



**All Saints' Church**  
*Preston on Tees*

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## Annual Report – 2021

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## Chair's Report

This year has been marked by hope and challenge. Hope for all God is starting to do and has for the future of All Saints, but also challenge in that lockdown was hard and we are still gradually coming back together, finding our shape, and in this there has been need to create space for the pastoral challenge that this has been for many of us. Last APCM I launched the vision of Connecting; connecting as the family of the church, connecting with our friends, connecting with our communities, and connecting with the wider church and wider area. The first half of the year was very much about reconnecting as the church family. We did garden parties, walks, beach trips, and reconnected with one another. As we progressed through the year we have had an increased focus on our discipleship as a church, seeking to encourage one another, finding new ways to spur one another on. We have seen two new life groups begin and are on the journey of seeing what else will help us to walk with Jesus and with each other. Reaching out and connecting with our communities we intend to run the Sharing Faith course where we help people learn to share the story of what Jesus has and is doing in their lives. We will also run Exploring Faith, where we offer people the opportunity to find out more about faith as we go into 2022. In the diocese we have been playing a greater role, being involved in church planting conversations, and coming alongside other churches and leaders to encourage them. In this of course the launch of the St Paul's plant has been hugely encouraging and we want to support them in an ongoing way. The PCC has been hugely productive particularly in the way the working parties have helped drive forwards the vision focussing on Discipleship, Social events, Buildings, Communities, the Environment and Communication. God has brought new people into the church as we have reopened more fully, and it has been a pleasure to host our first post-lockdown newcomers lunch; more are planned. A further mark of this year has been co-ordinating what we do, so that the pastoral team, life groups, prayer appointments team and so on work together for the benefit of those who call All Saints their spiritual home. It has been a joy to be back worshipping together through song, as well as seeing our preaching team grow with the inclusion of new preachers and youth preachers.

My thanks this year to all. It has felt coming out of Covid like trying to run a race where the ground keeps moving and I am so grateful for our wardens Anne and Martin, for Geoff keeping us Covid safe, and for so many of you who have stepped up and pulled together to see the work of Jesus move forwards. Thanks to Jan and Kathryn and their teams who have been amazing at supporting our children, young people, and families through lockdown and encouraging them as we come out of it. Thanks also to Shiromi, Sandra, Rachel and Peter for their efforts to keep us working well and welcoming. Thanks to the Pastoral team and Connect team for keeping encouraging so many whilst they could not come back into the building. Thanks to all of you who have held each other in prayer, who have been so gracious as I have learnt your names and who have gone the extra mile for this church and for your communities. God bless you.

**Rev. Matt Levinsohn**

## Wardens' Report

This year at All Saints' has again been a challenging year with some of the year spent once again in lockdown and restrictions continuing throughout the year. The autumn saw us slowly returning to "normal" with many groups and activities begin to once again take place.

The year started with the interviews for a new Vicar and we were delighted to welcome Matt and his family in April.

We have continued to keep updating risk assessments as restrictions changed throughout the year. We really appreciated the support of Geoff Jowett on checking through the various documents as we began to start many activities again.

The restrictions and lockdown once again significantly reduced our income due to many lettings for the buildings not taking place. We continued to make use of the furlough scheme for part of the year and reduced our running costs and maintenance budgets as much as possible to help offset this reduction.

Following the lightning conductor inspection and testing, some work was identified which was carried out by a local contractor. Most non-essential maintenance tasks were put on hold. Peter our caretaker has continued to keep on top of smaller maintenance tasks.

This year has seen only minor work on the Church flats. Our commercial tenant in the upstairs flat gave notice that he would be vacating the property in 2021 due to the business expanding. We were delighted to be able to welcome Tees Valley Youth For Christ as our new tenant. Our thanks go once again to Matt Falcus for liaising with our tenants and managing the flats on a weekly basis.

We are grateful to Nina Rye for continuing to manage the Food safety and kitchen team and ensuring we retain our 5 star food safety status. Whilst the kitchen was not used much during 2021, Nina has continued to pop in to make sure that everything is as it should be.

We would also like to thank our fantastic team of assistant wardens who look after our services each week. Due to some people stepping down from this role after many years of service our team is now quite small. If you would like find out more of what is involved please speak to us. We would also like to thank Shiromi, Sandra and Rachel who have provided admin support for us.

