

## **Whitefriars Church, Rushden (Charity Number 1130312): Trustees' Annual Report for 2022**

### **Background**

The Parochial Church Council (PCC) of Whitefriars Church, Rushden, has the responsibility of promoting the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical in the parish. It became a registered charity during 2009, with the PCC members being registered as its trustees. It has complied with its duty of 'promoting in the ecclesiastical parish the whole mission of the church', and in section 4 of the Charities Act 2006 to have due regard to public benefit, guidance published by the Charity Commission.

### **Review of activities in 2022**

This is an outline summary of the activities of the church: more detail of some areas will be found in the Vicar's Report.

During 2022, the Church has returned to meeting together for worship and for meetings, though some of the smaller committee meetings are still held using Zoom as committee members live and work at some distance and Zoom meetings reduce the negative effects of travel on the environment.

The Church has also become involved in the Greener Church project looking at ways in which members of the church collectively and individually can make small changes to their live-style that can have a beneficial long-term impact on the environment.

A small group has restarted the monthly worship services in two of the town's residential care homes, though occasional outbreaks of Covid still intervene from time to time. These services follow a range of themes as well as the major festivals and are attended by a good proportion of the residents in each home.

The PCC met six times during 2022. The sub-committees met several times between PCC meetings. Areas of PCC discussion and action during 2022 included a review of the church's safeguarding policy and appropriate training for those holding DBS clearances, updates on the church's children's and youth work and its staffing and funding. A new cycle of reviewing other policies has been put in place to ensure that all have been updated within the next twelve months. PCC meetings also included active monitoring of church finances, and consideration of issues from the wider church, through reports from Deanery, Diocesan and General Synods and the Rushden & Higham Council of Churches.

All those involved in leadership within the church were invited to an 'away day' in September when there were opportunities to look at where we saw God within our church, where we thought others saw God and where we thought non-church members might see God, with opportunities to discuss possible ways forward in making God more central.

The work of our employees: Emma Croxon has continued to develop as Children and Families Minister, working with pre-school children and those at primary school; Lizzie Moesbauer, who joined us as a youth work apprentice in September 2018, completed her degree course at Ridley College: her work focusses on teenagers and youth. Sara Owst has continued to provide administrative support for the vicar and staff team on a part time basis.

**GDPR:** there have been no reported breaches of data and the church continues to function within the guidelines laid out in the General Data Protection Regulations. The continued use of Church Suite has been invaluable in enabling safe communication with members of the church within the UK GDPR guidelines.

**Safeguarding** has always had a high priority within the church. Our Safeguarding Policy has been updated in line with the new guidelines laid down by the National Safeguarding Team and the Diocesan Safeguarding Advisors. All members of the church are encouraged to complete a basic safeguarding training programme that takes about 20 minutes. All those who have contact with children and/or adults at risk also hold current DBS certificates and higher levels of Safeguarding training that is appropriate to their role within the church. The church has a nominated Parish Safeguarding Officer and an Assistant Safeguarding Officer: the assistant is also a Diocesan Safeguarding Trainer. There have been no major

safeguarding issues reported. The church has continued to keep contact with those who are house-bound or who are unsure about meeting in public following the pandemic.

## **PCC membership**

At the annual meeting of 2022, the following were either serving or elected to the PCC.

<i>Vicar</i>	Revd. Chris Youngman	
<i>Curate</i>	Revd. Josh Thorne	
<i>Wardens</i>	Matt Croxon Richard Holley	
<i>Diocesan Synod members</i>	Andrew Presland	(General synod)
<i>Deanery Synod representatives</i>	Richard Holley Steve Holman	
<i>Elected members</i>	Nick Amis (to 2023) Simon King (to 2023) Nisha Slater (to 2023) Melvyn Hunter (to 2024) Lucy Jekyll (to 2024) Jeremy Smith (to 2024) Hannah Barker (to 2025) Glenda Dodds (to 2025) Celia Underwood (to 2025) Ken Owst*	(Resigned in November)  (PCC secretary)  (Safeguarding) (Treasurer)

## **PCC committees and groups**

*Standing and Resources Committee:* transacts business as required between PCC meetings, including overseeing the finances of Whitefriars Church, drafting the annual budget, monitoring income and expenditure and promoting planned giving.

*Bridge Management and Minibus Management:* carry out routine checks on the state of the Bridge and ensure that safety checks and routine maintenance are carried out; ensure that the minibus is correctly maintained and insured.

*Mission Committee:* promotes a range of mission and outreach activities including mission support, both in this country and overseas. Much of this is promoted to the congregation through the vicar's bulletin.

Each of these committees has a chair whose responsibilities include ensuring that sub-committees within each meet regularly, that meetings are properly minuted and reports returned to the PCC, management of the budget allocation, ensuring that expenditure is kept within the amounts allocated.

