



St Bartholomew's Annual Report

Presented to the APCM May 2022



Seeking to know **Christ**
better and to make
Christ better known.



Sharing the Lord's
supper together

Communion

St Bartholomew's Church





Vicar's Report



As I sit down to write this report, I've been the Vicar of the Benefice of the Redeemer for just over a year. What a year!

After a couple of months study (and moving) leave, it was a joy to be installed and inducted as Vicar on 25th Feb. Thanks to Zoom, many were able to join the service despite us still being in the midst of the pandemic. 2021 has in many ways been a year of uncertainty. The risk of covid has been ever present, disrupting fellowship and hospitality and causing anxiety and illness. It is taking us a while to re-establish and re-invigorate many church routines.

However our unchanging and mighty Lord has been hugely gracious in so many ways:

I'm so grateful for a wise, godly and supportive Leadership Team, Wardens and PCC.

The preaching and teaching of our Licensed Lay Ministers, especially at our evening services, has been a spiritual encouragement for many of us.

We have an enthusiastic and committed team of Sunday School and Creche leaders.

It's been a genuine encouragement to see so many seeking to serve God in different ways - spiritually and practically.

Since the lifting of restrictions, we've seen people join all four of our congregations.

Our youth have started attending events with young people from other local churches.

We continue to enjoy a strong and fruitful partnership with our local schools.

After families being instructed in the basics of the gospel, eight people have been baptised, including two adults.

Our men's and ladies' groups have thrived and are becoming a place where people of different ages and stages can have fun and encourage each other.

It has been particularly moving to share the Lord's Supper together after over a year of not being able to.





As you read through this booklet, I'm sure you'll find many more encouragements to add to the ones above!

As a Benefice we continue in our mission:

Seeking to know Christ better and to make Christ better known

When we looked at the early church in the book of Acts, we saw that, in order to do that, we need to hold firm to the key priorities of

The Bible – reading, understanding and meditating on God's word

Prayer – speaking to our generous Father in heaven

Relationships – developing our fellowship as a church family.

At the start of 2021, all our church members answered an anonymous questionnaire to get an idea of where we are spiritually.

It was a great encouragement to see that through 2020:

92% had grown in their faith

80% had some confidence in sharing the gospel

73% had identified and were using their gifts to serve God and the church

It was also very clear that weekly church attendance and being part of some sort of Bible study group had the greatest impact on people's growth in faith and service of God. You can get an idea of what these groups do later in this booklet. Although statistics are helpful for seeing where we're at, as a church our true desire is knowing God and people. Paul writes to the church in Colossae:

So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness. *Colossians 1:6*

Please join me in praying this for ourselves and for our churches in the year ahead.

In Christ,

Chris





Licensed Lay Ministers Report

Written by Duncan Stowe & John Ashcroft

We now have three main Sunday services across the benefice; one at Church of the Saviour and two at St. Bartholomew's. We also have Friday Live up at Church of the Saviour. As in 2020, so in 2021 we had restrictions because of Covid regulations. Fortunately, we have some tech-savvy people around and so were able to hold one service every Sunday over Zoom. When churches were able to re-open, numbers were limited and so the service was conducted in church and over Zoom. Eventually we added Sunday @ Seven back to our services but only over Zoom, although towards the end of the year we managed to get back into church, only for the new variant to put its oar in.

Because of family situations with regard to safeguarding your Licensed Lay Ministers were not always able to play as full and active a part as usual. In fact, it fell upon John to do the bulk of the work inside church when we re-opened.

Irrespective of the service, the team, Chris, John, Duncan, Geoff, and Philip set out to convey the main truths of the gospel and, hopefully, build up members of the congregations in their own faith, by showing them how the gospel can be applied to their own specific situation, be it at home, work or socializing.

For a short period of interregnum, we had to manage without Chris as he had to have a break from our church before he was inducted. This was achieved with the aid of visiting ministers and the members of the leadership team playing their part including extra pastoral responsibilities and in taking funerals at The Saviour and or the crematorium. During this period the newly trained worship leaders came into their own. We worked with them collectively as a team. We were all relicensed this year to the Benefice, so theoretically are good for the next three years.

Besides being seen active at the front of church, your Licensed Lay Ministers (Readers) are also busy behind the scenes leading study groups and doing other works to further the promotion of the gospel, mainly over Zoom, except for a tiny period when we managed to meet face to face. Hopefully this coming year we will be fully back to normal, but still streaming over Zoom for those unable to get to church.