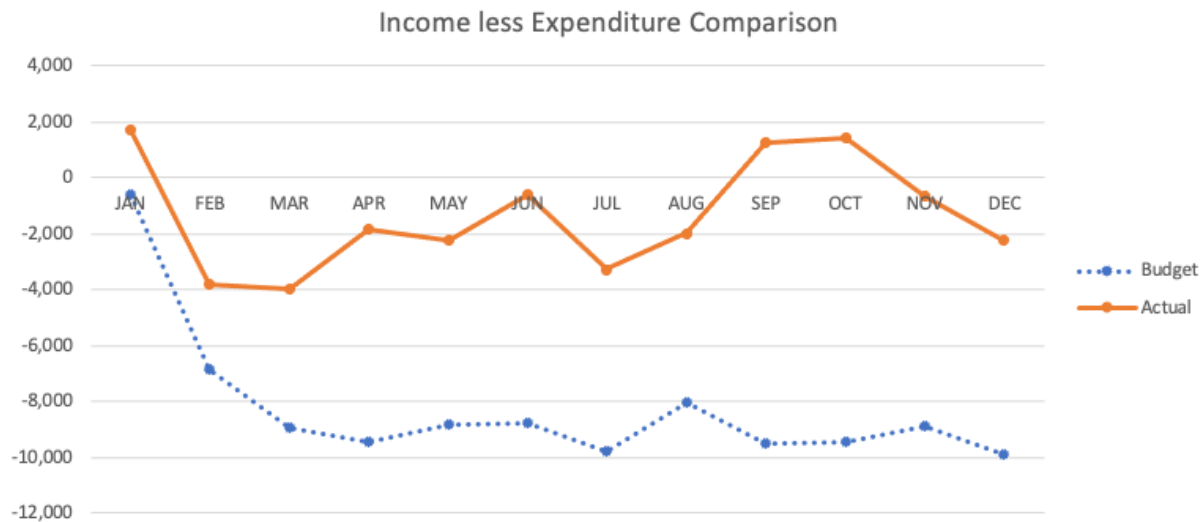
Finally, our thanks go to John Belmont for continuing as our treasurer.

**Anne Rolfe and Martin Howard**  
**Churchwardens**

## Treasurer's Report

### Review of 2021

As we end 2021, there are many things to be thankful for in terms of the finances of All Saints'. We began the year with a budgeted deficit of £10,000 and we were blessed with a couple of significant one-off donations, which were very gratefully received! The first half of the year still carried uncertainties of COVID-19 and it has taken (and is still taking) time to see ministry back at the pace it was 20 months ago.



*\* Please note that the graph above does not include one-off donations received during the year.*

Regular monthly donations throughout the year totalled £161,000 with one-off donations making the overall total £172,000. Gift Aid of £41,000 was also received. Income of £24,000 was received from other sources including; rent from Church House, Solar Panel feed-in tariff and Centre Hire as well as Employers National Insurance rebate and the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme grant.

The main items of expenditure come from the Diocesan Parish Share of £104,000 and Staff Costs of £68,000. General upkeep costs totalled £27,000, and other ministry costs were £7,000. As usual, the Mission Support Group allocated 10% of income received from congregational giving which amounted to £21,000.

Total income for the year ended up exceeding expenditure by over £9,000, which was mainly due to general upkeep costs running significantly under budget.

<b>INCOME</b>	
Congregational Giving	£172,000
Gift Aid	£41,000
Other Income	£24,000
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>£237,000</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>	
Parish Share	£104,000
Staff and Ministry Costs	£75,000
General Upkeep	£27,000
Mission Giving Support	£21,000
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>£227,000</b>



On behalf of the PCC I would like to thank everyone who has given sacrificially during the year and to those who commit to pray for financial provision.

Looking forward to 2022

Last month, the PCC approved the budget for 2022 and in a similar vein to this year, agreed to a deficit budget of £7,000. We believe that it is important to continue to invest fully in Mission and Ministry and also to honour the request from the Diocese for an increased Parish Share.

Since 90% of our income at All Saints' comes from church members, we trust in the generosity of those who give. If 20 people increased their giving by £20 per month, or if 3 people started giving £150 per month (which is the average monthly donation) we would meet our deficit.

If you do not currently give regularly to God's work at All Saints' and are able, please get in touch with me to find out how you can do this. If you are not able to give financially, please hold the finances in your prayers as we seek to be good stewards of all that we are given.

Special Thanks

I would like to thank Gill Wake for her role as Recorder, not playing the instrument, but for banking the collection each week and keeping a record of envelope giving throughout the year. Also, thanks go to Margaret Vaughan as Gift Aid Secretary who claims 25% of taxpayers giving back from the Government each month.

