



Amington PARISH CHURCH

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**Annual
Report
2019**

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Vicar's Report

As ever, I cannot thank enough everyone who serves our church family so faithfully. Every job matters, big or small, visible or behind the scenes.

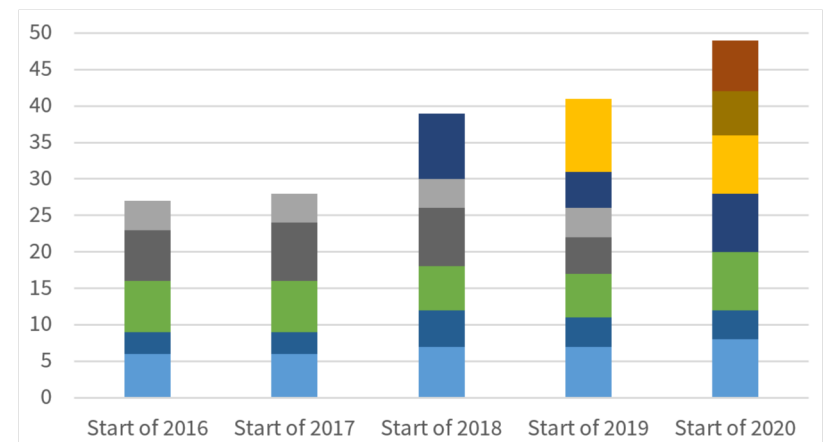
Mission Apprentice

Mandy runs the Ark and the Place of Welcome. Both are going from strength to strength thanks to her hard work, and that of the army of volunteers she leads. The funding for Mandy's role runs out in August 2020, but we hope to keep her on after that date, funding by grants (which we need to apply for!).

Discipleship Groups

It is of vital importance that a church family meet in smaller groups during the week, to pray and read the Bible together. These smaller groups offer a more intimate setting, where people can open up both the Scriptures and their own lives, in much greater depth than is possible on Sundays.

Therefore it has been a priority of mine to grow more groups, and encourage more people to take part in such groups. This graph shows both the number of groups which meet, and the number of people who attend each group:



This is a huge encouragement – not only has the number of people attending groups increased, we have also grown four new ones! If you are not in one of these groups, but would like to be – please speak to me.

New Bibles

This year we used Peter’s legacy to replace the church Bibles. The old ones were in a bad state, and (other than the people!) the Bibles are the most important thing in the building.

We were taken by surprise – and hugely encouraged – by the number of people who wanted to buy one, especially the large print edition! If you haven’t had one and would like one, they are still for sale on the discipleship table at the back of church.



Worship Leader Training



Another vitally important thing for churches to do, is to train the volunteers in their various tasks. In July we welcomed Sam Hargreaves, who co-leads Engage Worship with his wife Sara, to run a worship leader training day.

In the morning he asked the question, ‘How would Jesus lead worship?’ It was a challenging and encouraging time, as nearly two dozen of us met, discussed, shared, and ate together. Then in the afternoon he led a special session for members of the band, which was brilliant.

I hope to run more training like this in the coming months and years.

Church Administration

Many of the things vicars are required to do these days are more about running an organisation than leading God’s people in ministry and mission.

Last year the APCM tasked the PCC with finding a way to employ a part-time administrator to start taking some of these tasks off me, so I can focus on doing what I’m here to do: teaching, discipling, caring for the church family, etc. Catriona Paton and Ashleigh Price are now working for the church, assisting me with administration and communications.

Church Name and Logo

After a(nother) summer of people turning up late for weddings, having gone first to Big St Ed’s, the PCC decided it was time to start calling ourselves ‘Amington Parish Church’.



The church remains dedicated to St. Editha, but from now on in documents and publicity we will be referring to ourselves as ‘Amington Parish Church’.

Kitchenette & Toilet

Thank-you to all who donated so generously to enable us to install the kitchenette and refurbish the toilet (let’s be honest... the toilet was pretty disgusting!). Both have made a huge difference to the hospitality we are able to show – for example, we now have refreshments after every 10:30 service.