The Parochial Church Council 2021

The St Bartholomew's Parochial Church Council (PCC) members who have served at any time from 1st January 2021 until the date this report was approved are:-

Ex-officio members

Vicar- Rev Christopher Anderton

Wardens- Carol Jenkinson and John Cowell

Philip Beresford (Deanery Synod Rep, Licensed Lay Minister)

Margaret Mitchell (Deanery Synod Rep, Secretary)

Appointed members

Geoff Hutchinson (Licensed Lay Minister, Lay Chair)

Duncan Stowe (Licensed Lay Minister)

Elected members

Nan Goodall (Treasurer)

Jacqui Stowe

Alison McGhee

Kath Swindlehurst

Sue Norman

John Cowell

Yvonne Hargreaves

Karen Woodward

Frank Sutcliffe

Derek Forrest

The PCC meets 6 times, bi-monthly, during the year, starting in January and on the second Thursday of these months. Church of the Saviour PCC start first at 7pm. Dealing with matters particularly relating to their own Parish. St Bartholomew's join at 7:30pm and both parishes share a joint Benefice meeting. Then Church of the Saviour leave, and St Bartholomew's carry on the business appertaining only to their own parish. This works remarkably well, so much that we plan for this to continue.





Church Wardens Report

Carol Jenkinson and John Cowell

It is great to see the church reopening to people. Week by week people are returning and a few new faces as well. Sunday school is operating well. The church building is in great shape and the work on the heating system is almost complete. All regular inspections and testing are in place, the automatic doors have been serviced recently, along with a full electrical and PAT test. The fire extinguishers have been checked and serviced. The Archdeacon's parish visit (inspection) was a success. We meet all the criteria and were outstanding in most areas. The report from the Archdeacon is glowing and celebrates our success and gives us points for development. We have appointed a group of deputy wardens to reduce the workload and support the wardens in their work.



The building and fabric seem to be in good order, we have recently done some repairs and cleaning to the font and small table next to the lectern. The refreshments, now at the back of church, seem to be working well and we are grateful to the team for their work. Many thanks to all the side people, readers, leaders and preachers for their continued work in the Lords name.

'Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you' (1 Thessalonians 5:17-18)





Service Times

Sunday

9:30am

Family Service at St Bartholomew's

All Age first Sunday of the month (usually.)

Communion monthly (usually 2nd Sunday.)

This service can be joined on Zoom.

7:00pm

Sunday@7 service at St Bartholomew's

An hour long, informal service with more in-depth Bible teaching and monthly communion.

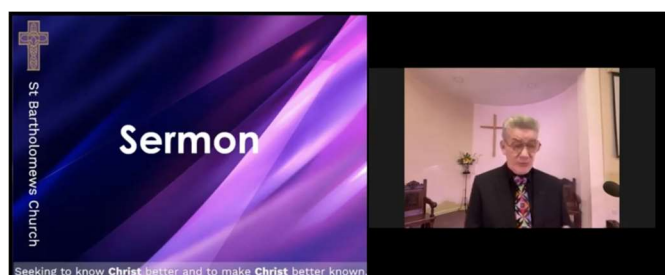
This is a joint service for both churches.

This service is live-streamed on Zoom and Youtube.

We also run services at Church of the Saviour.

Friday 6.30pm - Friday Live! All Age Service

Sunday 11.15am - Church of the Saviour Family Service





Sunday School

Lisa Cowell

Sunday School delivery has gradually been able to move from remote learning via Zoom during the lockdown period, to a return to the normality of face to face teaching on site. This has meant we can do far more interactive and creative activities that everyone reports they enjoy.

Over the last twelve months we've searched and prayed for extra leaders and helpers, and several people have answered the call to join our merry throng. This has enabled us to spread the workload as we now have a host of leaders and volunteer helpers for both the younger and older groups. Both groups have also seen growth in their numbers of attendees this academic year which is really pleasing.



The curriculum plans we follow come from two resources - 'New City Catechism' for the older group, and 'Promises' teaching materials for the younger group. The New City Catechism is a modern day resource aimed at helping children and adults alike learn the core doctrines of the Christian faith via 52 questions and answers. Each week children are guided to revisit prior learning then

assess one 'Big question' such as **"What is your only comfort in life and death?"** Answer. That I am not my own, but belong—body and soul, in life and in death—to my faithful Saviour, Jesus Christ. Each lesson we access the question we're studying through group discussion, Bible reading, an activity of some description, aiming to commit a verse to memory and closing in prayer.

The 'Promises' curriculum is very similar in its aims and seeks to convey each lesson's message through a variety of activities such as stories, songs and crafts.





The leaders agree that the current resources are well planned and creative and we are enjoying delivering them as much as the children appear to be enjoying engaging with them.

