



## Parish of Darlington-Bellevue ANNUAL REPORT 12 JUNE 2022





**PARISH OF DARLINGTON-BELLEVUE  
ANNUAL MEETING OF ENROLLED MEMBERS - SUNDAY 27 JUNE 2021  
MINUTES**

1. Members registered attendance using the attendance sheet (attached)
2. Apologies were noted: Sheena and Geoff Wheeler, Jan and Graeme Carroll, Kerry Stopher, Anne Crittenden, Theresa and David Harvey, James Saunders, Susanna Howlett and Trish Maughan
3. Reading of the Parish Governance Statute section 261
4. Election of Churchwardens (2)  
Jill Mackenzie and Lynne Evans were elected unopposed
5. The enrolled members formally acknowledged the contribution that the outgoing Church wardens James Saunders, Jan Carroll and Sue Young have made to the Parish.
6. Election of Parish Councillors (3)  
Mike Watson, James Saunders and Kerry Stopher were elected unopposed (4)
7. Election of Auditor: Pat Leighton was appointed
8. Reception of Reports
  - Minutes of Previous Annual Meeting
  - Rector
  - Wardens
  - Treasurer, including draft budget
  - Groups and Organisations

MOTION: That the Reports be received – Passed by acclamation
9. General Business

MOTION: That this meeting endorses in principle a proposal to reconfigure and improve the Parish Centre, and authorises Parish Council to expend up to \$20,000 of accumulated reserves, provided that the balance is contributed by donors prior to works commencing.  
Motion passed by acclamation
10. Rector's Appointments (5)  
No appointments made at the meeting
11. Election of Nominators (6)  
Philip Daniels, Jan Carroll, Caroline Bird and Lynne Evans were elected unopposed.
12. The meeting concluded in prayer



## WARDENS' REPORT

The Wardens' primary responsibility is the maintenance and improvement of parish property and the health and safety of those that visit the site. This year the Parish Council developed a maintenance plan which outlines what routine work (e.g. gutter cleaning, safety checks, window cleaning, weekly cleaning of Parish Centre) is required and when. Due to COVID restrictions we have not had the Woorloo workers to carry out numerous general maintenance tasks which has resulted in increased expenditure and a reliance on volunteers to assist with minor tasks. If you are able to help out occasionally with minor maintenance such as putting a hook on the wall, painting a bench, gardening and general cleaning please let a member of the Parish Council know. If we do not have volunteers for these tasks our expenditure will increase.

### FOUR MAJOR PROJECTS IN THE PAST YEAR WERE:

#### THE REAR GARDEN

Thanks to a grant from the Mundaring Shire for play equipment, a generous gift from Marlene Zlatnik's family for the brick paving and the tireless work of a number of parishioners led by John Ewing, this area is nearly complete. We look forward to seeing this area used in a variety of ways in the future.

#### THE CHURCH PATHWAY

The February 2021 evacuation procedure made it very evident that the paths surrounding the Church were a hazard so, following consultation with the National Trust and parishioners, it was decided to rebitumize the existing path on the south side including the path to the lych gate. In addition, the accessibility bay was bitumised and a new bitumen path was installed from the church to the lawn making the garden accessible to people with limited mobility. This work was made possible by generous donations from parishioners.

#### THE PARISH CENTRE REFURBISHMENT

Thanks to the efforts of Father Chris, \$10,200 was donated for the refurbishment of the Parish Centre. Parish Council decided to place this project on hold until our new Parish Priest commences. The funds raised for this project will not be used for any other purpose.

#### THE RECTORY

Since Father Chris moved out of the rectory the parish has employed a gardener to maintain the grounds and has had minor maintenance carried out which includes replacing locks on windows and replacing a broken cupboard in the kitchen. In the first part of the 22-23 financial year more maintenance will be required prior to a new priest and her family moving into the rectory in late July. This will include painting, arranging to have the internet connected, erecting a shed and a number of minor maintenance tasks.