**John Belmont  
Treasurer**

## Safeguarding Report

We are living in unprecedented times: having first been through Covid-19 and its affects for nearly two years and I am sure you have also seen some of the news headlines during 2021 relating to historic or ongoing abuse in churches and communities. In addition, the numbers of young people being diagnosed with mental health problems has risen from 11.6% of 6-16 year olds in 2017 to 17.4% in 2021; and 10.1% of 17-19 year olds to 17.4% in 2021 (NHS figures). In 2022 these figures are predicted to rise further. I have included this information as we have thriving Children's and Youth ministries who need our support both physically and prayerfully.

There have been a number of reported safeguard concerns during 2021 – all have been sensitively and confidentially supported.

Due to Covid safeguard training for those working with children, young people and vulnerable adults lapsed past the three-year renewal time as face-to-face training was restricted. During 2021, as Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO), I have worked to ensure that All Saints' is a church with a safe culture where everyone, including children, young people and vulnerable adults can come and worship and grow in God in a safe and secure environment. We are also following Church of England/Diocesan guidelines as they are renewed and change. To accomplish this the following have been put in place:

1. After lengthy PCC discussion a Safeguard Training Matrix was agreed matching roles in church to levels of training necessary.
2. All staff and volunteers have been safeguard trained to the levels required: 91 in total so far.
3. As PSO I was trained as a trainer and delivered the first face-to-face Basic Awareness Safeguard Training session in church in October.
4. Shiromi and I have worked together to update and renew DBS checks as necessary.
5. The new Church of England 'Safer Recruitment and People Management' policy was implemented on Jan 4<sup>th</sup> 2022. Matt and I worked through 2021 to produce a simplified document for recruiting volunteers, 'Safely Recruiting Volunteers', which will be shared with ministry leads.
6. The Church of England is also looking to put further training online for identified personnel to complete: both staff and volunteers. The first is Domestic Abuse training.

Moving into 2022 we are in a strong position in maintaining a safe church culture: as we recruit new volunteers the 'Safely Recruiting Volunteers' policy will become embedded; relevant safeguarding training will be completed, and DBS checks undertaken.

I would like to thank everyone for their commitment to help make All Saints' a safe place for all.

**Diane Backhouse**  
**Parish Safeguarding Officer**



## Parochial Church Council

This year has brought significant change to All Saints', and the PCC. In May, the following appointments were made to the PCC:

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| 1. Diane Backhouse (Parish Safeguarding Officer & Standing Committee Member) | 7. Rob Govier   | 12. Rev. Matt Levinsohn (Chair & Standing Committee member) |
| 2. Jonathan Backhouse (PCC Secretary, Standing Committee Member)             | 8. Simon Honeywell (Standing Committee member)        | 13. John Littlehailes                                       |
| 3. John Belmont (Treasurer)  | 9. Martin Howard (Warden & Standing Committee member) | 14. Anne Rolfe (Warden & Standing Committee member)         |
| 4. Mark Boyes  | 10. Geoff Jowett                                      | 15. Pamela Rushton  |
| 5. Debbie Bunford  | 11. Karen Killick (Vice-Chair)                        | 16. Kevin Storer  |
| 6. Lucy Falcus   |   | 17. Margaret Vaughan  |
| 19. Timothy Wye-Williams   |   | 18. Paul Wheeldon   |

Rev. Matt Levinsohn's leadership brought about the development of six working parties later in the year; the purpose was to enhance the effectiveness of the PCC by focusing on key areas within the church.

- A. **Environment group:** Taking steps to make us an eco-friendlier church including getting Eco Church status.
- B. **Discipleship group:** Running the Shapes course and working with Stuart and Ruth to help start new life groups.
- C. **Community group:** Talking to other local organisations which help those in our community and working out how we can work together.
- D. **Buildings group:** Repairing the roof, pruning the trees, maintaining the flat across the carpark, planning for the future use of what Sandra is calling the prayer room!
- E. **Communications group:** Designing banners which will go on Yarm Road fence to highlight to people the church and its work and that it is there for them. Installing the TV in the Centre lobby to advertise our events. Starting the email communication to those not on Facebook.
- F. **Social group:** Continuing both to plan events and to ensure other events organised by people in the church co-ordinate with the calendar overall.

Most members of the PCC have joined at least one working party and, working with other members of the church, have already started to create a positive impact.

Next year will provide greater opportunities for these groups to develop and for the PCC to become even more effective. In the 2022 Annual Report there will be an opportunity for each group to present their stories of the impact they have created.

Finally, on a personal note I'd like to thank Diane for her continued support in helping me in my role as PCC secretary and her work as the Parish Safeguarding Officer.

**Dr Jonathan Backhouse**  
**PCC Secretary**

## Planting Curate's Report

It seems like a long time since we launched St Paul's Stockton on Pentecost last year but in reality it has been just under a year! How time flies. We have had some great highlights and some challenges this year.