We got more than we bargained for with the toilet, as in the process we discovered that the frame was rotten and needed to be replaced. However that gave us the opportunity to remodel the door, as the wardens say in their report.



New Vicarage

The diocese was denied planning permission to build the new vicarage in the garden of the current vicarage – however the architects have advised that the reasons were not valid.

The diocese is therefore planning to appeal the decision during 2020.

Revd Ben Green

Wardens' Report

2019 was the year of improving church facilities by improving our refreshment area with the installation of a kitchenette, which enables us to offer hot drinks and snacks to those attending the 10:30 and Wholeness and Healing services, and other events for the church family and community as a whole. The new outreach ministry "Place of Welcome" and the Ark pre-school group are both highly successful – which is partly due to the improvement in Welcoming!

The other major improvement was the refurbishment of the toilet which now has proper hot water for handwashing and a safety door which can open both ways, to allow access from outside if someone becomes unwell while inside.

Neither of these upgrades would have been possible without the generosity of the church family who raised over £5,000 to pay for the kitchenette alone. Thank you everyone again.

We also repaired and upgraded the outside light at the rear of church so the East window can again be illuminated on dark evenings – especially for the Carols by Candlelight and Midnight Christmas services. We also repaired the outside lights at the front of church, and added extra lighting in the chancel.

During August we had the organ pipes cleaned – which had last been done in 1976 according to our organist Michael Ackroyd. This work took two weeks to complete, with the pipes stored in the chancel area while they were in the process of being cleaned and then replaced in the organ and then re tuned!

In the autumn we engaged an architect to advise on removing the ancient and unfit-for-purpose shed, and the possibility of replacing it with a small extension at the rear of the building, both for storage and children's ministry. We were advised that the best option is to seek permission to remove the shed and erect a temporary wooden shed in its place for storage, while looking into the possibility of applying for permission to erect a more permanent structure.

We thank everyone who took part in churchyard maintenance and cleaning inside the church last year. And as always we thank our team of volunteers who provide refreshments, clean the church, provide flowers at specified times of year and help move furniture. There is always room for more volunteers on the rotas. Please ask us if you would like to help in any way.

Carol Chadwick & Geoff Wyatt

Mission Apprentice's Report

Being devoted to one another in God's love

During 2019 the Mission Apprentice Scheme has had 17 Learning Programs at 1 Colmore Row, Birmingham, 2 Residential weekends at the House of Bread, Shipston-on-Stour, a Retreat day at Bishop's Lodge, Sutton Coldfield and one session held at Hodge Hill.

The Learning program has been varied, with speakers encouraging us to think about a range of subjects including Reaching young people, Unconscious bias, Listening to the call of God, Boundaries, the pastoral / hermeneutical cycle, Money to name but a few.

Our residentials have given us the opportunity to think deeper about specific topics. This year we have looked at Leadership and Empowering Disciples delivered by guest speakers Bishop Mike Royal and Mark Berry. We were also given time to share fellowship with one another, cook and eat together, pray for and encourage each other in our own contexts and reflect on the topic.

My main focus while in the parish has been to develop the Ark stay and play and to initiate the Place of Welcome.

Place of Welcome

Place of Welcome opened 16th May and has been made possible thanks to the installation of the new kitchen and the many volunteers who turn up each week to set up and take down plus making delicious homemade cakes, once again I am extremely thankful. There has been a huge number of faces come through the doors over this last year with an average weekly attendance of 26 people.

One notable afternoon was when we held a Macmillan coffee morning (in the afternoon) raising extra funds for this worthy cause. We had a visit from the Places of Welcome area coordinator, which led to an arranged meeting as she wanted to know how we have become so successful!



The Ark



The Ark has seen a growth in numbers and I am extremely grateful to all the volunteers who set up, help during the session and pack away at the end.

My challenge is to deliver a Bible story to 1-3 year olds... *and keep their attention!*

So, armed with cuddly toy props, materials, large drawings some children have sat and listened. The Christmas story went well, introducing a character to the children each week in the run up to Christmas culminating in the Nativity story with the now familiar characters.