#### THANK YOU

Thank you to our fellow Councillors James Saunders, Mike Watson, John Ewing and Kerry Stopher for their guidance and support over the past year. On behalf of the Parish we also acknowledge and give thanks for the work of Jan Carroll and Sue Young. Jan is responsible for communications, sending out the Mustard Seed e-newsletter fortnightly and ensuring that parish activities are communicated to the wider community through a regular page in the Darlington Review. She also organises our lavish champagne suppers after significant services. Sue is the Sacristan, and takes responsibility for the myriad practical details that aid public worship, both on Sundays and for special services. Finally huge thanks go to the Reverend Canon Theresa Harvey whose leadership and guidance as our Locum Priest is ensuring a very smooth interregnum which will conclude with the commissioning of The Reverend Julie Baker on 28 July 2022. **Lynne Evans, Jill Mackenzie**

**AUDITORS REPORT  
TO THE PARISHIONERS OF DARLINGTON-BELLEVUE ANGLICAN PARISH**

SCOPE

I have audited the special purpose financial report of the Parish comprising a Receipts and Payments account for the year ended 30 April 2022, and Statement of Cash Balances as at 30 April 2022. The Parish Treasurer is responsible for the preparation and presentation of the financial report and the information therein and has determined that the basis of accounting used is appropriate to the needs of the parishioners. I have conducted an independent audit of the financial report in order to express an opinion on it to the parishioners. No opinion is expressed as to whether the basis of accounting used is appropriate to the needs of the parishioners.

My audit has been conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards to provide reasonable assurance as to whether the financial report is free of any material misstatement. My procedures included examination, on a test basis, of evidence supporting the amounts and other disclosures in the financial report. These procedures have been undertaken to form an opinion whether, in all material respects, the financial report is presented fairly in accordance with the cash basis of accounting whereby revenue is recorded when it is received, expenses are recorded when they are paid, and no assets or liabilities, other than cash and bank balances, are recorded. Accounting Standards and other professional reporting requirements as not applicable to the cash basis of accounting adopted by the Parish.

The financial report has been prepared for distribution to parishioners for the purpose of fulfilling the treasurer's financial reporting requirements in terms of the Parochial Statute of the Anglican Diocese of Perth. I disclaim any assumption of responsibility for any reliance on this report or on the financial report to which it relates to any person other than the members, or for any purpose other than that for which it was prepared.

No Audit has been done on the GST.

The audit opinion expressed in this report has been formed on the above basis.

AUDIT OPINION

In my opinion, the financial report presents fairly in accordance with the cash basis of accounting, as described above, the receipts and payments of the Parish for the year ended 30 April 2022 and its cash and bank balances as at that date.

P A LEIGHTON FCA  
Auditor  
2 June 2022

**ANGLICAN PARISH OF DARLINGTON/BELLEVUE  
FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR YEAR ENDING 30 APRIL 2022**

<b>INCOME</b>	<b>Budget 21/22</b>	<b>Actual 21/22</b>
Offerings	\$ 100,000.00	\$ 95,722.78
Net Income - other		
Interest Earned		\$ 34.00
Donations - Weddings, Funerals, Baptisims		
Donations - Meeting Room	\$ 9,150.00	\$ 5,021.00
Grant		\$ 1,000.00
<b>Sub Total (Subject to Assesment)</b>	<b>\$ 109,150.00</b>	<b>\$ 101,777.78</b>
Special Appeals		
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$ 109,150.00</b>	<b>\$ 101,777.78</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
<b>Ministry Expenses</b>		
Stipend, LSL & Travel	\$ 75,000.00	\$ 71,277.14
Ministry Supply		
Rectory Electricity Water	\$ 3,300.00	\$ 3,139.69
Professional Supervision		
<b>Parish Running Expenses</b>		
Cleaners	-	
Electricity church and meeting room	-	-
Insurance	\$ 2,400.00	\$ 2,912.39
Telephone/internet	\$ 750.00	\$ 1,613.01
Childrens ministry	\$ 750.00	\$ -
Faith Formation Books	\$ 200.00	\$ 436.29
Liturgy	\$ 500.00	\$ 706.22
Mainly Music	\$ 150.00	\$ 670.91
Organ/Choir	\$ 3,600.00	\$ 4,113.64
Office	\$ 1,400.00	\$ 1,019.92
Church Maintenance	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 866.75
Parish Centre Maintenance	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 3,846.36
Rectory Maintenance	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 3,958.70
Grounds Maintenance	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 6,805.89
Rates	\$ 2,100.00	\$ 1,928.62
Asset Purchase	-	
<b>Expenditure for Church Purposes outside Parish</b>		
Synod Assessment	\$ 14,000.00	\$ 11,562.96
<b>Deductable as payments direct from parish funds</b>		
Mission Giving		-
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>\$ 109,150.00</b>	<b>\$ 114,858.49</b>
<b>NET EXPENDITURE OVER INCOME</b>	<b>-\$ 13,080.71</b>	