In addition to the lessons, some of our youths have been able to take part in some extracurricular activities such as attending a cook out at the local scouts hut and visiting the Blackburn Ice Arena to watch the Blackburn Hawks play ice hockey. These events were organised and promoted by a network of local churches.



We were delighted that both Sunday School groups could join forces with children from the crèche to perform our nativity; an annual opportunity for proud mums and dads to encourage their budding

actors whilst sharing the joy of celebrating the birth of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

To help our groups continue to go from strength to strength, leaders have engaged in training and have some more to come as this report goes to print. We've been enabled to get to know each other more through a social at the vicarage too, and we communicate regularly through our WhatsApp group. We're happy to report that Sunday School is thriving!



Youth Events

Hello my name is Zaza Swindlehurst and I have been on the last 2 Youth Events.

The first was at a canal side for an evening of games and campfire activities. I was one of three kids that went from St Bartholemew's to meet up with other kids from surrounding churches. When I met up with them I realised that I knew some of them from my high school which was great.

The evening was really fun with lots of laughter, singing and eating. It was so cold. We were around the campfire it was excellent. We learnt how to make popcorn on the fire and roast the perfect marshmallow, also if you put sugar and salt on a fire it explodes that is something I'm not forgetting!

The Second event took place at Blackburn Ice arena to watch Blackburn hawks play Hockey they played against Widnes wild and won 5-4! the game was Spectacular it was very high paced game. Everyone who was there got along very well and made you feel apart of the group, which was amazing. I would definitely go to another it was outstanding.





Creche

Rachael Anderton

The children have loved dancing to Christian songs, hearing a bible story, playing with toys and making friends at Creche this year. It's been great to see plenty of regular faces, and parents have had a good chance to get to know one another during the sessions too. This past year we've looked at stories from the Old Testament, and are now looking at Jesus' life, death and resurrection in the run up to Easter.



Deanery Synod

Margaret Mitchell and Philip Beresford

Synod met online on 17th March, with the meeting opened to all. Rev'd S Gill gave a presentation on **Presence and engagement parishes**. A P&E parish is one surrounded by 10% of other faith communities. The second meeting of the year took place on 16th November, again online, and Synod reported that K Adnitt has taken on the role of Lay Chair in place of S Witts. Parishes were encouraged to get involved in consideration of issues raised in the Living in Love and Faith document and the Area Dean provided an update on the responses of parishes to the Deanery Plan. D Wilkinson offered to stand again for election to Diocesan Synod, leaving 5 of 7 places unfilled.

Sheila Fielding on behalf of the Benefice Deanery Synod representatives





Bible Study Groups

We're so encouraged to have a number of Bible Study Groups meeting regularly across the Benefice. Here's that they've been up to.

Mums Monthly Bible Study

Rachael Anderton

A few mums with younger children have been meeting at the vicarage once a month on a Saturday morning for a catch-up and bible study. We arrange for husbands (or someone else!) to look after our kids so we can have some precious time to chat, pray and look at the Bible together. We've been working our way through Luke's gospel this year; finding out how Jesus is the promised Saviour who has come for the poor, the oppressed and the needy. We've also seen the surprising nature of his kingdom, and what Jesus wants from someone who desires to be a part of it.



If you're a mum with younger children, especially if you would struggle to get to a weekly home group, then come and chat to me- you don't have to know much about the Bible to come; we're a friendly bunch and you'd be welcome to join us!

Monday Bible Study Group

Duncan Stowe

We have a mixed group meeting up at Church of the Saviour on Monday's starting at 11.00am and lasting 1-1½ hours. We start off with coffee and biscuits, sometimes cream scones, to study God's Word and apply it to our own situations. There are people from Church of the Saviour and people from St. Bartholomew's, although at the moment it is weighted in St. Bartholomew's favour. The last study of 2021 was on Hebrews. We next looked at Lamentations, our studies were on Zoom. We carried on with a study on James followed by Isaiah. We then had our summer break and recommenced in September by looking at Acts 1 & 2 when we then looked at Psalm 104. After that we did the Explorer course that all the groups did which took us up





towards Christmas. When we come to the summer and Christmas breaks we usually end with a meal, unfortunately this year we have only been able to manage a meal just before our Christmas break. At present our numbers are static. People can put their views forward or just listen, no pressure is applied and different points of view are always welcomed as from them we can usually add to our understanding of the Bible. We are open to all and look forward to having others join us so that we do not become complacent in our studies. If you wish to come, speak to me at St. Bartholomew's or Sylvia Lord at Church of the Saviour, whenever we are allowed to meet together in groups again, to make sure we are holding one when you want to start coming, as sometimes we have to cancel one of our sessions if too many have other things to do on the same day. We also do not meet on Bank holidays. Please think about joining us not only to learn more about what the Bible says but to enjoy fellowship with like-minded people. We laugh a lot and sometimes even the leader has to succumb to the wider point of view.