Melvyn Hunter.  
PCC Secretary  
2023

\* Ken Owst was seconded to the PCC in November 2022, taking the casual vacancy left by Nick Amis.

## Whitefriars Church Vicar's Report – 2022.

2022 was, in many ways, a year of rebuilding. I am reminded of the diligence and resilience of Nehemiah rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem. But the verse I think is most relevant is Psalm 127:1

*Unless the LORD builds the house,*

*the builders labour in vain.*

*Unless the LORD watches over the city,*

*the guards stand watch in vain.*

The pandemic did give us the opportunity to reconsider all that we had been doing, and check if Christ is central, before reinstating it, or stopping it as appropriate. We tried to measure everything against our developing Missional Culture by asking: **Is this Jesus centred? Is this Kingdom centred?**

One example of literal rebuilding was the work carried out by Steve Oram and Pete Squires (thank you both) to **redevelop the Bridge Garden**. The pond was drained and filled, new planters were built and a sensory garden was created. Thanks too, to Emma and Sara for ideas, planting and tending. I was particularly impressed by the vibrancy of the sunflowers and the aroma of the rosemary. All this, the excellent Winter Clothes swap and some of our teaching programme (for example the climate themed services at the start and end of the summer) helped towards attaining the **Bronze eco-church award**.

Over the course of the year, most of our regular activities were re-established, though it was notable that many were reluctant to volunteer at the level they had been pre-covid. Following the 2022 APCM our midweek gatherings were renamed Discipleship groups to reflect the learning we had engaged with through Kairos Connexion. I met with the leaders monthly, by and large, modelling to them praying and studying together and latterly eating and having fun together as well; also asking the two discipleship questions: **What is God saying to you?** and **What are you going to do about it?**

Much of the regular pattern of church life was restored: children and youth groups; re-engagement with schools; monthly prayer and worship evenings; unrestricted Sunday worship gradually returned to more familiar levels. You can read about the excellent ministries to Children and Families and Young people in their respective reports. Whitefriars really has kept close to its origins in intergenerational ministry.

Some highlights for me were **at Rushden Academy**: we supported the Ethos Team with the Christmas Assemblies and lessons and we co-ordinated the GSUS live project, which took lessons on Forgiveness, Fear and Rejection from a Christian perspective to all Y7,8,9 students. I have also loved the gradual emergence of our Youth Band who are skilled and gaining confidence in leading worship. Josh Thorne has provided leadership and encouragement, and we have been blessed to have Mikie, Lizzie's fiancé, join the youth team and band.

### **Staffing:**

Our staff team has remained stable throughout the year. Josh Thorne has now completed his curacy training and did an excellent job of covering for me at various times, first during my month-long medical leave in February 2022, then stepping in for me when I got Covid in the summer and more recently when I took a Sunday off for my own well-being. I am sure he will make a great vicar when he leaves us at some stage in 2023. Sara Owst our Ministry Resources Manager, has supported the whole staff team and maintained the website, often working remotely but still managing the office. I am most grateful for all the help she has been to me during the year. At the start of 2023 she had to take time off for the first time, with severe back pain. Please pray for her as she returns to work.

Emma Croxon has been our Children and Families Minister since April 2018, and her ministry is now well established. We extended her hours to allow her to continue the great work she did with young families, initially using the Hope Beyond grant funding. We are now at the stage where we need to make up this funding gap. Lizzie Moesbauer finished her Youth Ministry degree at Ridley College, Cambridge and has been supporting youth ministry all around the deanery and running a number of deanery wide youth events. All her salary costs are funded by the diocesan Gen<sub>2</sub> project scheme grant. The deanery has saved sufficient to cover our contribution over the first 3 years out of college, but we need to significantly increase funding to provide the long term employment security we want to offer her. Both their detailed reports are elsewhere.

### **Teaching programme at Whitefriars:**

From the start of 2022 we studied the Gospel of Luke, (we looked at one chapter a week right up to the summer holidays), particularly noticing when the disciples were: with Jesus, learning to be like Jesus and doing what Jesus did. These concepts came from some external input a few of us have been receiving from Kairos Connection. Over 2 years they will have helped us to improve the culture of the church in the areas of Mission, Discipleship, Community and Leadership. They have helped us sharpen the Jesus focus on the 3 dimensions of our Growth Action Plan: UP, IN and OUT.

- **UP** is more than worship, it is about **Being with Jesus**,
- **IN** is more than fellowship, it is about **Becoming like Jesus**,
- **OUT** is more than social action, it is about **Doing what Jesus did**,

**UP** – By encouraging everyone, particularly in groups, to Listen to God and act on what he is saying to them. From September we studied together on Sunday morning and in our discipleship groups using Pete Greig's book "**how to hear God**" as a basis. We have been gathering on 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday evenings to "**Step In**" to the presence of God, listen to him in the context of more informal worship, more exploratory study and more freedom in our prayer ministry.