## FINANCIAL REPORTING

### PARISH ACCOUNTS

The Church Council has the oversight of the operation of the church accounts.

1. The Operating Account is used for the daily operations of the parish
2. The Term Deposit and Interest Bearing accounts were opened to maximise interest earned on the parish savings.

### NATIONAL TRUST ACCOUNT

This year we raised \$10,000 for the National Trust heritage Account which allows for tax deductible donations for church maintenance which includes the grounds immediately surrounding the church building. The bulk of these funds were used to repair and upgrade the bitumen between the litch gate and church which had become a dangerous tripping hazard. It also enabled us to widen the path along the western side of the church, add bitumen to the path leading to the lawn making it accessible and safe for everyone, and add a bitumen disabled parking area. Not only have we repaired the dangerous paths, we have improved safety and access for all parishioners. Most of these funds were donated by parishioners so thank you for responding to this urgent need.

The National Trust has requested that we improve the drainage on the car park side of the building to reduce the risk of further cracks and damage to the church after the extensive renovations completed last year. The wardens are currently obtaining quotes.

### PARISH CENTRE REFURBISHMENT

Special thanks to Father Chris Bedding for conducting a parish centre refurbishment fundraiser as his leaving gift. \$8200 raised through this campaign is in a separate Diocesan account which is not reflected in the balances of the accounts we manage. This is to ensure we do not pay assessment on these funds. The funds raised came from parishioners as well as people outside the parish who were keen to support Father Chris's leaving gift to the church. Thank you to everyone who donated! This is an expensive undertaking so we will continue to fundraise and work towards this project.

### ARTS FUND

This year we launched the Arts Fund. Money raised from music concerts in the church as well as private donations go towards this fund. The current balance is \$2,668. The Arts Fund committee make recommendations to Parish Council on how best to use this money to further our music ministry in the church. This fund has already allowed us to increase Rainjan's honorarium fee to a more equitable level.

### RECTORY RENTAL

Due to the speed in which a new priest was appointed to our church we were not able to rent out the rectory as initially planned as a minimum six month lease is required. We had planned to use the income from this short term rental to cover the maintenance costs to get the rectory ready for the new priest but this amount of approximately \$10,000 to cover painting, new oven, shed and electrical work will now need to come out of next year's budget.

### BALANCE OF FUNDS AT 30 APRIL 2022

Account	Opening Balance	Closing Balance
Working Account	\$ 6,134.84	\$ 4,468.38*
Interest Account	\$25,562.08	\$16,652.39
Term Deposit	\$20,088.45	\$20,088.45
Totals	\$51,785.37	\$41209.22

\*Working account balance includes \$2668 set aside for the Arts Fund

## **SUMMARY**

Once again this year, income from offerings and meeting room hire was lower than expected mainly due to COVID. Expenses have also been higher due to unforeseen maintenance costs. As we have not had additional income from job-keeper or Chris working at Amana Living to make up for any shortfall, we have made a \$13,000 loss which has come out of reserves.

The 2021 - 22 accounts have been audited by Pat Leighton FCA with no qualifications.

## **GIVING**

This year we received approximately \$96,000 from households which represents 95% of the budgeted requirement to balance the budget. For the 2022/23 financial year \$89,100 has been pledged in planned giving. We have allowed for \$102,033 of planned giving to balance the budget, a shortfall of almost \$13,000 on what has been pledged.

The generosity of this community is incredible and I find it quite astounding that such a small congregation can sustain full time ministry, so thank you! To help meet the shortfall, Parish Council asks you to extend that generosity even further and review your planned giving commitments. If enough people increase their planned giving even by a small amount this will be possible. You can rest assured that your planned giving is making a real difference in this church and in the wider community.

