

# St Laurence's Church

## ANNUAL REVIEW 2021



St Laurence's  
Church

# Annual Review 2021

for the **Annual Parochial Church Meeting** of St Laurence's Foleshill  
held on Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2022

## Contents

Vicar's Report.....	3
Family Link Worker .....	4
Hope Hub .....	5
Safeguarding .....	6
Electoral Roll .....	6
Fabric & Buildings .....	7
Deanery Synod.....	8-9
Finance .....	10-12

# VICAR'S REPORT

## GARETH IRVINE

**“The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field.” Matthew 13:44**

2021 began with the country once again going into National Lockdown as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The short-term effects of COVID remained, whilst the longer-term effects of lockdown and COVID on our physical & mental health began to increasingly show. The faithfulness of God remained throughout, yet for many of us it was another challenging year, yet with opportunities to reconnect and reimagine life.

We returned to online worship via Zoom in the New Year until things began to ease in the late spring & Early summer and activities slowly restarted. We enjoyed the beauty of God's creation by meeting outside in the church grounds for most of the summer and appreciated meeting together in person. At Easter, we welcomed children from our local schools in an outdoor based Way of the Cross – continuing to adapt and innovate how to enable worship, community, and mission in a changing context of regulations and guidance. We partnered with Coventry City Council in running a successful HAF Summer Holiday Club in August, and the ministry of the Hope Hub grew and developed and continues to serve our local community.

We began Encounter, an online space on Sunday evenings, and Trinity Treasures – a youth missional community meeting in the home of local leaders. We welcomed Rev John Samuel as Curate, and John co-hosted an Autumn Alpha course where we welcomed people from beyond our church family to explore Christian faith over a meal. Our congregation continues to change as new people join us, returners come back after a season away and we said goodbye to some longstanding church members who are no longer with us as Jesus called them home. In 2022, our big focus will be to develop as a Mission Hub in partnership with the Diocese, to help support existing churches and grow new worshipping communities.

# FAMILY LINK WORKER

## REA VERDON

The last year has seemed more settled, and life is almost back to normal. Both school and church have returned to a usual routine with groups and services being held in person.

Some things that were started or changed amid lockdown have now become part of our normal routine. For example, Messy Church went through several changes, when we returned it was to an outdoor session in family groups with table service, but we are now back indoors. Instead of individual tables for the crafts we use one long table, and everyone does the same craft at the same time. Although we miss the chaos of the old Messy Church, this model helps the sessions continue despite the small team numbers.

The children's sessions on a Sunday morning have also returned this year, with a sizeable number of children attending regularly. The relationships between the children are strong and their engagement is encouraging. Due to an increase in teenaged members of St Laurence's a new group was formed with Becca Henney leading. Following the success of this, a midweek community was started, and the teens have invited friends in. 12 teenagers now meet each week to share a meal and life together.

In school, the groups run continue to go well. Stay and Play was able to stay open through most of the restrictions of Covid as it was seen as a vital support for parents. The core group has stayed the same for three years with several new families dipping in and out. At Christmas they held their first Little Stars Nativity where they got to dress up and act out the story of Jesus' birth. Several the families that came do not attend any type of church so it was wonderful to welcome them and share some of whom Jesus is.

Last summer St Laurence's hosted a Summer Club with funding from Coventry Councils HAF project. Families from the local area came to daily activities over three weeks and were supplied with lunch and entertainment. The funding allowed for many different activities, gymnastics, music lessons, sports and crafts and the club ended with a day trip to Bosworth Waterpark. Although running clubs like this take a lot of organising and demanding work, it really is worth it to have the chance to meet and serve families in our community, 2022 will see more holiday clubs, starting with the one held at Easter.

As always, reflecting on the previous year fills me with joy for all the things that were achieved and hope for all the things the coming year will bring.

# HOPE HUB

## LAURA EDMUNDS

St Laurence's Hope Hub has just celebrated its 2<sup>nd</sup> Birthday, how has it already been 2 years since the Country went into full lockdown due to a Worldwide Pandemic, time really does pass us by.

St Laurence's hope Hub is still reaching out to families and single Adults within the community, supporting them with Emergency Food, Support, Safe Space, Open Table on a Tuesday, and we have the wonderful Ian from CAP who joins us each week to help our service users with Debt Support. St Laurence's is based within the Northeast of Coventry and is reported to be one of the top Wards who suffer with poverty.

We have been working closely with the Food Bank and Bare Necessities to provide food, cleaning, laundry, and hygiene packs as well as safely recruiting volunteers for our existing team. From the secured grants we purchase fresh fruit, vegetables Ham, Chicken, butter, Cheese, Bread, Yogurts. As a team we believe that everyone should have healthy additional produce to their parcels. St Laurence's Hope Hub was open every Tuesday from 12.30pm to 2.30pm and on a Thursday from 3.30pm to 5pm.

In December 2021 St Laurence's Hope Hub arranged and funded a Christmas Dinner and Christmas Hampers to Service users, which was extremely popular and a massive success.

The emergency food parcels consisted of all essentials, including, bread, milk, cereals, rice, pasta, sauces, treats for children, fresh fruit, and vegetables to name a few items. St Laurence's Hope Hub have provided support to a number of people ranging from single person households up to larger households, some of which could have up to 7 children and 2 adults occupying I am genuinely proud to say that with our continued efforts and "can do" attitude we have managed to feed over 600 mouths.