**IN** – By encouraging one another to listen carefully to God, then ask the two discipleship questions: "**What is God saying to me?**" and "**What am I going to do about it?**" we have been going deeper in our relationships with Jesus as we seek to become more like him. Of late we have been encouraging fun and food to add to the fellowship and think of our discipleship groups as families on Mission.

**OUT** – Our **Stepping Out groups** have continued, new ones established, old ones re-focused. The **retireds group** goes from strength to strength, helping people journey to the Silver Service and the Sunday worship and come to faith. I particularly enjoyed their Queens Jubilee Tea party. Wild Church quickly attracted people from outside the church family to worship outdoors. Unfortunately, this was unable to continue for lack of leadership once Chad stepped back to prepare for his curacy.

It has been great to have more examples of how God has been working in people's lives to use as testimony to encourage us all. We can always use more! We have been blessed by the ministries of Matt, Karen and Nisha who are undertaking **Licensed Lay Ministry** training with the diocese and we are benefitting from their learning. We have also enjoyed the teaching of many others in the church family, what a gifted group of preachers we have, translating God's word into real life application.

So I thank all those, staff and volunteers, who have worked tirelessly to develop the worship, teaching, fellowship and witness of the church through this growing time. God has blessed us with many wonderful people who have quickly become part of the family of God in this place. May we all, rooted in Jesus Christ, grow from strength to strength in the coming year.

Rev Chris Youngman, Vicar

## **Independent Examiner's Report to the PCC of Whitefriars Church, Rushden, Northamptonshire.**

This report, on the accounts of Whitefriars Church, Rushden, for the year ended 31 December 2022, which is set out below, is in respect of an examination carried out under s.145 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act).

### **Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner**

The church's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The church's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act,
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act, and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

### **Basis of independent examiner's report**

My examination was carried out in accordance with general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the church and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

### **Independent examiner's statement**

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in, any material respect, the requirements:
  - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; and
  - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Acthave not been met;
2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



**W.J. Eldred**

6 Nightingale Way  
Higham Ferrers  
NN10 8PR

**Date 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2023**

**whitefriarschurchrushden**  
**Statement of Financial Activities**

**For the period from 01 January 2022 to 31 December 2022**

	Unrestricted funds	Designated funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total funds	Prior year total funds
<b>Income and endowments from:</b>						
Donations and legacies	102,145.25	1,302.78	14,768.71	—	118,216.74	115,253.19
Income from charitable activities	1,405.00	2,778.16	764.00	—	4,947.16	3,019.96
Other income	931.38	—	1,740.29	—	2,671.67	1,214.84
<b>Total income</b>	<b>104,481.63</b>	<b>4,080.94</b>	<b>17,273.00</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>125,835.57</b>	<b>119,487.99</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>						
Expenditure on charitable activities	98,957.11	2,560.58	18,769.71	—	120,287.40	117,329.79
Other expenditure	824.00	2,486.43	674.00	—	3,984.43	4,354.56
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>99,781.11</b>	<b>5,047.01</b>	<b>19,443.71</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>124,271.83</b>	<b>121,684.35</b>
<b>Net income / (expenditure) resources before transfer</b>	<b>4,700.52</b>	<b>(966.07)</b>	<b>(2,170.71)</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>1,563.74</b>	<b>(2,196.36)</b>
<b>Transfers</b>						
Gross transfers between funds - in	246.00	66.25	816.52	—	1,128.77	3,133.43
Gross transfers between funds - out	(65.00)	(997.52)	(66.25)	—	(1,128.77)	(3,133.43)
<b>Other recognised gains / losses</b>						
<b>Net movement in funds</b>	<b>4,881.52</b>	<b>(1,897.34)</b>	<b>(1,420.44)</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>1,563.74</b>	<b>(2,196.36)</b>
<b>Reconciliation of funds</b>						
<b>Total funds brought forward</b>	<b>14,366.37</b>	<b>34,174.12</b>	<b>5,192.59</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>53,733.08</b>	<b>55,929.44</b>
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>	<b>19,247.89</b>	<b>32,276.78</b>	<b>3,772.15</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>55,296.82</b>	<b>53,733.08</b>
<b>Represented by</b>						
Unrestricted						
General fund	19,247.89	—	—	—	19,247.89	14,366.37
Designated						
Bridge Reserve	—	6,512.16	—	—	6,512.16	5,262.16
Mini Bus	—	2,501.01	—	—	2,501.01	2,143.03
Mission Fund	—	22,067.71	—	—	22,067.71	25,519.43
PA Fund	—	1,120.54	—	—	1,120.54	1,174.14
Vicarage Reserve	—	75.36	—	—	75.36	75.36
Restricted						
Compassion	—	—	(157.45)	—	(157.45)	(62.45)
Hope Beyond	—	—	—	—	—	1,863.59
Youth Fund	—	—	2,812.16	—	2,812.16	1,783.53
Youth Residentials	—	—	1,117.44	—	1,117.44	1,607.92