## **FINANCE COMMITTEE**

The Finance Committee meets at least twice a year to review the budget and financial reports in detail. Any financial proposals are also analysed in depth and where appropriate recommended to Church Council.

## **2022-23 FINANCIAL YEAR BUDGET**

The budget for the current financial year is conservative, and reflects a sustainable increase in income and expenditure to that which occurred in previous years.

## **THANK YOU**

On behalf of the parish I would like to thank Pat Leighton for auditing the parish accounts. Special thanks also to Graeme Carroll, Jill Mackenzie, Nancy Johnston and those others who diligently count the offerings each week and assist with the banking

Special mention must be made of council secretary Jill Mackenzie. Thank you for your hard work, quietly working behind the scenes to ensure Council and church administration runs smoothly. Your efforts year after year coordinating planned giving is also much appreciated

I would like to acknowledge James Saunders who handed the mantle of treasurer to me earlier this year. Your tireless work as treasurer for many years is much appreciated as is all the support you have given me to move into my new role as treasurer.

Thank you to Father Chris, the Parish Council and Finance Committee for their wisdom and advice.

Finally, thank you for the trust you have placed in me since taking over as treasurer. It has been a privilege to serve you and God in this role.

**Mike Watson,  
Treasurer**



## 2022 - 2023 DRAFT BUDGET

<b>INCOME</b>	
Planned Giving	102,033
Unplanned Giving	7,800
Facilities Usage	4,000
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$113,833</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>	
Rector Stipend (incl. Superannuation, utilities, vehicle allowance, electricity, water Rectory, insurances)	68,925
Administration (incl. utilities, insurances, office expenses, cleaning)	5,300
Property (incl. Repairs and Maintenance)	19,000
Mission and Ministry (incl. children ministry, music, faith formation, community development etc.)	5,600
Synod Assessment (incl. support for Chaplaincies, Youth Ministry Department, Parish Grants, Clergy Training)	15,008
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>113,833</b>

## GROUPS AND ACTIVITIES

### ASCENSION CONNECTION

St Cuthberts has continued support of Ascension Connection throughout this past year. Groceries and cash are collected weekly and delivered to the Church of the Ascension in Midland. We have also been responsible for collecting fruit and vegetables from Second Bite in Belmont and delivering them to Midland.

The volunteers of Ascension Connection distribute 50 -60 food hampers weekly. Every Friday they provide not only food hampers for people in need but also a friendly environment for coffee and morning tea, a sausage sizzle, and an opportunity for people to relax and socialise.

They rely on donations of goods and cash from local churches and are always grateful for all of our contributions. This is a very worthwhile and practical form of outreach for our church and well worth our support. **Ros Bannister**

## BOOK CLUB

This financial year has bought the Book Club group another interesting year of reading. Thankfully we have been able to meet face to face or mask to mask and not on zoom, this makes for a well-balanced discussion.

Amongst our reads this year was *Pachinko* by Min Jin Lee, *The Birdman's Wife* by Melissa Ashley, *A Matter of Death & Life* by ID & M Yallom, *The Curious Charms of Arthur Pepper* by Phaedra Patrick and an oldie but a goodie *The God of Small Things* by Arundhati Roy. We had some lively discussions each month with a fine assortment of books touching on all sorts of subjects.

We said farewell to Vicki Mizen during the year as she moved from her lovely house and garden in Glen Forrest to another property in Lesmurdie where she is now in the throes of making another beautiful garden. Vicki tells me she initiated the idea of book club well over a decade ago along with Charlotte Blackley and a few others. We keep Vicki in the loop with what we are reading.