Highlights:

1. Launching! What a day and great to share with everyone at All Saints too.
2. Roots down - Our staff team is now in place and our church is beginning to see serious culture change as the church shifts from an inward focus to a more missional one.
3. Walls down - We have seen regular predictable patterns of events that are helping the church to connect with the community: Youth Drop In on a Tuesday, Monthly Coffee Mornings (every second Saturday) as well as regular schools work.
4. Bridges Out – Our team are starting to get to grips with detached youth work and we are looking at how we can be a blessing to our communities outside of the church building.

Things to pray for –

1. We are focusing on growing our children and young people this year and need prayer for support for those activities. Our general church demographic is getting older and frailer and as a result there is a willingness to engage but the energy is lacking.
2. Culture change is traumatic at the best of times but when it comes after a period of nationwide trauma it can be very disruptive. We are trying to discern how best to serve those who need to be more gently shepherded through change at the moment whilst at the same time seeking to really up the spiritual temperature here.
3. We will be looking to relaunch life groups. We have one pilot group at the moment but need to multiply out soon to provide space for people coming in to grow as disciples.
4. Finally, we will be taking the church as a whole through the Alpha course in the summer (starting 8<sup>th</sup> May) instead of meeting for normal worship services. Pray that this helps people deepen their walk with Jesus and that it begins to accelerate the necessary culture change here.

As we go, we know that we can rely on All Saints for support both in prayer and people and that is such a blessing to us. Keep doing what you are doing!

Every blessing.

**Rev. Paul Arnold**

## Deanery Synod

Stockton Deanery Synod met for the first time since the pandemic began in July 2021 and also had meetings in September and November. The Synod is made up from representatives of each parish in Stockton Deanery (stretching from Billingham to Egglescliffe, Sedgefield to central Stockton). Our purpose is to encourage each other in worship and mission, share good practice, hear messages from Durham Diocese and, where needed, debate topics to pass up to the Diocese. July's meeting was held at St Paul's Newtown and we had an update on the plant from Paul Arnold. We said goodbye and thank you to Sylvia as she retired from St John's, and welcomed Matt Levinsohn to All Saints' and St Mary's. Synod also shared Holy Communion together.

In September we met at Holy Trinity and discussed one of the Diocesan priorities - caring for God's Creation, and also spent time discussing what synod aims to do over the three year term. Elections for Diocesan Synod were also held. November's meeting focused on the Growth Diocesan priority and we discussed in groups where we are seeing growth in the Deanery, and where we have challenges. This will be picked up again in 2022.

Lucy Falcus

## Diocesan Synod

There have been three meetings of Diocesan Synod in 2021. In January 2021 the Synod met on a midweek evening via zoom to adopt the Durham Diocesan Five year Plan. This plan is centred on four priorities; **Energising Growth, Challenging Poverty; Engaging with Children, Youth and Young Adults and Caring for God's Creation.** The meeting in May was held via zoom. Significant items at this meeting was a session led by Eeva John, who is the national enabling officer for Living in Love and Faith; acceptance of 2019 financial statements for the Diocese and a session thinking through what it means to Care for God's Creation. Over the summer months elections were held for the next tri-ennium (3 year cycle) of Diocesan Synod. Karen Killick and Margaret Vaughan have both been elected as lay members and Matt Levinsohn is one of the clergy members for the next 3 years.

Diocesan Synod then met in person in mid November for a Saturday meeting. As this was the first synod of the new 3year cycle it opened with Communion. This was a busy agenda with an induction being given to synod members from the Chancellor of the Diocese. Updates received regarding Children and Young people's work as the nation emerged from the pandemic. A motion regarding ethical investments was approved. The Diocesan Budget for 2022 was approved (which sees the Diocese operating at a deficit and needing to prioritise filling clergy vacancies as they arise). The impact of Covid-19 on local parish finances and the Diocese's finances were discussed with some stark observations being made about the viability of some parishes and the overall financial projections for the Diocese. The Diocesan five-year plan was further explored. Sadly Bishop Paul was unwell with Covid-19 so Bishop Sarah delivered his presidential address in his absence. There were a few process/housekeeping items also done: a change to church quinquennial inspection schemes and changes to governance structures due to the Diocesan Boards of Education measure.

Canon Margaret Vaughan

## Administration

2021 for me has felt like a year of things gradually starting to get back to a new normal and getting busier. I was on part-time furlough for the first few months of the year, so it was wonderful to get back in the office in March each day. It has been so lovely to see our church building being used again mid-week and all the different groups coming back in.

I continue to work on keeping the website, Church Suite and our Facebook page and group up to date and compiling the monthly programme. I have worked closely with Diane to ensure our DBS records are up to date and renewed where necessary.