Monday Night House Group

Margaret Mitchell

2021 has been a strange year for our House Group. We have met all the way through successfully on Zoom with the exception of a couple of face-to-face meetings in September. As we meet in the evening, 7-8.30ish, we decided Zoom winter meetings would be more acceptable to those travelling a distance from Darwen and the far side of Blackburn.



Over the year our study material has been varied, including material on Isaiah and Romans, a USPG Lent study, a Six steps Encouragement course and one or two free standing studies relating to Christian life. We always have lively discussion and find encouragement through what we learn together. A big part of our evening is the prayer time in which we include topical items, church and mission items and very importantly prayers for the sick. Our enjoyment then flows over into fellowship and support time which can last anything from 10 minutes to an hour!

We do have room for more members so please see me if you would like to talk about joining us.





Tuesday House Group

Geoff Hutchinson

2021 proved yet again a very different year for us as a group. The pandemic showed signs of easing yet still remained a threat to us as a society. Jobs and boosters came and went, bringing with them hope for a return to normal. Through it all we continued to meet virtually over Zoom. We considered returning to face-to-face meeting, but our group has a number of very vulnerable members who felt uncomfortable about returning to face to face. However, meeting on Zoom enabled Marilyn to join us each week from Wales and Ken from Fulwood in Preston. Sadly, meeting on Zoom means we were unable to share a brew and cakes together, nor the occasional bar-b-q or pizza night. Our members continue with their Bible reading, using Every Day with Jesus Bible notes which have been a great help to us on our faith journey.

We spent much of the year looking at the previous Sunday morning's sermon, learning how it affects us in our day to day walk with God. Towards the end of the year and into the New Year we looked at Jesus' parables and again how they are just as relevant now as when they were first written.

We picked up one new member in 2021 but there is room for more, hopefully, with the new booster program about to get underway, we may be able to meet once again face-to-face and enjoy, not only the studies, but also relaxation and fun together.

If you fancy joining us, have a word with Geoff and I'll fill you in with all the details.

Tuesday House Group

Philip Beresford

Because of lockdown and illness, we have only just started to meet again for our usual Tuesday evening house group. We now meet at our house every Tuesday. If the Rovers are at home, we change it to Wednesday.

We have some members from The Saviour and others from St Bartholomew's. It's a great feeling meeting together to pray and study the Bible.

We are looking forward to the joint Lent course with all the groups meeting together at The Saviour, but will be back, as usual, after Easter.

If you feel you would like to come and see what the group is like, feel free to join us for an evening - you will be made welcome.



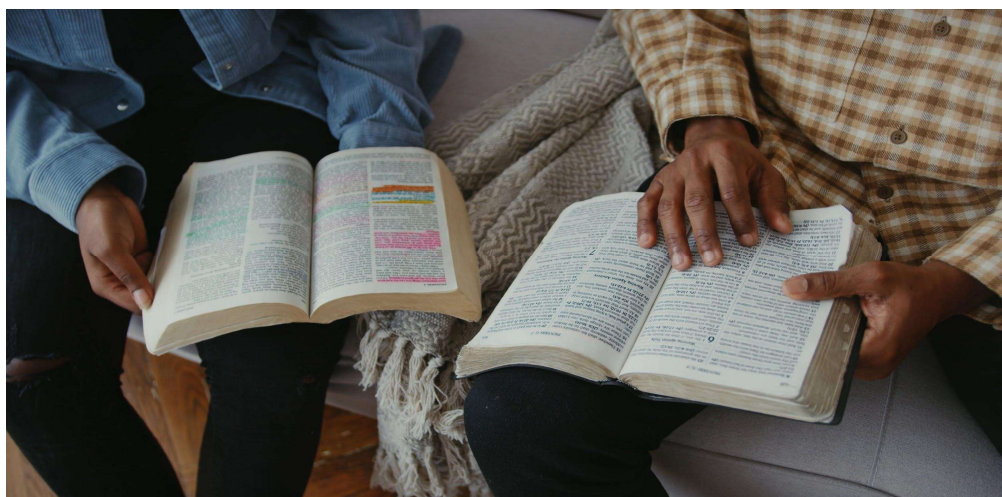


Wednesday House Group

report written by Michael and Lorraine Turnbull

Our home group was established following the completion of the Christianity Explored course; keeping together the closeness we had created, agreeing to meet Wednesday evenings, mostly on Zoom. This gave us all an opportunity to keep in touch, making sure everyone was ok during the difficult pandemic and discussing the word of the Lord.