Book Club is all about reading books that you may not necessarily read and then being surprised that you actually enjoyed them - of course the social interaction and the wine and nibbles play a big part as well! Our usual meetings are on the first Monday of the month at 7.30pm (although occasionally this may vary) and all are welcome. **Nancy Johnston**



## BRIDGES TO PEACE

We are now in our sixth year of hosting interfaith gatherings. The gatherings are promoted via an email list and social media with at least five different faiths joining in each gathering. These gatherings are jointly offered by Baha'i Community of Mundaring, Jewish Spirituality Australia and our parish. The format for the gathering which includes time for shared prayer, a 'listening circle' and socialising over food is proving successful. This year due to the COVID restrictions we were limited to two gatherings. **Jill Mackenzie**



## CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

Our Children's Ministry team is Louise Cook, Megan Broad, Rosie Logie, Michelle Watson and Father Chris until his departure. Aside from resting in January, we try to provide a Godly Play programme each week of the year – either in the Godly Play room or in the church with our monthly Child Led Eucharists. Attendance numbers usually fluctuate and are currently quite low, but this is typical of the ebb and flow of children's ministry as children age and families move to other places. Sunday sport, general sickness and lately Covid have affected attendance. Our Godly Play room is well loved and appreciated by children, leaders and parents alike. It is a sacred, safe and creative space – a blessing for which we are extremely grateful.

The new outdoor area is almost complete and looking fantastic!! There is shade, paving, a sandpit, a water play trough, and some newly planted gardens. The children from Godly Play, Mainly Music and SCY will gain a great deal



from using this area. As will the adults of the Parish. I'd like to acknowledge and thank several people in finally making this area become a reality – An Anglicare grant and a gift from Marlene Zlatnik helped fund the landscaping, and John Ewing for his hard physical labour!

Jan and Michelle organized Shrove Tuesday pancakes again this year, with some of the most extravagant pancakes ever seen. Sadly, despite much promotion, the event was poorly attended so it meant the few of us there had to eat LOTS of pancakes. Hahaha

The children of our Parish continue to serve us by taking part in occasional services and celebrations in the church calendar. We have monthly Child Led Eucharists and on Christmas Eve our annual Nativity was a blessing to those who attended. At Easter some of our children assisted SCY on Palm Sunday.



### **St Cuthbert's Youth (SCY)**

In Term 4 of 2021 Father Chris, Melanie Hobbs and Michelle Watson began a new St Cuthbert's Youth for young people in Years 5 to 8 in the Parish and local area. We met on Sunday afternoons for 6 consecutive weeks for games, afternoon tea, study, an activity, and finished with evening prayer in the church. Junior SCY was enthusiastically received by both young people and parents, so it was continued by Melanie and Michelle in 2022. We have approximately 10 young people who attend including 3 sets of twins! I'd like to thank Theresa for her enthusiastic support and wise input with SCY and Mike for stepping in when either Mel or I have been too sick to attend. Thank you too to our lovely parents who have been so encouraging and helped when needed.



Our original SCY group, or Senior SCY as I like to call them, have continued to meet occasionally but due to other commitments it hasn't been as often as we would like. We have kept in touch and our young adults still help with services such as Palm Sunday.

Michelle is launching "Supper and Spirituality" for this age group in the second half of the year. This will be held on 2 Sunday evenings a term with guest leaders helping facilitate discussion, activities etc. We will open this up to a larger group of young people from other churches and parishes as well. We have so much wisdom and creativity amongst Christian leaders in our parish and local community that I am extremely excited about this! Unfortunately, a case of Covid for Michelle made us cancel our first session in May. But watch this space!

A great deal of time this year has gone in to discussing, teaching, preparing and supporting young people in our parish for either Baptism or Communion. It has been a time of deep discussion, soul searching and sharing which was extremely valuable. On May 22, Bishop Jeremy joined us in a joyful service to confirm 4 young people. Unfortunately, a few others were unable to be baptized or confirmed due to being ill or isolating with Covid. Some of the young people have chosen to wait to make their commitment when they are a little older. A heartfelt thank you goes to Sebastiana and Theresa for their support and wisdom on this journey with our young people this year. Altogether our journey together has been very special.

**Michelle Watson**





## **GARDENS**

During the last few years garden development was done under the leadership of Vicki Mizen, Alison Atkinson and James Saunders. Lawns, garden beds, reticulation and maintenance have been installed and tended by them and many others. I am extremely grateful for the work they have done. In August 2021 I was appointed Garden Group Co-ordinator by the Parish Council with the Garden Group having authorisation to undertake tidying maintenance such as pruning, mulching, and mowing. I am required to present to the Parish Council a costed proposal regarding significant changes or improvements to the grounds.

