

**Ewelme Benefice**  
**Dursley Parochial Church Council**  
Registered Charity No. 1130972

**Trustees Annual Report 2020**

Dursley Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility of cooperating with the incumbent, the Revd Canon Michael Cozens, in promoting in the ecclesiastical parish, the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. The PCC is specifically responsible for the churches of St James the Great Dursley (the parish church) and St Mark Woodmancote and the Parish Centre located behind the church of St James.

**Our Vision**

As members of the Ewelme Benefice, we will work together to share in the Diocese of Gloucester's LIFE Vision. *'I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full'.*

*John 10:10*

**Objectives and activities**

The PCC is committed to enabling as many people as possible to worship at our churches and be part of our community. Patterns of worship are discussed by the PCC which makes suggestions on how to improve contact with everyone within the parish. We try to enable all people to live out their faith as part of our parish community through:

- Worship and prayer; hearing about the Gospel, and developing their knowledge and trust in Jesus.
- Provision of pastoral care for people living in the parish.
- Missionary and outreach work.

To do this work it is important that we maintain the fabric of our buildings.

**Safeguarding**

As a parish we have been working through the requirements of the Safeguarding Handbook and have been involved in a pilot trialling the new Parish Dashboards. Our PCC and Churchwardens have completed all the online safeguarding training required of them, and by our next PCC meeting in April 2021 we will have complied with all the requirements of Level 2 of the Dashboards, which will allow us to access Level 3, which is the highest Level available. Our focus for 2021 will be rolling out those DBS checks which are now up for renewal, and planning for the return of our congregation and our children and young people's ministry.

**Achievements and Performance**

The covid pandemic has had a huge effect on how we can carry out our objectives and activities. Throughout we have followed C of E and Gloucester Diocesan directions for the use of our church buildings and the conduct of services. The churches have been closed from March to July, opened during the summer with social distanced seating and no singing apart from by a small choir of 8, and closed again for the period of the November lockdown. When permitted, restricted areas of St James have been open for private prayer two days a week. No weddings were held in 2020 and only 1 baptism. Severe restrictions on attendance numbers at funerals and memorial services meant fewer than usual were held in our churches. The benefice has developed expertise in holding and recording services online using Zoom, publicising the links through email contacts and the benefice website. PCC and other meetings have also been held via Zoom. The restrictions have prevented much of the practical outreach work we would have hoped to do however the positive outcome of Zoom services has been that we have been able to reach church members

online who normally would have found it difficult to attend and also be regularly joined by people from as far away as Germany and France.

The clergy have been able to undertake a very limited number of home visits and telephone contact has been maintained with more vulnerable people in the parish using a 'Buddies' system set up in March 2020. The Open the Book team have not been able to visit Dursley C of E Primary Academy due to the restrictions. The Rector has provided recorded worship for the school to use and the PCC funded the cost of some iSingPop worship for the autumn term. It has not been possible to hold any of the usual school services and events in church. The Christingle service was held online, bags with the ingredients to make Christingles were put in the church porch for collection. A benefice Christmas carol service was pre-recorded and uploaded to Youtube.

Messy Church in St James was able to hold one session in the first quarter of 2020 before the COVID restrictions came in. This was well-supported and we are grateful for the leadership of Liz Rymer from Uley, who took on the co-ordination across the Benefice, as well as the loyal team of volunteers and we look forward to a re-launch in autumn 2021. Diane Ansell ran a weekly online Children's Church on Facebook which followed on from the 10am Benefice Zoom service. Diane also ran an online Summer Holiday Club.

During the school summer holidays, the parish worked with other churches from Churches Together in Cam and Dursley to offer two weekly Pop-up cafes which included take away craft activities for children. In December, the same group of churches, in collaboration with the local town councils, created an outdoor nativity trail using children's drawings of nativity figures entered in a local competition. These were reproduced on tough corex board, mounted on posts and displayed in the various churchyards. The figures were all gathered together outside St James during the week leading to Christmas and were then taken up to St Giles Uley, reassembled, displayed and lit up on Christmas Eve, remaining up until Candlemas.

The parish is a member of Churches Together in Cam and Dursley. We have space for three representatives on the Wotton Deanery Synod, currently we have one vacancy. There have been two meetings of the synod since the Annual Parochial Church Meeting in October. They were held online on 18 November and 10 February. At the first meeting Bishop Rachel gave an inspirational talk followed by questions. The questions included how to cope with Covid and new approaches to 'doing' church. The main topic at the second meeting was the Deanery Strategy Planning Process. There was a video presentation to illustrate the process followed by a discussion. Finance was the main topic at both meetings. The deanery treasurer gave updates on parish share payments. He said that all the parishes had responded magnificently to the difficult situation they had all faced.

Numbers on the Electoral Roll for 2020 were 148. Chris Raffle continued to serve as Electoral Roll Officer.

The Messenger Parish Magazine was published monthly during the year with a reduction in the number of printed copies due to the COVID restrictions. The Magazine also appears online on the Benefice website. We are grateful to Judith Staddon for her role in producing the magazine each month and for the small group who work with her. Thanks were given to Marlene Powell who stepped down from her involvement with the production of the magazine after many years of service.

The state of the fabric at both St James' and at St Mark's remains generally good and is well maintained.

In October 2020, Ecclesiastical Insurers carried out a Risk Management Review at each premises and issued a report with a number of recommendations. Those for St Mark's have been actioned but some at St James' remain outstanding. These are mainly of an electrical nature which will be attended to shortly by the church's electrician, Francis Jones, who was isolating earlier in the year.