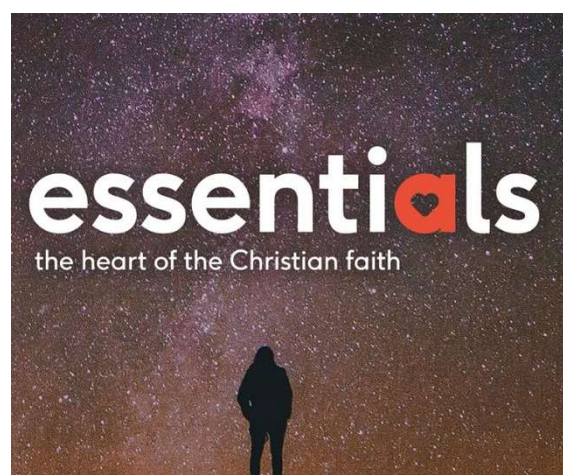
The group consists of around 7 regular members, sometimes increasing depending on availability and commitments. We have enjoyed looking in depth at various books of the Bible including, Thessalonians, Romans, Isaiah, Genesis, Revelations and more. We also enjoy meeting together in person, when safe to do so. This has included, in person Bible studies and also social BBQs and a games night planned for the coming year.



Essentials

Chris Anderton

As a Benefice we regularly run short courses such as Christianity Explore and Essentials. These have been a great help for people going over the basics of the Christian gospel, either for the first time or as a refresher. They're also great courses to invite a friend along to.





The Benefice of Blackburn

Who's Who

St Bartholomew's

Licensed Lay Minister

Philip Beresford
Geoff Hutchinson
Duncan Stowe



Rev Chris Anderton

Wardens

Carol Jenkinson
John Cowell

Deputy Wardens

Derek Forrest
Paul Forrest
Margaret Mitchell
Frank Sutcliffe



Geoff Hutchinson

Assistant Warden

Brian Officer

PCC Secretary

Margaret Mitchell

Treasurer

Nan Goodall

Electoral Roll

Sheila Fielding

Safe From Harm

Sue Norman

Sunday School

Lisa Cowell

Ladies Hub

Nan Goodall

Flowers

Dorothy Morley

CAP Office

Sheila Fielding 07963 431760

Web Master

John Cowell
john.cowell@the-redeemer.org.uk



Duncan Stowe



John Cowell



Carol Jenkinson



Nan Goodall



Philip Beresford





The Redeemer

Vicar - Chris Anderton

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Church of the Saviour

Licensed Lay Minister	John Ashcroft
Wardens	Coleen Leaver David Rintoul
Deputy Warden	Julie Wilkinson
PCC Secretary	Sheila Fielding
Treasurer	David Wilkinson
Electoral Roll	Sheila Fielding
Safe From Harm	Coleen Leaver
Bible Notes	Carol Makinson
Ladies Hub	Ann Hadwin Jean Swainbank
Flowers	Carol Makinson



John Ashcroft



Sheila Fielding



David and Julie
Wilkinson



David Rintoul



Coleen Leaver





Treasurer's Report

Nan Goodall

St Bartholomew's Church and Church of the Saviour are joined together in the benefice of 'The Redeemer' and each church has its own Parochial Church Council [PCC], St Bartholomew's Church PCC is responsible for the financial dealings of St Bartholomew's Church.

As Treasurer I merely implement their decisions. The Treasurer oversees the income and expenditures of the Church. I manage the cash flow and record all financial transactions carried out on behalf of the PCC and ensure they are properly authorised. I monitor the PCC's finances throughout the year, and alert the PCC if any difficulties are likely to occur. I work with the PCC to meet all its financial obligations, especially Parish Share, clergy expenses and insuring the church and its buildings etc.

One of our major income streams comes in via our congregational donations - either direct to our bank account, envelopes, cash in the collection box or contactless giving. Other streams of revenue include hire of the church premises, fees for banns, weddings, funerals and burials. Included in income is fundraising by any social or other activity, ad-hoc donations, legacies and grants for specific purposes are also counted. Expenses are many and varied, large and small, from the parish share to the toilet rolls that we use on site. We also have a number of missionary projects that we support. Some of the expenses that are paid are due across the benefice so every 3 months, quarterly over the year, I invoice Church of the Saviour for these and they reimburse St Bartholomew's Church directly to our bank.