It has been great to welcome Matt, Rachel & their family along with what seems like quite a lot of other new people joining our Church family. In October Sandra retired and Rachel started as our Receptionist. It has been great to work alongside Rachel and together with the help of Peter our caretaker we keep things running mid-week!

I would like to say thank you to Matt, Martin & Anne for their support and to thank everyone who encourages me either by email or in person - it really does mean a lot.

**Shiromi Davison**  
**Administrator**

## Reception

I started in the role of receptionist in October, taking over from Sandra. I am so enjoying this lovely job. I am really enjoying working more closely with Shiromi and the rest of the staff team, as well as getting to know other church members, and non-church people better as they come in and out of the building during the week.

It is lovely now that more groups have restarted to see a variety of people using the building during the week. Thursday is always a fun day having the babies and toddlers here. It is a great opportunity for me to build relationship and share my faith with the parents and carers. In 2022 we intend to restart the Monday coffee morning

In addition to this, I do a number of administrative tasks, which I enjoy. However, the opportunity to chat to a variety of people and on occasion to pray for them remains my favourite thing about the job. I look forward to seeing what God wants to do with this role as I serve the church and it's visitors.

**Rachel Levinsohn**  
**Receptionist**

## Publicity, Communication & Website

2021 saw the start of the Communications Working party, which includes John Belmont, Matt Falcus and Matt Levinsohn. Together they have worked closely with Shiromi to help improve our communication.

**Website:** Our website had 5766 users access it during 2021 of which half came to it through a search engine. The most popular pages were 'Sundays' and 'Who is who', both of which were accessed over a thousand times. 58% of those accessing our site used a smartphone as compared to a computer, which shows the work we have put in optimising our site for phones was worthwhile.

**Live Streaming:** 169 people subscribed to our online services with 9600 watches total of which 36% were to the 9am service and 49% to the 10.30am service. Over 2021 9am viewing figures were around 30 people watching over the week, which roughly halved over the year as restrictions eased. 10.30am figures for those watching hovered around 60 people, reducing to 40's as restrictions were removed. With that in mind we started to only stream the 10.30am service as of November and numbers are holding at around 40 views.

**Facebook and Other Communication:** Throughout lockdown Shiromi has continued to produce a weekly bulletin. This was very helpful to keep people in touch but ceased to be required as notices in church were seen by more people returning to church, and as we combined advertising through Facebook, with an email going out to those not accessing Facebook. We have taken greater advantage of advertising through local Facebook groups and through Preston Primary newsletter where that has been appropriate. In 2022 we intend to erect banners on Yarm Road and Dunottar Avenue to raise the profile of the church and have a monitor in the Centre Lobby installed to publicise events to those not at Sunday services. Shiromi has continued to produce excellent monthly overviews of what is going on in services and through the church. We will continue to try to maximise the effectiveness of Church suite and help congregation members to be confident in accessing it. The welcome packs and other information we give out as a church has been updated and the welcome team are distributing them to new members. The hope in all of this is to ensure that both internally and externally we are removing obstacles from people finding out about Jesus and going deeper in their faith.

**Rev. Matt Levinsohn**

## Health and Safety (COVID19)

We are completing almost two years of managing Covid Risks throughout all church activities. During the last twelve months we have had to take account of ever changing guidance from government and the Anglican Church. Assessing the risk is not an objective activity; it is subjective meaning the level of risk can be assessed differently by different people. So the assessment of risk at All Saints has been a team effort involving the church staff and, where applicable, leaders of various activities. Following this control measures have been put in place to reduce the risk of Covid infection in the church community.

We have recognised that we have to protect the vulnerable who either by age or medical condition are at high risk from the consequences of Covid. Additionally we also want to open up the church in as safe a way as possible to allow people to meet up and attend worship services. So the management of Covid has been a balancing act, taking into account the conflicting priorities of risk and meeting together. It has taken wisdom and faith and, I can definitely confirm, fear has not played a part in the process. All in all I believe we have managed the situation in a way that has been sensitive to our spiritual, emotional and physical needs.

**Geoff Jowett**

## Staff Management Team

Over the last year the Staff Management Team have continued to help with recruitment, appraisals and provided some informal support to staff. We have also helped to prepare a profile of the Parish to be used for the possible recruitment of a curate in 2023.

The current members of the team are Debbie Bunford, Elaine Webster and David Emerton.

**David Emerton**

## Music and Worship 09.00

The nine o'clock service continues to worship with a mix of traditional and new songs. Whilst congregational singing was not allowed we benefitted from several new faces helping lead us in sung worship, accompanying Pamela, Janet or Lucy, and we are very grateful to Kate Pickover and Sue Jennings who continue to sing regularly.

