

Guest Speakers; Johnathan Kerry – Chief Executive & Diocesan Secretary and Simon Wilson – Finance Director along with David Palmer, Claire Bampton, and Phil Leech.

Gill welcomed our guests; they explained the purpose of their visit was to share information and to start a conversation around the financial challenges the Diocese are facing.

A letter from Bishop Martyn circulated in January 2023 was referred to before a slideshow showing income/expenditure, breakdown of assets, parish contributions and other useful information was presented.

A short time was given to discuss what we had heard and to raise questions.

June

Living Faith; Growing Gifts with Revd. Liz Rawlings

A brief review of the evening.

The heart of the matter

Lectio Divina – Luke 6:12-19

→ Jesus spends time abiding in God

- Jesus called together a community of faith
- They minister to the crowd, in word and deed.

The calling of all Christians is to live out our **everyday faith** in the whole of life. This calling begins from being 'in' God, a place of abiding, from knowing ourselves as the beloved. In God, in community, in the world.

We were then invited to think about:

- How am I attending to abiding in God?

Everyday faith is grown in communities of mutual discipleship and this leads to fruitfulness in the world where we can be salt and light and bearers of the grace of God.

We were given three interlocking circles to look at.

Relational Ministry - How do I live out my faith in and among, my family, friends, networks and colleagues?

Church Ministry – What is my role in the life and mission of my church?

Social Ministry – How does my faith affect, my household, my work, my community, the environment, and social justice?

We were invited to consider and write down:

- What does my faith mean in the various spheres of life I occupy?

The calling of the church

- **In God**- shaped by prayer and worship
- **In community**- a place of mutual discipleship and service
- **In the world**- to bear witness to the Kingdom of God and bless the world.

We were invited to consider and note:

- What is my role in the life and mission of my church?

PCC member, confidant/listener, schools work, community work and much more.

How does God guide us?

God always calls us into deeper life in him and resources us to live more fruitfully in all spheres of life.

He sometimes calls us to new ways of living out our faith.

How do we know what he is saying?

We were challenged to think about:

- What does your mind say?
- What does your heart say?
- What does your spirit say?
- What do others say?

Some useful next steps;

- Talk to someone you trust
- Life Signs exercises
- Journey in Faith Course
- For everyone sessions
- Spiritual Direction
- Contact the Vocations Team – liz.rawlings@leicestercofe.org

Vocation and ministry

All of us are ministers of the Gospel but some are called to particular ministries authorized by the church. These may be:

Authorized Local Minister

Roles could include – children’s work, pastoral visiting, welcome and hospitality, volunteering parish officers and many more.

Associate Minister

All licensed laity enable others to grow in faith

Ordained Minister, Incumbent, Priest, Associate Vicar, Chaplain, Ordained Pioneer, Deacons

The Community Examen

- Where are we seeing glimpses of glory? – what do we reflect on at the end of the day?
- What is troubling us? – what is weighing heavily on our mind?
- What are we hoping for? – what would I ask God to do?

We considered and shared a few ideas for each.

October 2023

Parish Commitment – Noreen Mewies

Noreen thanked all the churches for sending their information in, figures showed an overall deanery increase of almost £17,000.

Two questions arose; -

- Will Minster Communities affect Parish Commitments in the future?
- Will there still be a deanery?

It is not yet known how/if Minster Communities will affect Parish Commitments, although finance is a major consideration.

There will still be a deanery but, again, not yet known how this will work. Deaneries will certainly have to work together, but we do already have strong bonds across boundaries.

Laity Meetings

As a consequence of the Deanery Tour, Noreen felt we should not wait until next Summer to talk to people again, and thought it would be a good idea to arrange informal meetings starting in the new year.

This will be an opportunity to hear and share concerns and worries, share good news etc. Both Noreen and Avril will be meeting with the groups

Newsletter

Again, starting in 2024, Synod would like to produce a deanery newsletter. This could include good news, what's happening in our churches, things to pray about etc.

Church reps will be asked to send their items to Avril who would collate the items, it is hoped to do this three times each year.