I also organise the Gift Aid Claim to HMRC, in April, after checking that all the information is correct. This makes a great difference to our yearly cash flow bringing in approximately six to seven thousand pounds per year, so if you pay income tax, but do not take part, please consider doing so. Our Church Accounts run from January 2021 to December 2021. I send the yearly accounts information off to Turner & Turner at Preston in January of the following year, and these are what are presented to you at the APCM. During 2021 our accounts showed a loss of approximately £2,000.00.

Whilst the Christians Against Poverty [CAP] centre is financially independent, the Benefice facilitates this charity by allowing the Blackburn centre's accounts to be managed alongside our own, therefore their bank account runs alongside the two St Bartholomew's accounts. Monthly I authorise the payment of Sheila Fielding's CAP salary and other related monies. These are recorded in the accounts under the column 'Restricted' funds.





Brownies

Gail Hull

January 2021: We were still meeting on Zoom at the start of the year. During January we started working on a challenge badge called "Pack Your Guiding Bags". We looked at a variety of landmarks and had a go at building our own out of recycling.

February 2021: We continued working on the challenge badge. As part of this we did some potato printing, made fruit cocktails and designed and made a kite. The girls did a wonderful job at flying them.

March 2021: This month saw our girls trying to break a variety of world records, making masks and designing their own Easter bonnets. We couldn't choose a winner as they were all fantastic!

April 2021: We only had two meetings this month, and the girls worked on some skill builders from the Brownies programme.

May 2021: We started working on another challenge badge this month (Midsummer Mapness). We looked at maps and summer festivities. The girls also designed and made their own 3D rooms in boxes.

June 2021: This was a very exciting month for us, as we were finally allowed to meet face to face after spending 14 months on Zoom. It was amazing to see everyone again and to see how much taller our Brownies had become! We played lots of games and completed the Harry Potter hunt that is set up around the site.

July 2021: We continued meeting at Canalside until the school summer holidays began. The girls worked hard to complete their camp badges, but also had lots of fun pond-dipping, making their own fire-branded coasters, doing soft archery and playing lots of games.

August 2021: Summer holidays- no meetings

September 2021: We were allowed to meet indoors again, so we moved our meetings back to the church this month. The girls worked on their live smart badges, which saw them using hammers and screwdrivers, looking at spending money more carefully and exploring their talents. We gave out our first ever Gold award to Ellie- hopefully we'll be doing this a lot more!

October 2021: The girls worked on their network badges this month, which saw them making outfits from recycling, thinking about their ambitions, and having a go at building tall towers with playing cards.





November 2021: This month the girls worked on their communicate badges and we explored things like mime, musicality, how music makes us feel and how to project our voices. Our unit celebrated its 65th birthday this month and the girls designed badges for the occasion. The winning badge was designed by Poppi and this has now been made and distributed to all members of our group.

December 2021: We only held two meetings this month. The girls did some Christmas craft activities during the first one and designed cards for a competition. One of our girls, Tiana, produced the winning design and these were sent out to all Girlguiding members across Blackburn Division. For our last meeting of the year we had a joint party with the Rainbows group. We played lots of games, made a bauble and had some snacks and drinks.

Future 2022: Our unit continues to flourish, with lots of our girls working hard towards earning their Bronze, Silver and Gold awards. We are hoping to plan some trips and maybe a holiday later this year if the guidance allows.





Guides

Nicola Mellor

Again, we started 2021 on zoom and found ourselves repeating 'you are on mute'.

We travelled the world and had a virtual sleepover where we made crafts from around the world ,supporting our lovely mums with a heart filled with buttons and we made lemonade scones.

At last, we had permission to meet face to face, but outdoors, every Monday. It seemed to be very cold and raining, but that didn't stop us. Meeting in Witton Park, we made homemade butter using fresh cream and spread it on scones, crackers and posh bread. We increased our map reading skills and tried to make our own maps.

Next, we took the Nostalgia trail around Witton Park, taking us around the Lily Pond, the ruins of where Witton House once stood and finishing at the river playing pooh sticks .We did what we do best and had a ready steady cooking competition, cooking using vegetables, cooked chicken and ham, some really delicious dishes. One of our mums took us on a very muddy walk, up and around and we ate our picnic in the cemetery overlooking Blackburn. Very peaceful.

We ended our first face to face term by wishing Lydia congratulations on her pending wedding and we even bought her a badge.

September fast came round. We made use of the light evenings and, for a couple of weeks, we went to Canalside, owned by St George's scouts. We lit fires, made s'mores, breadsticks and stuffed ice cream cones with fruit, chocolate and marshmallows. We had a few new guides start too.

We remembered our loved ones that had lost their lives in the wars by making a poppy jam jar which lights up using a tea-light, very effective.