A Gardening Group has been formed. Members include Alison Atkinson, Dave Bearham, Graeme Carroll, Ian Clayton, Anne Crittenden, Andrew Harper, Judy and Trevor Maughan, James Saunders, Gus Skene and Mike Watson. I am extremely appreciative of their assistance. The ongoing maintenance work of the group has included:

- Care and maintenance of the lawns. The lawn, although less than perfect, has mostly managed and it is hoped that the 'coring' done in late summer will have long term benefits over the winter/spring period and that the current bare patches will recover.
- Watering the native plants. These plants were purchased last autumn. Most plants have survived and grown, some flowered but a few have had the temerity to die. It is planned to replace these plants in the near future.
- Reduction of the fire hazard weeds around the grounds.
- Gutter clearing and leaf removal to the tip. Some leaves are left to provide mulch, particularly in the lower garden, thus enriching our beautiful environment.

Rear Garden: The Group has completed the brick paving area at the back of the Parish Centre and the garden area filled with soil. Judy and Trevor Maughan have planted this little garden bed. The shade cloth overhead is a temporary measure and will be gradually removed as the plants grow on the wire to give a complete green cover. Then we anticipate inviting Vicki, with others, to have a coffee in the midst of the greenery. The Garden Group is always delighted to welcome anyone who is interested in maintaining and improving our beautiful church property. I would like to thank the Gardening Group as without their assistance we would not have such a wonderful environment to share and enjoy.

**John Ewing**



## **MAINLY MUSIC**

Mainly Music Darlington is one of hundreds of 'Mainly Musics' around Australia, New Zealand and the world. We pay an annual fee to access music and resources from the Mainly Music organisation. Our team in 2022 is Jan Carroll, Sarah Daniels, Michelle Watson, Holly Edwards, Nancy Johnston and Raima. On arrival each Tuesday, each child is welcomed by name, and given a name badge and sticker. After singing, prancing and dancing, children enjoy fruit and the adults enjoy a delicious morning tea.

Mainly Music provides a forum for parents and carers with small children to dance, sing and play. But it also provides an invaluable connection between adults and the opportunity for conversation and mutual support. After nine years, the program has a positive reputation in the local community, and nearly all new attendees come by word of mouth.

The number of children each week ranges from ten to twenty. Sometimes we are full to the brim with children, but this often eases as children start 'big school'. Unlike most Mainly Music groups, we do not have a waiting list, and we love to welcome new children and their adults.



## LITURGICAL MUSIC

During 2021-22, the core music team continues to be Rainjan Mills and Caroline Bird, with regular assistance and support from Kerry Stopher. In 2022, we have been able to increase Rainjan's time and we are now fortunate to have him play the organ three Sundays a month, as well as for special services and directing the choir. Despite Covid, we have cautiously resumed the choir's activities. In late 2021, we held an evensong for the first time in two years. The choir rose magnificently to the occasion and learnt a new setting of the Magnificat and Nunc dimittis. At Christmas we returned to St Cuthberts for Nine Lessons and Carols – perhaps our best yet – it was certainly our biggest choir ever, with several new members. Like last year, we also welcomed guests from both the Hills Choir and WASO chorus and we really appreciate their contributions.

The opening of the borders, mask mandates and increased spread of Covid have made 2022 more difficult for choirs – singing is recognised to be a high-risk activity for Covid-spread and many find singing in a mask difficult and stressful. Consequently, we have continued to be cautious. So far this year, the choir has sung at the farewell service for Father Chris and at the Easter Vigil. Chris has been a great supporter and member of the choir and will be missed. We hope to be able to hold evensong in the second half of the year at least once and will soon begin planning for Nine Lessons and Carols.

Thanks to all who contribute their time and talents to the musical life of the parish – whether as instrumentalists or singers. New musicians are always welcome. Anyone interested in joining the team, please speak to Caroline. **Caroline Bird**

## VENUE USAGE

As Parish Centre Coordinator, my primary role is liaising with the organisations using the Centre to reach agreement on the conditions of usage including the times and payment. Organisations that use the centre and make a donation or pay an agreed fee include:

World Vision - Second Thursday each month at midday to 2pm

Darlington Women's group – meeting on 3rd Wednesday each month – 11.30 to 2pm

Drumming group – each Wednesday evening 7pm to 9pm

Pitter Patter Music – small groups of children's music Thursdays in term time 9am to 11.30

Quilter's group – Friday 9.30 to 1.30. Runs every week for 10 months February to November.