Summer Tour 2023

Over the summer Gill, Noreen, Jean and Geoff visited all the churches in the deanery apart from Staunton Harold. The group listened, prayed and enjoyed wonderful hospitality. Every church representative had something different to say and they were impressed by the wonderful ministries that are happening in every church community.

There was concern expressed regarding Minster Communities, the uncertainty about the future weighed heavy. We await the meetings in early 2024 which will determine our future path.

Living in Love & Faith

Prayers for Living in Love and Faith could soon be used in church services. Wider discussions are taking place regarding the blessings of marriages of same-sex couples.

Noreen Mewies

Deanery Lay Chair

Community Outreach

Ashby Foodbank

We continue to be busy at Ashby foodbank and are helping people from around our area who are struggling for food in the current cost of living crisis. Our figures as shown below, are a little lower than the previous year, but we are still providing a vital and important service to those who need us.

We have 4 distribution sessions per week (2 in Ashby, 1 in Measham and 1 in Swadlincote (which has recently moved from Woodville) where we meet clients, offer help and assistance and give out our food parcels.

We are blessed with a good team of volunteers ranging in age from 15 to 85, who all work together in a range of ways (from donation collection, labelling and storing, through parcel packing, to meeting with clients in our distribution centres) to achieve a positive experience for the clients. We are constantly looking for ways to improve our offering – including using new signposting software which helps to match the client to services which may help them and the possibility of having a CAB worker on site to offer advice.

We have also recently employed a Foodbank administrator who is able to help with some of the admin jobs such as thank you letters, updating referrers information/leaflets, shopping for missing items and other jobs as required.

We are grateful to Ashby Congregational church for their continued support in offering the use of so much of their building for storage and our activities and the other venues,

Measham Baptist Church and Emmanuel church Swadlincote, for the use of their rooms for our sessions. We thank Holy Trinity for continuing to provide governance and support too.

Our statistics for the year April 23 – March 24 are as follows (*with the previous year's figures in brackets and italics*)

Number of vouchers (food parcels issued to clients)	822	(936 2022-23)
People helped	1385 adults / 944 children //	2329 total
	(1495 adults/ 999 children //	2494 total 2022-23)
Food given out in parcels	23560 kg	(27021kg 2022-23)
Food donated in	25031kg	(27949kg 2022-23)
Current stock level	4636kg	(3835kg 31/3/23)

Rev Catherine Booton
Ashby Foodbank Management Team

Ashby Youth for Christ

AYFC had a positive year during which we saw God move and develop the work in Ashby with young people.

One highlight was the connection that we made with Ashby School, the school allows us in on a regular basis to support young people with their mental health, friendships and to be a listening ear. This access to the school pupils has been a blessing and a privilege.

Due to our work in the school, we have seen our evening clubs grow and develop, with many young people also coming along to Skaters each week.

Rock Solid and Skaters have continued to grow and we have been blessed by new volunteers coming on board. This has given the opportunity for us to invite a therapy dog in on a monthly basis, have a regular craft slot, and to engage with young people through board games and other activities.

It has been a blessing to not only see new volunteers but also to see the development and growth of our existing volunteers.

Our weekly football sessions continue to take place, giving 18+ young men the opportunity to hear about God, play football and to receive regular support from Vernon. We continue to pray for a volunteer to support this work.

Adventurous, our outdoor activities programme continues to be popular. It has given the opportunity to many young people to stretch their boundaries, get outdoors, and try out

new activities. We have also been able to offer other charities and groups the opportunity to use our equipment and Vernon for one off sessions, meaning we have had some income from the programme.

In our annual report to British Youth for Christ these were some of the statistics we shared with relation to the number of young people we had contact with (some of these figures are through school assemblies):

Number of under 11s: 1200

Number of 11s – 18s: 175

Number of over 18s: 45

Number of young people reached: 1420

Thank you to everyone who has been involved in supporting AYFC, as volunteers, financially or prayerfully we appreciate all you have given in whatever way. Thank you to the staff team and to our trustees, council of reference and volunteers.

Helen Davis
AYFC Centre Director