



*The*  
United  
Reformed  
Church

# **St Andrew's URC Chesterfield**

## **Annual Report and Accounts 2013-14**

***Sharing Good News***

St Andrew's URC  
187 Newbold Road  
Chesterfield S417BE  
[www.chesterfieldurc.org.uk](http://www.chesterfieldurc.org.uk)

## Minister's Report



This picture is a reminder of how we appear to the people passing by. But remembering what I need to write here is always a challenge!

Obvious are the new chairs we have sat on for the last year, adding comfort and ease to our worship. Thank you for your many donations which helped to pay for these. We have still more renovations and redecorations in hand to keep us busy during the year ahead. But finances continue to be tight. We all need to review and adjust our giving – upwards where possible within our resources - so that we can do all that is necessary to maintain the building in good order.

Elders have reviewed the mission priorities in our Profile, and in conjunction with Holymoorside, the Terms of Settlement, as expected every two years. The Elders had an Away Day and agreed that we must do what we are already doing to the very best of our abilities – that quality is paramount. The events being planned for 2015 are part of this strategy. We have several small groups connected to the church – Monday Club, the Wednesday Guild, the morning and evening Bible study groups – all evidence of a church in reasonable health. We have several people interested and wishing to come into membership – another good sign.

I was enabled to take a retreat last autumn at Scargill



House, somewhere north of Skipton. The weather was not always kind, but the flowers in the garden were lovely. The time enabled me to put together a Bible study on Ezekiel that formed the basis of the Elders Away Day in May.

And water formed a large part of our concerns in the autumn as a pipe came apart in the Manse kitchen late in the summer and did considerable damage to the lower parts of the units. Thanks to your generosity we have a new kitchen that is easier to use, bright and modern. A new boiler provides more efficient heating and hot water.

We continue to strive for good quality worship for both mornings and evenings. The Elders continue to lead on a fifth Sunday putting into practice some of their skills revisited during a short course during January and February. A similar event is planned for the coming winter season. Other exciting moves are to be found as we expand the Cluster meeting with the other churches in North Derbyshire – Buxton, Tideswell, Wirksworth, Calow, Holymoorside and Rose Hill. With more people coming we can invite speakers and hear about the

developments in those churches and the wider United Reformed Church.

The psalmist in Ps 39:12c tells us, "*For I am your passing guest, an alien, like all my forebears.*" We have been confronted in many ways through the loss of old friends and for some, family members. It's always sad and we give thanks for those who have been called home to their Lord during this past year, remembering in particular Dorothy Wells. I continue to take a number of funerals in the area, many not associated with either of our two churches. The outcome is that we now hold a Family Remembrance Service at Holymoorside in November, inviting all those I have supported, together with an open invitation to anyone else to attend.

Our link with Holymoorside continues to flourish and the Christian work in the village moves forward together with St Peter's. Sadly they are losing their current priest at the beginning of July after only two years and will enter a period of vacancy. We eagerly await a replacement for Ben Harding so that we can continue to draw the two congregations closer together.

Keeping us all abreast of everything that is going on is Alison who does a sterling job adding Notices to Bulletins for me, as Eileen does for visiting preachers, and editing our magazine. It is no small job and we are served well by Alison.

Another person who has served us well is Helen who is stepping down from her role as Church Secretary to become Synod Clerk. It has not been easy to fill that role – in fact we have, sadly, failed to fill that role! We are dependent, in the short-term, on the Elders to do

additional work whilst we seek a full-time replacement within the next twelve months. I gratefully acknowledge Helen's hard work, her skills, insight and wisdom that have served St Andrew's supremely well over the years, and kept me on the straight and narrow.

The future is looking bright as we plan for a season of welcome for autumn 2014 and a year of celebration through 2015.

Thank you to every one of you as you continue to carry out your tasks, sometimes, you might think, without thanks or acknowledgement. But that is not true, all of you are appreciated. Unseen by many, will be Andrew, our cleaner, who is always cheerful and takes pride in caring for our premises. Others have quietly stepped aside from tasks they have been doing. They leave gaps in our work that will be hard to fill and we give thanks for your good and faithful service over the years. Thank you to each one of you for all your hard work.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'A. D. M.', written in a cursive style.

*The two Church Secretaries, Helen from St Andrew's and Judith from Holymoorside, at lunch after the Palm Sunday North Derbyshire Cluster service at Wirksworth led by Rev Dr Michael Jagessar, Moderator of the URC General Assembly.*



# **Secretary's Report**

## **People – names on the roll**

Members 65

Children 18

Friends 30

Serving Elders 9

Numbers in Sunday morning worship: 40-50, including between 2 and 8 children. Special services such as Harvest and Remembrance Sunday attracted congregations of over 100. Several new people started attending worship regularly and we look forward to receiving them into membership.

## **Pastoral Care Group**

The Pastoral Carers, serving and non-serving elders, provide on-going support and friendship for everyone connected with our church. It is work done unobtrusively with visits to people at home and in hospital and praying regularly for those in their group, all of which is greatly valued. News of people in need is shared at the monthly healing services and on the prayer board.