Church groups that use the facility and make no payment include:

Mainly Music – Tuesday mornings during school terms

Bridges to Faith – Sundays 4pm to 7pm approximately twice a year

St Cuthbert's Youth – Sundays 3-6pm with 5 sessions per time

Book Club – once a month – Mondays 7.30-9pm

All users are fully insured for Public Liability either themselves or via Anglican Central Office insurance. In the coming financial year, the Parish Council will explore avenues for increasing the site's usage. The Parish Centre is available all day on Monday, Tuesday afternoon, during the day on most Wednesdays, most Thursday afternoons, Friday from mid-afternoon onwards and on Saturday. The use/hire of the Centre is promoted on our website. **John Ewing**



## LOCUM TENENS' REPORT TO THE ANNUAL MEETING OF PARISHIONERS

Anglican Parish of Darlington-Bellevue  
Sunday 12 June 2022

Today is Trinity Sunday. Trinity is the only major festival that the Church celebrates, which is not specifically found in the Scriptures. The first Sunday after Pentecost, it is the celebration of the Christian doctrine of the Trinity, the three Persons of God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Each of these are, of course, found in the Christian Bible, the New Testament, but not as a unique joined entity.

In the early church, there was no such recognition or celebration, but this festival arose partly as a response to various heresies that emerged in the early centuries. Among these, Arianism maintained that Jesus did not always exist, but came after God the Father, so therefore was not God's equal. A quick scan of John's gospel, chapter 1 verses 1-14 could have sorted that one out, but apparently it didn't.

Heresy comes from the Greek, *haireisis*, meaning 'choice' and the early Fathers found this to be not a good thing. Too confusing. Better to have clarity. So, after some trial and error, Pope John XXII, in the early 14th century, ordered Trinity Sunday to be a major feast of the Church and in 1162, Thomas a Becket was consecrated Archbishop of Canterbury on Trinity Sunday and Anglicans have celebrated it ever since.

It is the least favourite Sunday for preachers, particularly if the preacher is committed to explain, clarify, teach about the topic, for how do you explain a mystery? What do you say to make the inexplicable clear? Various ideas have emerged over the years.

Look at a three-leaf clover. One plant, but three separate leaves.  
Mmm. Possible. Or, consider the three manifestations of water, as liquid, solid [ice] and steam. Same properties, different ways to experience the same thing. Equally possible.

This morning I want to apply the mystery of the Trinity to our parish, our past, present life, and future possibilities. I am not meaning to imply that somehow we are an aspect of God the Holy Trinity, although we are, but not as mystery, except that we are that too! I want to suggest we somehow embody the mystery of the Holy Trinity in our parish life and being.

Without wanting to engage in tricky theological debate, I want to propose that our past, our history is the ground under our feet, our foundation, our experience of God the Creator. Our present of- course is only a millisecond of time, because we are always moving into our future. However, for today, perhaps we can accept our present as being our past year, the time we are officially reflecting on and reviewing today, and see that as our current ministry, as we are committed to follow the ministry of Jesus as offered to us in the Gospels. Then our future is what is to come, which I see as the work of the Holy Spirit.

Just take a moment to reflect on that. Get in touch with this place as the work of God our Creator. Get in touch with yourself as part of that creation. Ground yourself in that possibility, that reality.

Then see how what we do here, what you do here and on behalf of here, is your response to the example and commands of Jesus.

Are you someone who reliably gives time to sit with local primary school children to help them with their reading? Do you give money or do shopping for those who are hungry, cold? Do you rummage through your possessions to respond to appeals from the Women's refuge? Are you committed to the elderly residents at Regis care who regularly attend our fortnightly services. Do you hop around with a beanbag on your head, supporting younger parents at Mainly Music? Are you the person with energy to support our small children with story in Godly Play, or our older young people at our Junior SCY, or our even older young people at our senior SCY? To have three parish-based groups of young people is unusual in this day and age. It is something to be immensely proud of and supportive of, we don't want to let them slip through our fingers for lack of our support.