November, we visited York, travelled by train and stayed overnight, plenty of sightseeing and shopping, we had a visit from Lush and we all made bath bombs, visited The Chocolate story and Jorvik and of course Primark.

We ended another very different year by bowling at Blackburn bowling alley, had a burger supper, swapped secret Santa gifts and said a very Happy Christmas to everyone.

I would like to say to every parent and leader a huge Thank you for their continued support and hope that 2022 is a better year.





Safeguarding

Sheila Fielding

Benefice Safeguarding Co-ordinator

There were no safeguarding or data protection incidents over the course of 2021 and I would like to thank all concerned for their diligence and care towards our church members in this respect.

Safeguarding training for all those involved with children, young people and vulnerable adults has now resumed following the break during the lockdown period, although mainly online. This has proved problematic for those with limited internet access or experience, but those affected have generally been able to overcome this by using the benefice office facilities.

I continue to carry out DBS checks and adhere to safer recruitment procedures for people taking on new roles within the church and to regularly monitor the DBS status of those continuing in roles.

The parish safeguarding self-audit was completed in time for the Archdeacon's visit to the parish in November and there were no items of concern to be actioned.

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

Thank you to everyone for your patience in adhering to safeguarding measures, making our church a safe place to worship.





Superstars

Sheila Fielding

Superstars is a lunchtime group taking place on Thursdays during term times with pupils in years 5 and 6 from the Redeemer School. We meet in the foyer and share lunch together.

As a group, we study the Bible in a way that is fun, friendly and fascinating. We read together, discuss weekly topics, emphasising them with fun activities, and learn to pray together. We enjoy games, quizzes and activities, all aimed at exploring the treasures of the Bible and what it means for us today.

As the lockdown restrictions were gradually lifted over 2021, we were able to resume this group at the start of the school year in September, albeit with children from different classes having to sit on separate tables in the church worship space to maintain distances between them.



We began the year by studying life in Bible times, looking at dwellings, the makeup and importance of the family, and then clothing. The children built a typical Israelite house from paper and later made clothing to dress a peg doll.

The children enjoy the time together in a lively, fun atmosphere, whilst also thinking seriously about the important part that Jesus can play in their lives.

Friday Live!

Report by Lee Bentley

Our family friendly Friday Live has been going strong over the last 12 months with our weekly meet at Church of the Saviour. Our service kicks off at 6.30pm with prayers and uplifting songs with great actions for the kids and adults to get involved with and praise the Lord. This is followed by an informative and interactive bible talk and reading focusing on key themes to help us understand and live in the way of Christ. Following our service we socialise with drinks and biscuits and connect through activities including crafts and games. We love our inclusive and relaxed vibe and would encourage you to join us for family fun and worship.





Ladies Hub

Nan Goodall

During the restrictions of Covid, both the Ladies Fellowship and the Craft Evenings did not take place. However, from September 2021, both these organisations have combined together to become 'The Ladies Hub'. This is a friendly and innovative new start for the ladies of the parish.

It is pleasing to report that 'The Hub' has taken off well, with its new routine of speakers, events and craft evenings. It offers much in the way of fellowship and friendship, whilst taking part in all the activities. Future events are advertised in Church on a Sunday morning and we have a planned programme for the year for distribution. We have also gained a few new members. Please feel free to give us a try - you will be made very welcome.





Men's Group

John Cowell

We have restarted the Men's Group post Covid and have a great success with over 20 Men joining in each event. We have enjoyed a curry Night in Darwen with a member's testimony. A great night was had by all. This event was followed by a quiz night with a potato pie supper and a personal story of faith from one of the group's members. Our next event was an evening bowling. We took over four lanes at Super Bowl in Blackburn and enjoyed a fun yet competitive evening with several high scores. We are planning many more events for the coming year. If you are yet to get involved, please let John or Chris have your details and we will add you to our distribution list.



Sing and Play Toddler Group

Rachael Anderton

Since starting up on Thursdays after Covid restrictions were lifted, it's been great to see the play group grow to healthy numbers! In our 9:30-10am 'sing' slot, babies, toddlers and pre-schoolers enjoy dancing to some Christian songs with their parents/carers, and then sit down to listen to a bible story. So far, we've had a whistle stop tour of the Old Testament, and we're now looking at Jesus' miracles, as well as his death and resurrection in the run-up to Easter. From 10-11am, we pile into the big hall to play with toys, do a craft (which we try to relate to the Bible story and have our drinks and toast/fruit.