The worship often has a reflective or contemplative feel along with the more celebratory services such as Advent or Palm Sunday. Songs are chosen both to complement the theme of the service and uplift the congregation in worship. The songs we use often contain wonderful words and phrases that can be used also in private prayer, following the service. In the next year we hope to expand our repertoire and learn some new songs together.

**Dr Lucy Falcus**

## Music and Worship 10.30

Worshipping our Lord at All Saints' has seen some pretty impressive changes through 2021. We entered the year unable to all be in the church building together, went through phases of being together and apart, masks were either a fashion accessory or a cage, and finally, we were allowed to sing together again. Thankfully, home recordings of worship were knocked on the head – I will never forget our first attempt with Rebecca holding up a written sheet of words, but backwards so no-one could see them...!

It has been bittersweet to say goodbye to so many of our family as they left for St Paul's. For the band we very much miss Deb, Dunc and Pam but we know they are doing an incredible job leading worship and a hundred other things in their new church family just around the corner.

God has been the unmovable centre of our worship and has provided in so many ways. We have recently said welcome to the Myers family who have brought new perspectives and encouragement to the band and to the PA team. We are grateful that God always gives us enough at each stage of what we are doing.

The next stage of the worship team's development looks like a possible change to the foldback speakers (the little speakers on stage that help the musicians hear what is going on). Pray that we will know best how to improve things so that the instruments and PA equipment work in beautiful harmony with each other!

Thanks to everyone in the group and for the lovely comments people make after services - musicians always love to hear that people were able to use their offerings to worship our wonderful King!

**Dr Jim Daniel**

## Youth

2021 was certainly a unique year for the Youth Ministry at All Saints'; the first third in lockdown, the second third was mainly outdoor youth ministry and the final third returning to normality. However in the midst of this there were many highlights!

As a team we tried our very best to support our young people throughout lockdown. We held Life Groups, Youth Church and socials on Zoom – worship looked very different, however we enjoyed the opportunity to think creatively and God met with us as we gathered. We were so happy that there was a core group of young people who really committed to 'online church'. We worked through the whole book of Colossians together on Zoom as well as the 'I Am' statements of Jesus, amongst other things. Our 'Cheeseteregg' and Escape Room socials were particular highlights! We were grateful to have the opportunity to deliver Easter bags to our young people on their doorstep, filled with resources to encourage their faith, and bless them. Our young people also continued to attend the Doulos Leadership Course online throughout lockdown. During this time we continued to produce creative social media content to encourage the young people in their faith including 'a verse for the day' devotional videos and reels like 'how to share your faith in 30 seconds' and 'bible verses to help if you're struggling with fear'.

As lockdown came to an end we were extremely grateful to be able to start meeting together in person - whilst social distancing was still in place we ran multiple youth events in the Vicarage garden and we held Youth Church most weeks in the park. It was amazing to engage with God in new ways, and rethink what church might look like.

Summer of 2021 gave us the opportunity to spend some dedicated time with our young people. Whilst we weren't able to go away on a summer camp together we decided that we would create our own camp at home called 'Love Your Neighbour'. The week involved daily devotionals led by our young people, a trip to Alton Towers, a sleepover, prayer walking our community, serving alongside Cultivate Tees Valley, making and delivering gifts to our church neighbours, evening meetings with a resident speaker and opportunities to reconnect with each other and connect with God. This was one of the first things we did that felt somewhat normal, and it was really special.

As things became more normal other highlights included; mentoring young people, investing in young preachers, holding a Youth Service, launching Youth Apprenticeships (encouraging young people to serve throughout the church), re-launching our Mexico mission trip, restarting Lads Club, Refresh and Café Church, young people committing to be baptised, and many other things.

I would like to end by thanking my exceptional team for serving our young people so well throughout a challenging year. We are also incredibly thankful to be in a church that loves our young people so much and really invests in them.

**Kathryn Belmont**  
Youth Pastor



## Children

August 2021 in particular was a challenging time due to Covid with all areas of the Children and Families ministry being affected. However, it also provided many opportunities to think outside of the box and follow on from 2020 with new, creative ways of doing ministry which I have enjoyed and some of which I want to carry on with, moving forward.

Highlights of this time include things like connecting via Zoom for leading assemblies at St Mary's, Xplore Kids groups Sunday Zoom sessions and starting a separate zoom session weekly for our children in years 5 & 6 which was a great opportunity for them to explore faith with their peers.

2021 was a time to continue developing ways of using the puppets to share the gospel and provide recordings to send out on social media. The puppet team and Gus recorded outdoors in various settings and we now have a number of Puppet songs on video that are used regularly in Gems and Play & Praise and that can be shared with other churches too.