Maybe you are a natural feeder of people, and turn up with goodies for morning teas, for concerts, for any number of celebrations we seem to generate. Perhaps you enhance our liturgy with music, with singing, with serving or reading or praying on our behalf, or even by initiating a new, peaceful, reflective service. Perhaps you give time to provide special Evensongs, Festival of Lessons and Carols. Perhaps we mostly only notice the fruits of your labour as we enjoy our grounds, as we are safer on our paths, as we find our rubbish removed, trees lopped, grass growing, the fabric cared for, the buildings maintained. There may be activities and ministries I have unintentionally omitted, for which I apologise, but this gives a glimpse of our collective and individual responses to the call to be followers of Jesus here. I think we do well, and that there are many possibilities for newcomers to find their place.

The purpose of an annual Rector's report is to reflect on the past year, and lay the ground for the year ahead. I am uniquely positioned not to be the best person for this, as I was away for five months in Lesmurdie, and in seven weeks, will be replaced by our new Rector. However, this time last year, few people expected or anticipated our current situation.

The years with Chris Bedding were a time of change and growth. Most of the activities mentioned above were initiated, in one way or another, by Chris. Through his energy, vision and leadership we became more engaged with the wider community. Our liturgical practise was enriched, sermons were memorable, our Choir happened, Evensong became a regular offering, Taize was lay established and led. Links were made with other religious traditions and we hosted Inter-faith gatherings. We had celebratory suppers, we celebrated the Festival of Lessons and Carols, we became more aware of and responsive to the situation of migrants, asylum seekers; the list goes on.

And all this is the work of the Holy Spirit amongst us and within us. If we had known what was ahead of us at the beginning of Chris' ministry, we might have quailed at the thought! But we engaged, took on the new directions, challenges and we flourished as a community.

Saying farewell to Chris was hard, as it is when a good thing comes to an end. It is, perhaps, a great comfort that Chris is delighted with the choice of his successor, and we are extraordinarily fortunate that Julie Baker is able to join us within six months of the parish being vacant.

And now we begin a new year in our parish life, with a new Rector imminent.

The Christian life is full of surprises and often invites us to consider tasks, possibilities that catch us unawares. I like the cartoon, with two people, waking, bleary eyed to a new day. One says, "good morning God!" The other says, "Good God, it's morning!" Some of the new things ahead of us will delight and invigorate us; others may disconcert, even alarm, almost certainly challenge us. I don't need to remind you that Jesus didn't promise us that ministry is easy and I sometimes think that we have it so relatively comfortable here, we risk losing sight of some of the cost of discipleship.

One cost that we could consider taking on is a simple, but real one. Since our annual budget was done,

unexpected expenses have arisen in relation to the rectory. You hopefully have read the excellent report which sets out our financial position. The annual rector's report is not, traditionally, at all a time to ask people to reconsider their giving, so I hope you will forgive me. However, we have a new Rector who understands she is coming to a financially viable parish, which we are, just. However new ventures, new directions, new ideas, often have costs attached. If we each added to our weekly giving, the equivalent of something we have regularly; a coffee, a new book, a movie night, our position would be more solid. I would be sad, and a bit embarrassed, if new directions were limited by lack of finance.

As we sit in this lovely church on the evening of July 28, waiting for the next part in the life of this parish, I hope we might be aware of God the creator, who is our foundation, of the ministry of Jesus whose example endlessly is before us and the Holy Spirit, whose presence invites us to trust, risk, explore.

William Temple, a revered Archbishop of Canterbury, once said that the Church is the only organisation which exists for the benefit of those outside it, which is, of course, where the Holy Spirit is alive and at work, with our cooperation and assistance.

I wonder where the Holy Spirit will lead us next?

In the meantime, we wait. R S Thomas puts it beautifully and simply.

*Moments of great calm,  
kneeling before an altar  
of wood in a stone church  
in summer, waiting for the God  
to speak; the air a staircase  
for silence; the sun's light  
ringing me, as though I acted  
a great role. And the audiences  
still; all that close throng  
of spirits waiting, as I, for the message.*

*Prompt me, God:*

*but not yet. When I speak,  
though it be you who speak  
through me, something is lost.  
The meaning is in the waiting.*