For the remainder of my hours as Mission Apprentice in the Parish I have supervision with Ben, mentoring with Elizabeth Baker, reflection from the learning programme, research and visits for the church family weekend away, visits and bible study.

A final note of thanks goes to my parish prayer support team who keep me in their prayers and are only a text away when needed.

Mandy Widdas

Activities

Sunday Services

	8.30am	10.30am	6.30pm	
1st	HC (BCP)	Café Church	EP (BCP)	Baptisms at 1.30 & 2.30pm
2nd		HC	EP (BCP)	
3rd	HC (BCP)	MP	EP (BCP)	Baptisms at 1.30 & 2.30pm
4th		MP	HC	
5th		MP	No Service	

The teaching programme began with Mark: Seeing Jesus (chapters 12-16), leading up to Easter Sunday. After that we looked at spiritual disciplines using John Ortberg's book 'The Life You've Always Wanted'. In September we began a Bible overview called 'The Story'.

Midweek

Discipleship Groups Seven groups meet during the week:

Monday	Church Family Prayers and a Home Group
Tuesday	Three Home Groups
Wednesday	Home Group
Friday	Friday Prayers

These are led variously by Carol Chadwick, Geoff Wyatt, Bruce and Judith Ackers, Ray Skarratt, Mandy Widdas, Sue Joyce, with the assistance of others.

Band This is led by Mark Widdas and meets for practice in church on Thursday evenings. Peter & Jane Sheppard have started leading on some Sundays.

Saturday Prayers A faithful group meet once a month to pray for TCHA.

Pastoral Care

Prayer Calendar We continue to produce a monthly prayer calendar, containing all church members, to help us pray for each other regularly.

Pastoral Care Team Sadly one of our members – Annie Somers – died in the autumn. Carol Chadwick continues her pastoral work.

Knit & Natter This continues to meet fortnightly in the OSH coffee shop, and is led by Allan & Anne Baldwin.

Children & Young People

The shared leadership team overseeing our children and family ministry continued to meet, and is led by Sue Joyce.

The Ark The group meets weekly on Thursday mornings and continues to thrive. It is led by Mandy Widdas with assistance from other church members.

Creche Team At each 10.30 service a member of the team prepares and leads an activity for the young children in the church family, during the sermon.

Schools Ben continues to build relationships with local schools, and with Sue Joyce and others has welcomed schools into church, and taken assemblies.

Florendine Link A group of church members meets occasionally with children from Florendine Primary School, to promote inter-generational learning.

StEdys This reached a natural close due to the age of its members. Thanks go to Steve Robins and JoAnne Griffin who have been leading it.

Light Party Once again we held a Light Party as an alternative to Halloween.

Outreach

Place of Welcome This new group meets every Thursday afternoon from 2-4pm and provides drop-in refreshments, activities and conversation for anyone from the local community. It is run by Mandy with a huge team of volunteers. It has been extremely successful, connecting with a number of people from outside the church family.

Wholeness & Healing The team continue to lead services of Wholeness and Healing on Monday evenings, for a time of worship, prayer, and the ministry of the laying on of hands. These services are intended to have an outward focus, being aimed at and accessible for those who do not normally attend church.

Alpha We ran an Alpha course in the autumn term, hosted by the Joshi family. We used the Norman Chapel at St Paul's Dosthill for the Day Away, which was led by Ben. He was assisted during the course by Mark Waterstreet, curate at Dosthill – who as a result, is going to run a course in Dosthill in early 2020.

Food Parcels As they did last year Amington's three Borough Councillors each gave a grant of £100 at Christmas, to be used to provide food parcels for families connected to Amington Heath Primary School. Overall thirty-three children and fifteen adults were fed at Christmas by these parcels.

Fundraising and Social Events

The shared leadership team overseeing our fundraising and social events continued to meet, and is led by Janet Hine.

Valentine's Celebration A 'Mr and Mrs' (or 'friend and friend') game was well attended and enjoyed by all.

Maunder Supper We had a fish and chip supper and celebration of Holy Communion at the Old School Hall.

Beetle Drive We inaugurated the new Cornerstone Cup with a Beetle Drive, which was won by Ben and Jess Green.

