



Church of the Saviour Annual Report

Presented to the APCM May 2022



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



















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 Crecheleaders.

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 a 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 is 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









<u>Licensed Lay Ministers Report</u> 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.









Church Wardens Report David Rintoul and Coleen Leaver

The last 12 months have been somewhat different for us all and we have been able to get back into attending church again following the Covid 19 lockdowns. This was possible with maintained and up to date Risk Assessments undertaken by the Wardens, with measures in place, e.g. social distancing, mask wearing, hand gelling, ventilation as well as managing groups and church activities with enough 'gaps' between activities.

In terms of maintenance, the lightbulbs have been replaced in church with low energy LED one to minimise energy costs, thanks to David Wilkinson for his help and use of his very useful scaffolding to scale the heights and reach the light fittings.

A replacement projector was needed and we have replaced one of the PCs. This has allowed us to move to a new music projection system which has had significant benefits for the sound desk team.

At the time of writing this report, we are arranging the annual servicing of the three church boilers which will take us through to next year and the update to this report.

Our church gardens and grounds continue to be maintained by the Ashcrofts and Brian Dagger with the support of others, thanks to you all.

We held a church clean up in the early summer of 2021 which saw a number of us take on a task or two to clean both inside and outside the church. Thanks to everyone who supported and helped with this and we will be planning another clean up in the springtime with dates/details to be shared in notices with everyone in advance. Thanks to all for everything you do to support our work as wardens, it is very much appreciated.

The Parochial Church Council 2021

The Church of the Saviour (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

Warden-David Rintoul and Coleen Leaver









John Ashcroft (Licensed Lay Minister)

Sheila Fielding (Deanery Synod Rep, Secretary)

David Wilkinson (Deanery Synod Rep, Treasurer)

Elected members

Marianne Rintoul

Julie Wilkinson

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.

At the beginning of the year, due to continued Covid lockdowns, our church was open only for private prayer and we are grateful to J Ashcroft for his time in manning this activity. However, church fully re-opened in March, following a council inspection and updated risk assessments with the understanding that Covid restrictions regarding distancing and the wearing of masks would remain until further notice.

In March, we were delighted to welcome Rev'd Chris Anderton as our new vicar following his time with us as curate.

After consultation with the congregation of the 8:45am service, it was decided to end this service. When the lockdown ended, most of these people attended the 11:15am service and it was felt that this offered sufficient provision.

After many years running our Mums and Toddlers group, S Lord stepped down and we offer our sincere thanks for her faithful service in this way. However, by the end of the year, R Anderton and a friend from another local church, had started a new toddler group meeting on Thursday mornings.

In May we welcomed a local urban evangelist to our meeting to give some insight into the kind of person to look for to fill our proposed new worker role under the control of the charity formed to take care of the substantial legacy received last year.

May also saw a decision to open a community café in the church on Thursday afternoons and we now have a card reader to enable people to give to the work of the church via contactless card payments.









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 $1\text{-}1^1/_2$ 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. Jabs 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

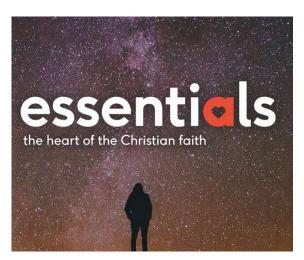
Our home group was established following the completion of the Christianity Explored course; keeping together the closeness we had created, agreeing to meet Wednesday evenings, mostly on Zoom. This gave us all an opportunity to keep in touch, making sure everyone was ok during the difficult pandemic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











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.









The Benefice of Blackburn

Who's Who

St Bartholomew's

Licensed Lay Minister Philip Beresford

> Geoff Hutchinson Duncan Stowe

Wardens Carol Jenkinson

John Cowell

Derek Forrest Deputy Wardens

Paul Forrest

Margaret Mitchell Frank Sutcliffe

Assistant Warden Brian Officer

PCC Secretary Margaret Mitchell

Treasurer Nan Goodall

Electoral Roll Sheila Fielding

Safe From Harm Sue Norman

Lisa Cowell Sunday School

Ladies Hub Nan Goodall

Flowers Dorothy Morley

CAP Office Sheila Fielding 07963 431760

Web Master John Cowell

john.cowell@the-redeemer.org.uk



John Cowell



Carol Jenkinson



Nan Goodall



Rev Chris Anderton



Geoff Hutchinson



Duncan Stowe



Philip Beresford









The Redeemer

Vicar - Chris Anderton 07951695257/01254 51206

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









Deanery Synod

Sheila Fielding and David Wilkinson Report by Sheila Fielding

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.

Treasurer's Report David Wilkinson

A big thank you to all who give to support the work of the church. Again, we were able to pay our parish share in full, but we must be grateful for the large grant we receive from central church because we are in a lower income parish.

Thank you to the Ashcroft clan for collecting and banking the plate offerings. Detailed accounts will be available for the APCM.











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 and submitted to the Dioceses with a few minor 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.











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!











Youth Events

youth Events Hello my name is zasa swindle horst and I have been on the last 2 Youth Events. The first was at a cannot side for an evening of games and compfire activities. I was one of three kids that went from St Bartholemen'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 for with lots of laughter, I 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 marshmellow, 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.











Ladies Group Ann Hadwin and Jean Swainbank

We had our first meeting following the easing of the Covid restrictions in September when we just met together and enjoyed being in each other's company.

In October Mrs. Pat Ascroft told of her adventures in Ireland when she hired a horse-drawn caravan. This was a very interesting and amusing talk. The speaker in November had double-booked so we resorted to the old favourite of dominoes and in December our Christmas meal was held at the Mytton Fold Hotel.

We have speakers with an interesting selection of topics booked for 2022 and we look forward to having a few new members. We meet at 1.30 p.m. on the third Tuesday of the month.

Mrs. Dorothy Vernon has kindly agreed to help with the running of the group.

We wish to thank all who help at each meeting with the setting up, brewing up, serving the refreshments, helping on the book stall and dealing with the subscriptions.

Above all we thank God for His unfailing love and blessings.











Men's Group

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.















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.













<u>Electoral Roll</u> Sheila Fielding (Electoral Roll Officer)

Following the APCM in May 2021, the revised Roll contains 50 names, with 24 people living in the parish and 26 outside the parish. Three names were removed following the previous APCM, one due to a death, one due to moving out of the area and the remaining one due to moving to a care home.









<u>Link Missionaries</u> 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

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