Children of all ages seem to enjoy coming along, and it's been lovely to start getting to know the adults too, many of whom have been attending regularly with their children. We're praying this group will be a place for local people to find company, feel welcome and be introduced to Jesus through the bible stories, songs and conversations they have here. If you're free with your children on a Thursday, then we'd love to see you! And lastly- a very special thanks to the volunteers who come to help out!





Christians Against Poverty

Sheila Fielding (Centre Manager)

In 2021, we helped 31 new clients, eight of whom went on to begin a Debt Management Plan with CAP. As a result of their involvement with us, we celebrated one person making a first-time commitment to Christ and another re-committed his life. Seven clients became debt-free over the year and, after working with us initially, seven others felt sufficiently empowered to manage their finances successfully alone.

Covid disrupted operations again this year and, although we had more referrals come in and clients start their debt-free journey with us, many more dropped out of the system before we could fully prepare their cases. We were able to meet face-to-face with a small number of clients, but the majority of meetings took place by telephone and I believe this was the key to clients dropping out. This highlights the importance of relationships in our work and I am indebted to those volunteer Befrienders who maintained contact with clients and encouraged them to keep going. Home visits are a unique aspect of CAP's debt help, setting us apart from all other debt management organisations and I very much look forward to resuming these visits in 2022.

God has been very faithful in providing the funds needed over this year and we are currently able to continue operating until July 2022. This provision came in the form of grants received from Laing Family trusts (through CAP central), Postcode Neighbourhood Trust and Churches Together in Lancashire. Local churches and individuals from our own and neighbouring churches continue to donate regular gifts and we had tremendous responses to our appeals both for the general running costs of the Centre and then also for clients' Christmas gifts. People responded so generously to our appeal for clients that we had enough surplus to pay for future client events.

One of my favourite duties as Centre Manager is to deliver gifts to clients at Christmas and this year was no exception. These are just some of the responses:

"Thank you so much for the gifts. I'm completely overwhelmed with your kindness. Thank you for everything. I hope you have a lovely Christmas and New Year. God bless."

"What a wonderful thing to do!"

"You have made Christmas meaningful and I'm very grateful"

It is a lovely opportunity to catch up with clients and listen to stories of how their lives are improving with the help and advice of CAP. Thank you to all who gave to this appeal. I must also thank our church leadership teams for their support and encouragement, alongside my team of prayers, befrienders and volunteers, without whom I simply could not function. You bring love, joy, laughter and blessing into some very grim situations. Thank you.





Electoral Roll

Sheila Fielding (Electoral Roll Officer)

Following the APCM in May 2021, the revised Roll contains 78 names, with 41 people living in the parish and 37 outside the parish. One name was removed due to moving out of the area since the previous APCM.





Link Missionaries

Report by Chris Anderton

The risen Lord Jesus commands His followers to "go and make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28:19). As a Benefice we have the joy of supporting people seeking to do this in other countries. We partner with them through prayer and by contributing financially.

Below is a bit of information about the missionaries we partner with. If you'd like to know more, get in touch with Chris.

Stephen and Tabita Bell in Croatia (European Christian Mission)

After a period of rest and study back in the UK (Capernwray) Stephen and Tabita have returned to Croatia to support a new church and its ministries. The church focuses on evangelism, music and, more recently, supporting Ukrainian refugees.

Currently Stephen and Tabitha are involved in evangelism, youth ministry and leading a house group.





James, Juliette and Family

After completing language learning, James has begun working in a medical clinic. This will involve a house move and their oldest child is about to start a new primary school. There are still strong covid restrictions in the place where they live.



Alan and Pat Davey in France (United for Mission)

Alan and Pat are still working to establish the International Church in Bordeaux. They seek to be a Bible church in the heart of Bordeaux to glorify God, to strengthen Christians, and to reach anyone and everyone with the Gospel of Christ.







Benefice Timetable

Monday	11am	Bible Group at Church of the Saviour
	7pm	House Group
Tuesday	1.30pm	Saviour Ladies Group (monthly)
	7.30pm	House Groups
Wednesday	7.30pm	House Groups
Thursday	9.30am	Toddler Group at Saviour (term time only)
	2-4pm	Community Café at Saviour
	7.30pm	St. Bartholomew's Ladies Fellowship (monthly)
Friday	6.30pm	Friday Live!
Saturday	9.30am	Mum's Monthly Bible Study (monthly)
Sunday	9.30am	St. Bartholomew's Service
	11.15am	Church of the Saviour Service
	7pm	Benefice Service at St. Bartholomew's

07951695257

0125451206

chris.anderton@the-redeemer.org.uk

www.the-redeemer.org.uk/

www.facebook.com/theredeemerblackburn

YouTube: Redeemer Benefice Blackburn

Instagram: @theredeemerblackburn