Church Summer Fair Numbers were reasonable, but the weather let us down again – we still raised over £700 for the church administration fund.

Harvest Supper and Quiz The Cornerstone Cup was won by the Nitwits.

Christmas Party This year we had a do-it-ourselves photo booth, along with the usual puppets and Christmas crafts, quiz, and refreshments.

Occasional Offices

In 2019 1 adult and 10 children and were baptised, 7 couples were married in church, funeral services for 11 people were held in church, and for a further 9 in a crematorium or cemetery. There were 3 confirmation candidates.

Special Services

Baptism, Confirmations, and BBQ We were joined by +David for a celebration which included a baptism, three confirmations, a BBQ lunch, and a reading and performance of the story of the Bible, led by Ben with the assistance of Jess Green, Sue Joyce, Alan Paul, Ashleigh Price, the Robins family, John Taylor, Mandy and Samantha Widdas and Geoff Wyatt. The food was organised by Sue Joyce, with the help of Alan Hillstead and Susan Jordan, Tony and Janet Land.

Harvest Our food collections were donated to TCHA and St Giles Hospice.

Memorial Service As usual we held our memorial service, for the families of those who have died in the previous twelve months and whose funerals were taken by the Vicar and Readers of Amington. As we did last year, instead of reading out the names, we created a video with the dates and photos of the deceased, which was received very well.

Financial Review

Our financial position has continued to improve through 2019, with a marked increase in regular / planned giving through the year – by the end of the year, in December 2019 it had increased by more than 13%.

This is a wonderful result, and has enabled us to continue to increase our Diocesan Common Fund contribution, which at the end of 2019 stood at £2,750 per month (or £33,000 per year). In line with diocesan policy, the PCC will keep our contribution at 60% of unrestricted income – this year we managed 60.1%.

The full cost of a full-time paid minister in 2020 will be £49,735. This means that we are only able to have a full-time minister thanks to the generosity of others in the Church of England Birmingham – amounting to over £16,000 per year.

Receipts (income)

The Parish Giving Scheme continues to be a huge help to us – whether or not you pay tax, the more people who use it, the less we have to count in the vestry after a service. It makes the whole thing much easier. Advantages are that it can increase in line with inflation (a gift of £20 20 years ago is worth only £13 in today's money), and you can give anonymously so that no-one in our church, not even the treasurer, knows what you give. In January we received £685 (including Gift Aid) through PGS – in December we received £1,439!

Overall our income this year was £13,533 higher than last year – however most of that was the legacy we received from Peter Edridge. Details of how we have used (most of) that gift can be found in our financial statements.

Our fees income stayed relatively stable in 2019, however we expect it to drop significantly in 2020, mainly due to a big reduction in the number of weddings.

Payments (expenditure)

As usual the biggest item of expenditure was our Common Fund contribution (£32,100). Other major items this year were the kitchenette (£5,933) and toilet refurb (£2,060), as well as the money we spent from Peter's legacy.

We ended the year with a surplus of £36 – that might not sound like much, but given what we spend and the work we have been able to do this year, it is a sign of God's marvellous provision and generosity.

Outward Giving

In 2019 the PCC set aside 5% of our unrestricted income each month. Whenever that reached £1,000 we identified three charities (one local, one national, one other) and then over the following month every time someone attended a service in church they got a token to vote for the charity they wished to support. £1,000 is then given away in proportion to the votes cast.

Also during 2019 we began supporting Claude, Ruth and Caleb Baraberewe, Iris Global mission partners in Burundi. We were delighted to welcome them in the first half of the year, and hear about their work in that country.

Christian Aid Malawi Flood Appeal	£1,000.00
Sarah Paine / Atulya	£600.00
Hardship Fund	£540.00
Tamworth Foodbank	£391.89
The Children's Society	£328.83
Barnabas	£279.28
Tamworth Cornerstone Housing Association	£271.73
Claude & Ruth Baraberewe	£250.00
United Christian Broadcasters	£140.00
St Giles' Hospice	£20.00
Total	£3,821.73

We ended the year with £208 to be carried forward and given away in 2020.