Special events for families included an Easter trail around the community, a Pentecost themed activities day and woodland trail, weekly walks and play time in the park for our under 5's and their carers from all the activities we usually run indoors, and activities & picnics in the walled garden at Preston Park.

The summer months also provided wonderful opportunities for our Gems and Trailblazers to meet in their groups live, mainly using the vicarage garden as well as the park. The children engaged well and settled into our sessions quickly.

I enjoyed organising a few informal trips out for our church families such as Wynyard woodland walks. Another highlight was a special event for our years 5 & 6 children, which we held at a scout field. Campfire, toasting marshmallows, silly songs and games proved great fun and a lovely bonding time.

The autumn term brought about some normality as our Sunday and midweek groups opened up in church again. I was nervous and excited at the same time and it was interesting being back indoors but still needing to adapt the way we ran things. However, my teams and those attending adapted well and it was lovely to be welcoming the children and families back and many said how much they appreciated being back. Our Glow party needed to run differently too but families seemed to still really enjoy the evening and as a team we were pleased with how it went.

2021 was a great year for re-connecting with the Links Primary and Junction Farm schools and we have agreed to work more closely together moving forward, They are very keen to attend the Life exhibition and I really enjoyed leading a short lesson about what Baptism is all about at Junction Farm in October.

In November I launched a new way of running Trailblazers on a 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of each month. We call it 'Trailblazers club' and the children are enjoying the format which includes a mix of café refreshments and treats, a God devotional time, then free time to enjoy building friendships whilst playing games/sport, etc. Part of the vision for this moving forward will be to encourage the children to invite a friend to the 'club'.

It was great to be able to celebrate Christmas in the various midweek groups with parties and include the nativity story & songs in the upfront time and with a nativity gift for each child.

Many more things happened in 2021 too and I thank God for his sustaining strength and a big thank you to everyone who helped in any way.

**Jan Peters**  
**Children's and Families Worker**

### **Prayer - Sandra Griffiths**

Prayer Ministry has always been an integral part of our life at All Saints', whether after services, during services, in home groups, small groups and the daily life of our Church family.

As we tried to return to pre-Covid ways of praying, the usual uptake for after service prayer has been much less, and we worried that this is mainly because of a new layout of church. However, after speaking to some prayer ministry members from other churches, it seems to be a common theme and perhaps asking God for new ways of doing things in the future is required.

To encourage and renew confidence and skills in our team, on Sunday December 5<sup>th</sup> we planned and led a training session (as John Wimber called it "doing the stuff"). As we worshipped, the Holy Spirit overwhelmed us and blessings were poured out, a visitor gave their life to Jesus. It reminded me of the verse in 1 Kings 8.10-11 "the cloud filled the temple of the Lord. All the priests could not perform their service because of the cloud, for the glory of the Lord filled His Temple". Adam and I discussed that God was saying something big here, and so Adam is beginning "Encounter" a monthly space to encounter Him in new ways, beginning 27 Feb 2022.

#### **Prayer Appointments**

We are called to always look to God and ask "where next?" Our previous Sozo ministry has now become the aptly named Prayer Appointment Ministry. After much prayer and discussion, God has led us forward into a Holy Spirit blessed and freeing ministry for many who have chosen to access this facility to connect with God. Using much of the experience and training learnt in Sozo but adapting more to our local culture and most importantly guided by God!

A longer time of prayer and listening to God by trained ministers (approx. 1 hour) for up to 3 sessions can be booked via the office or email [prayerappointments.allsaints@gmail.com](mailto:prayerappointments.allsaints@gmail.com)

All sessions are confidential and can be arranged at a time to suit.

I also wanted to let people know that we are now praying from 10.05 until 10.25 before each 10.30 service on a Sunday in the chapel. It is a blessed time each week, all are welcome, and access needs to be via the side door from the centre into the chapel as the band are practicing on stage.

**Sandra Griffiths**

## Prayer - David and Jill Munby

Shortly after arriving on Teesside in August 2020 Jill and I were asked to take up the mantle of Prayer Coordinators from Rob Govier. Because we still don't know a lot of members of the congregation it has been hard to know just what the role should entail for us. We ran a few Sunday evening Prayer and Worship evenings earlier in 2021 and have now settled on a monthly Saturday morning pattern of worship and prayer on the second Saturday of each month 10-11am when we worship, listen to God and intercede as the Lord leads us. We have now been joined as Coordinators by Sandra Griffiths and Rachel Levinsohn, partly because some of our time is taken up with ministry at St. Johns Egglecliffe.