St Laurence's Hope Hub has continued to grow from strength to strength, and we are looking forward to the future and expanding our services, which would have not been possible without our wonderful, dedicated team. Big massive shout out and thank you.

# **SAFEGUARDING**

## **CHRIS MCKIRDY**

Chris McKirdy and Laura Edmunds have continued to work on Safeguarding as part of their roles within St Laurence's. Chris McKirdy is the Safeguarding Officer and Laura Edmunds manages the Safeguarding Administration.

We use the Safeguarding Dashboard which is updated on a regular basis. We have only a few tasks outstanding, one of which is something that we are awaiting an update on and the additional are for the risk assessments for church activities and still some safeguarding training. Overall, the Dashboard is on the Green for Good.

The Basic & Foundation modules are now online and accessible to anyone, have sent out required links to all persons whom the training applies to. Currently in the process of Safer Recruiting for positions within our Church Worship Team and Youth Leader.

We have had 2 separate Safeguarding incidents throughout 2021, both were referred to the Diocese for review.

# **ELECTORAL ROLL**

## **PCC SECRETARY**

There are 41 people in the Church Electoral role, of which 23 people reside within the parish and 18 reside outside of the parish. There have been 7 additions and 1 removal since the 2021 report. The removal was due to the sad passing of a dear St Laurence's Church Family.

# FABRIC & BUILDINGS

## BEN VERDON

Now covid restrictions have eased the buildings are back to being used to the full again.

Not much has happened in the buildings really since the last report.

In the hall we have had a new commercial type of oven which is more suitable for the intended future use of the kitchen.

The house on Gayer Street is still occupied with discussions ongoing regarding the future plans and hopes for the property.

The church has had an unwelcome visitor who has chewed at the entrance doors giving us another feature but has not really caused much damage.

We have had a heating engineer come out to assess the current boilers and heating arrangements, whilst we are still waiting for a copy of the report, the general feeling was that it may not be cost effective to keep paying out on the system we have as it is not suited or set up for the building properly, a few recommendations have been made but will be clearer when we have the report and some budgetary costs to give us a starting point for discussion of how we move forward.

We held a works party and had a really good turnout. We managed to get a lot done both outside and in, from painting the gates (and hands and faces!) to clearing ivy and a lot of the unwanted growth on the churchyard trees. The paths were re-edged, and a massive amount of litter cleared.

Inside the church was cleaned, hoovered and the pews have had a fresh coat of wax. We are all fresh and ready for summer.

We even managed to share a lunch together.

We would like to thank everyone who came to help and gave their time and efforts either cleaning, chopping, weeding, painting or feeding and watering us!

Your friendly wardens Chris and Ben.

# DEANERY SYNOD

## ANN WEITZEL - DEANERY LAY CHAIR

This year the Deanery has met 3 times. It is a real privilege to be on synod and get to know the other churches- in particular hearing their joys and challenges and praying with and for them, which has been part of every meeting.

Clergy movements over the year were- Rev Graeme Anderson left Holy Trinity, and Rev Mark Norris left St Thomas Keresley to become the DDO in the diocese. At the end of the year, Holy Trinity, St Thomas Keresley, St Francis, St Paul's were all in interregnum.

A brief summary of the meetings in 2021 is as follows.

**January (Zoom):** We had the privilege of hearing from Chris Edwards the CEO of HOPE Coventry about all the exciting things that he is heading up in the city. Good neighbours, Christians against poverty, Winter night shelter (Currently under council due to lockdown) Prayer House at Holy Trinity, Motofest as well as the food bank and feeding Coventry. They moved to the Halo centre in Binley in February. Parishes also shared Joys and Challenges at this time. This being the first meeting of the new synod elections were had for the DMPC- This will be Rev Gareth Irvine (Area Dean) Ann Weitzel (Lay Chair) Les Harlock (Secretary) Rev Mark Norris (Assistant Area Dean) Rev Jennifer Wickham, Rev Simon Oakes, Wilfred Kendall. David Fletcher has agreed to remain as treasurer, joining DMPC meetings as needed.

**May (Zoom):** The main focus of this meeting was a presentation from Archdeacon Ven Sue Field about clergy wellbeing. This was followed by discussion groups who looked at a variety of different questions. All parishes were asked to take this back to their PCC. We also had a presentation from Darren Stevens at Allesley on their initiative to prayer 365 to pray for the city each day.

**September (St George's/Zoom):** This was great to meet in person for the first time in ages and the wonders of technology allowed zoom attendees too. It was a full meeting, starting with looking at the progress on the Deanery Plan. This is being put together by the DMPC working along with the CofE vision, Simpler, Humbler, Bolder. We then looked at the work that some parishes had been doing through the Deanery Learning community. The final part of the meeting was an introduction to the Living in Love and Faith course. This is something we should all be looking to study in the coming year. A deanery course would be happening in November led by Cathedral if others wanted to join.

Our reps on synod are Rea Verdon & Dawn Edmunds.

**Deanery Learning Community- A** new initiative was encouraged in 2021 for us to meet together as parishes in a learning environment. St Laurence's joined in 3 workshops. We looked at: - the current reality, what could be, and planning for what will be. These were good times and helped us as a church to feed into the deanery plan for mission over the next year.

**Gareth Irvine with support from Ann Weitzel (Deanery Lay Chair)**

**FINANCE**

**KELVIN GWAMBE**