At St James' the repair to some of the wall monuments (project cost £32,000) remains outstanding while we await a Faculty and continue to apply for grant funding. Gloucestershire Historic Churches Trust has promised £4,500 towards the project once work commences.

The gutters and down pipes of both churches (as well as the Parish Centre) received their annual clearance in December. The churchyard at St James continued to be well cared for by a small but loyal group of gardeners and lawn cutters.

### **A report from the Churchwardens**

Firstly we would like to thank everyone who has quietly got on with all those 'behind the scenes' jobs during this difficult year, especially the gardeners, the cleaners, the flower arrangers, the administrators, the telephone buddies, the IT and social media contributors. Together we have shown that we are a family of God all working together and keeping connected.

The year started with Canon Michael going on a planned sabbatical. All the various tasks and responsibilities had been carefully delegated and this meant a smooth transition. As the months went on, as we know, suddenly changes had to be made and made, sometimes, quite quickly. Another 'thank you' to the pastoral team for their work in setting up the new Facebook page, and over a short time getting to grips with Zoom, leading services from home, getting worship materials out to those without IT access, and setting up a phone buddy system to keep in touch with those particularly on their own.

Just after Easter we were pleased to welcome Canon Michael back to a different look Parish situation and as we worked our way out of lockdown we had a series of risk assessments to complete to allow safe and COVID secure access to the churches, firstly for private prayer and then for services, and also for the parish centre. Thank you to everyone who came and helped with the spring clean of St James and the Parish Centre in July and at St Marks in September.

The services looked very different with booking in, ensuring mask wearing and hand sanitising, appropriate seating spaces and carefully choreographed communion and a couple of attempts at 'outside bring your own coffee' before restrictions tightened again. It was also good to welcome back a small and distanced choir to add another dimension to our worship, the challenge being to listen to the hymns and not join in! On a positive note most Sundays we nearly reached our maximum number and thankfully never had to turn people away.

October brought the postponed APCM and a change of Churchwarden. A huge thank you to Austin Meares as he stepped down following many stints as Churchwarden, sharing and showing knowledge and dedication to our churches and the parish. We are so thankful that he continues to lead the fabric committee. It was great to welcome Chris Morgan as his successor.

We then entered another lockdown in November meaning that the Remembrance Day Service was Zoomed and then a simple wreath-laying ceremony was live-streamed. Although lockdown was lifted in December, we Zoomed most Christmas Services, including the Carol Service, Crib and Christingle and Midnight Services, but were back in Church for the Christmas Day services at St. Mark's and St. James.

The Facebook Virtual Christmas Fair saw a variety of people hold home based stalls, with COVID safe delivery or collection once the lockdown was lifted. Amazingly for our first attempt at this type of venture it raised over £1,000.

**The Finance Report** is included in the Independent Examiners Report carried out by Azets.

## **Structure, Governance and Management**

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation Rules. The members of the PCC are listed below. All those who attend our services are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and stand for election to the PCC. Elected members serve for 3 years to enable a rotation of the membership.

PCC members are responsible for making decisions on all matters of general concern and importance to the parish including how the funds of the PCC are to be spent. The PCC held 7 meetings throughout 2020. The first two of these were held in person, pre Covid-19 restrictions. A further 4 full meetings were held virtually, via Zoom. We held a very short meeting in the Church immediately after the APCM in October, again in person, following the Covid-19 guidelines regarding face coverings and social distancing.

St Mark's church remained closed until September when the PCC again discussed the future of the church there. During November, Canon Michael wrote to all the members of St Mark's church family informing them of a PCC discussion to be held in December relating to the future of St Mark's. Responses to these letters were brought to the PCC in December and included in the discussions before a vote was taken to request the Gloucester Diocesan Mission and Pastoral Group to begin the process to consider the closure of St Mark's. The resolution was passed with 1 member against and 1 abstention. We are now awaiting further details of a consultation period.

## **Administrative information**

St Janes the Great Church, Silver Street, Dursley

St Mark's Church, Woodmancote, Dursley

These churches form part of the Parish of Dursley which is part of the Ewelme Benefice with the parish of Uley with Owlpen and Nympsfield. The Benefice is part of the Diocese of Gloucester within the Church of England.

The correspondence address for these churches is via the Parish Office c/o The Rectory, Broadwell, Dursley. GL11 4JE

The PCC is a body corporate (PCC Powers Measure 1956, Church Representation Rules 2006) and a registered charity, number 1130972

**PCC members** who have served at any time from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2020 until the date of this report are:

Ex-officio members:

Incumbent: The Revd Canon Michael Cozens

Assistant priests: The Revd Ian Gardner

The Revd Jane Wood

Reader: Tony King

Churchwardens: Caroline Marrow (Vice-chair from October 2020)

Austin Meares (until October 2020)

Christine Morgan (from October 2020)

Elected members:

Leonie Northcote	Deanery Synod representative until
David Smith	Deanery Synod representative
Elizabeth Oakley	Deanery Synod representative
Edwina Walton	PCC Secretary
Peter Kirvan	PCC Treasurer (until March 2020)
Sally Pearson	PCC Treasurer (from March 2020)
Chris Raffle	
Joy Pepper	until October 2020
Valerie Meares	until October 2020
Anthea Fittall	until
Sarah Hodge	
Marcia Heaven	
Ian Unsworth	
Corinne Unsworth	
Jan Vonberg	
Gill Mather	
Kathie Rebbeck	from October 2020

Parish Safeguarding Officer: Rachel Brown

Approved by the PCC on 14<sup>th</sup> April 2021 and signed on their behalf by the Rector, the Revd Canon Michael Cozens, PCC Chairman