Thanks

Thank you to our treasurer Catriona Paton for her hard work keeping such accurate records, and making our payments.

Thank you to Geoff & Jan Wyatt who regularly bank the money from services, and manage our Gift Aid tax claims.

Thank you to our independent examiner for the 2019 accounts – Alan Greathead FMAAT, PIIA, CIA, CTA.

But above all, thank you to everyone who gives regularly, and who support the church through social events and fundraising. Without your generosity, we would be forced to close. Christian giving should always be a response to the abundant generosity of God – not because the church is strapped for cash!

Reserves Policy

The Church of England and Charities Commission recommend that all churches should have a reserves policy. This is not about hoarding money, but good stewardship.

The PCC have agreed to follow these principles in our reserves policy:

- To keep approximately three months' running costs in reserves (currently about £12,000).
- This will cover emergency building work, or help fund new developments while we are fundraising.
- To achieve this, we will continue to underpay our Common Fund until that level is achieved, at which point we will review and increase our monthly Common Fund payment to be 60% of our unrestricted income.
- Once we have reached that level, we will also start to save a small amount of money (£50-100 a month) to cover the cost of small development projects.

At the end of 2019 we held £12,036 in unrestricted funds, which is above this level, leaving us with an effective surplus of £36.

PCC Report

The PCC met eight times in 2019, and discussed, among other items:

- The work of the Mission Apprentice, especially the Place of Welcome
- Shared Leadership teams and volunteer training
- Various fabric items, including the kitchenette, toilet, and spending Peter's legacy on lighting, organ cleaning, shed and extension, new (foldable) wooden chairs, replacing the church noticeboard, etc.
- Changing the church's name and logo to 'Amington Parish Church'
- Church finances and stewardship – including administrative assistance for the vicar
- Becoming an Eco Church
- Vicarage building works – planning permission has been denied, but the diocese is appealing
- Changing the parish boundary to include the housing development by Robey's Lane (this will come into effect on 1 February 2020)

Sue Joyce and Ray Skarratt continued in their role as Readers.

Members of the PCC in 2019

Chair Revd Ben Green (ex-officio)

Lay Chair Geoff Wyatt

Churchwardens Carol Chadwick and Geoff Wyatt

Parish Safeguarding Officer Carol Chadwick

Deanery Synod Steve Robins and John Taylor (elected to 2020)

Readers Sue Joyce and Ray Skarratt

Elected Members

to **2020** Janet Hine and Matthew Price

to **2021** Helen Slim and Janet Wyatt

to **2022** Catriona Paton and Mark Widdas

Treasurer Catriona Paton

Minutes Secretary Steve Robins

Deanery Synod Reps and PCC members are elected for a term of three years, after which they must step down for at least one year before seeking re-election.

Safeguarding

The PCC has complied with its duty under section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016, and has due regard to House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.

A copy of our Safeguarding document and policy is available in church and on our website. Our Parish Safeguarding Officer is Carol Chadwick.

Other Reports

Electoral Roll

As church has been closed we have not been able to renew the roll. This will be done later in the year (last year it stood at 53 names).

Coleshill & Polesworth Deanery

On 1 November the deaneries of Coleshill and Polesworth were merged; in 2020 a new full-time Area Dean will be appointed. This was the major item at most of the meetings.

Tamworth Christian Churches (TCC)

We continue to support the work of TCC, including a Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, Good Friday Walk of Witness and a Pentecost Party in the Park. Our lay rep is Janet Wilson, who is also TCC's treasurer. Ben Green is the communications officer.

Tamworth Cornerstone Housing Association (TCHA)

Geoff Wyatt represented the church on the TCHA User Committee.

The pre-school and NRG dance group continue to operate in the OSH and mezzanine level.

Overall, the position of TCHA remains good. It opened a new house on Albert Road, and purchased two new houses on Woodhouse Lane, and is planning development work to enable it to provide housing and support for almost 50 homeless young people.

Ben Green and Sue Joyce are members of the Management Committee, which is chaired by Frank Joyce.