Sandra has continued to send out daily prayer requests via our Facebook page and oversees our Sunday Prayer Ministry and Prayer Appointments (see her reports below).

**Rev. David and Jill Munby**

## Pastoral Care

The Pastoral care team in All Saints' continued to play its role within the church and the wider community despite, and in some situations, because of Covid-19.

Currently the team is: Jayne Davies, Peter Gray, Chris Vass, Karen Killick, John Taylor, Evelyn Leadbetter, Nicola Dursley and Kate Pickover. We listened, prayed and offered practical help whenever called upon. Our preferred route was to meet face-to-face but where that was not appropriate, by zoom or a phone call.

Jayne and Peter communicated regularly to discuss concerns, pray and initiate actions, which needed to be taken. These concerns, shared with the team, made a tangible difference to the well-being of many in the church and beyond.

We were grateful for the much-valued personal relationships and friendships, including those vital Life Group contacts, which were firmly at the forefront of meeting most needs, both immediate and prolonged, spiritual and practical, which presented themselves over the last year! We also are monitoring the membership list to try and ensure that, as far as we are able, no-one is overlooked and all members have someone who "has their back", and can encourage them in their faith during these difficult days.

We continue to thank God for such a caring church and for the support of you all.

**Peter Gray**  
**Team Leader**

## **Morning Prayer Zoom Meetings**

Since the outbreak of Covid, Morning Prayer, previously held in various locations on the church premises, has been conducted on-line. Some 6 to 8 people are regularly using this opportunity to start the day with communal prayer. We have, during the past year, been regularly using the format of Lectio 365, led by members of the group attending, which combines readings from a Psalm and from either the Old or New Testaments with prayer times focused on particular themes, and a time of more general intercessions. On weekdays, except on Wednesday (to avoid any conflict with the Wednesday Communion Service) we start at 09.10, and usually finish by 09.30. This means, of course, that many people will be at work, and unable to be involved, but if you are able to join us I think you will find it a rewarding and worthwhile experience. We have been using Zoom, with the passcode 835 4592 5539.

**Dr John Littlehailes**

## **Life Groups**

We now have eight Life Groups as well as the Wednesday morning communion group, which has been able to meet again. A new group will be starting on Friday evenings in 2022 for parents of young people, who are taking the opportunity to meet while their teenagers are attending Youth Club.

The Life Groups have all been using Zoom and most have started to meet again in person, following social distancing guidelines. Many of the groups continue to use WhatsApp to share prayer matters and to keep in touch.

In July we held a leaders' meeting to share experiences and support each other.

Our groups are linked with our six mission partners. The feedback from this initiative has been very positive and it is fantastic to be able to support them all in this way (and be blessed in return).

There is capacity for more people to join some of the groups, and we hope to be able to establish further groups in the year ahead. We are also encouraging prayer triplets to meet together in addition to (or as an alternative to) Life Groups.

**Dr Ruth and Dr Stuart Johnson**

## Walkers

The Walkers have not met during the past year as a precaution against the spread of Covid-19. We expect to restart our programmes of walks this spring, as we hope that the Omicron variant will have run its course by then. We aim to provide led walks of either 3-5 miles (short) and longer walks of the order of 8-10 miles with at least a couple of weekend walks per month. We have, in the past, also regularly had shorter walks on Wednesdays. The walks are open to church members and unchurched walkers alike, and we hope that when we restart we will be joined by others who draw inspiration and pleasure from the beauty all around us, and joy from the company of others who are moved by the same impulse.

**Dr John Littlehailes**

## Choral Group

The Choral Group was formed in 1996. In the intervening years we sang in twenty-two different churches/venues including Hexham Abbey and a Songs of Praise recorded in Sunderland Empire Theatre.

When Covid restrictions eased, we resumed singing in September 2021 and sang at St Mary's Harvest Festival and the Remembrance Service at All Saints. We had a busy Christmas season singing at the Orchard Community Carol Service, carols in the Victorian Street at Preston Park, and at St Marys and St Paul's Carol services.

After a discussion with the group it was felt that the time had come to change how and when we sing as we move into 2022. We have decided to transition as a "scratch choir" singing for special services when invited and weddings and funerals if requested. We will try meeting monthly and hopefully this may encourage new singers to join us rather than to commit to a weekly practice. I would like to pay tribute to our previous Choral Directors and all those who have accompanied us when we practised. In particular many thanks are due to Brian and Gill Wake, and Beryl Gathergood, who have throughout the 25 years supported the group with their organisational, administrative and record keeping skills.

**Kate Pickover**



**All Saints' Church**  
*Preston on Tees*

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## **Annual Report – 2021**

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