## **Church Meeting**

It is in church meeting that we think, plan and pray together about the life and witness of the church. During the year we held 6 general meetings and one special meeting, with attendance between 18 and 24. We shared news of people – both joys and sorrows. We have thought about mission and how we can reach out to the

local community. The minister and Families Worker from Bulwell came to the special meeting in February to share their experience of engaging with their local community and offering a range of activities for children. Following this meeting, the minister and two elders met with local councillors to see what opportunities there might be for cooperation in community service. Key decisions have been improvements to the premises, the purchase of new chairs, changes to the newsletter, the ending of the Good Causes scheme and agreement to mark the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the opening and dedication of the church building in 2015 with a year of celebration.

## **Reaching Out**

We tried opening the church for one morning a week – and failed to attract anyone. We opened the church for the Derbyshire Churches and Chapels Preservation Trust 'Ride and Stride' day in September and received several groups. We held a successful concert in December. We ran the Summer Fair and Christmas Bazaar. We held a 'Partners Meeting' for representatives of the church and user groups. We continued to support the Chesterfield Foodbank, with donations regularly topping up the box in the church and many kilos of food being transported regularly to the warehouse for sorting. Some of us attended the Cluster meeting in Buxton to learn about poverty in the UK. We held a Christian Aid 'Souper Soup' lunch and a Fair Trade 'Big Brew' tea party.

We are concerned at the falling use of our premises by community groups and are attempting to recruit new users. Unfortunately everyone seems to want evenings which are already filled!

*Helen*

## **Premises**

There was a lot of work lined up for the new Premises Management Group of Robert Lee and Michael and Janet Warburton.

Following the water leak, a new kitchen and new hot water and central heating boiler have been fitted in the manse. Some minor roof repairs were also done.

A new UPVC window has been installed in the vestry and the fire door next to it replaced, also in UPVC.

Leaks in the Michael Room roof have been repaired and estimates are now being sought to replace the whole of the flat roof.

The illuminated cross was repaired – but went out again and has once again been taken down for repair.

In the car park, external gulley covers have been fitted and security lighting attended to.

Peter Dawson has single-handedly redecorated the Meeting Room, installed a new cupboard and arranged the fitting of a new carpet. It has now been dedicated as the Janet Roberts Lounge and is available for small groups both from the church and for hire.

The major task in the coming year is external redecoration and completion of the redecoration of the interior of the church.

# **Group Reports**

## **Junior Church**

Eight of us have worked on a rota basis to provide instruction, music and craft work for the children. We have a lovely, enthusiastic group of children. Attendance fluctuates but the average attendance is five.

We arranged a special children's service at Christmas. It was kept simple with all the children doing a reading while a tableau was built up and they enjoyed taking part. Making posies on Mothering Sunday was good fun. Anna Purdy was the only child who turned up at the Procession of Witness – were glad to see your smiley face, Anna.

We really miss Ethel taking her turn with the Junior Church and I know that the children do too. She's been such a wonderful example to us all. Thank you Ethel, for all the years that you've cared for and inspired the children. And what a joy it is to see one of them, Shelley, coming through to church membership.

We're very pleased that Martha and Barney Lawrence have agreed to join our team.

*Audrey*

## **The Guild**

On the last Wednesday of each month the Guild has met throughout the year (except August). To cut down on Speakers' expenses we have covered four sessions ourselves, one, a Members' Meeting, an enjoyable

Pancake Party hosted by Denise and Terry Healy, an outing to a Garden Centre and a special Christmas Party. We accepted an invitation to Fountain Square Church in Tideswell where a delicious tea was provided and a quiz kept minds alert. Transport was provided by the Community Bus.

On the whole, attendance has been good, averaging fourteen, and supplemented by members of the congregation when the appeal has gone out for a particular speaker. Unfortunately, at one meeting only six people attended when we had an excellent speaker. If we are to attract new members we need a varied programme and an attendance of at least twelve to cover expenses.

We were able to give a donation to Church funds. We have discontinued the Bring and Buy Stall. Refreshments are provided by members who subscribe £2 per meeting. We thank all those who have supported us during the year.

*Ethel*

## **The Monday Club**

We have had a good variety of meetings during the past year ranging from local to general interest. Reg Hobson told us about the Bronte connection with Hathersage, for which he had done a great deal of research. We had a very enjoyable evening when Majorie Dunn brought us old photographs taken from original lantern slides and projected on the screen for us to see how poor children in Sheffield were taken by train for a day out in the country. Maureen Taylor came again to make history come alive for us and explain Sir Walter Raleigh's

connection to Derbyshire. Other talks included 'The London Olympics', given by Gordon Staines (one of the three starters) Brazil, Costa Rica and Northumberland and the Scottish borders. Louise Nesbeth, whose Mum Joyce is one of our members, talked about family history. Last August we visited Felley Priory Garden. We had a lovely afternoon and were provided with a superb tea. Yet again we had an evening playing Diminishing Whist at our Christmas Party in December and met at the Olde House for a lunch in February.

Plans are well ahead for next year's meetings and everybody is welcome to join us.

*Audrey*

## **The Craft Group**

The Craft Group was reconvened in September 2013, after a number of people expressed interest in the idea. We come together on the first Tuesday of most months, commencing at 7pm. The evening is usually very informal. There is a small charge which offsets any costs, and a donation being given to the church to defray the cost of heating and lighting during the winter months.

Numbers attending have fluctuated between three people and fifteen. Each participant usually brings along something that they are working on and we have shared ideas and expertise with one another. We have two members of the group knitting small blankets for memorial boxes, whilst others have knitted small teddies and made other items which we can sell at church fairs.

We much enjoyed a card making evening during the year led by Clare Taylor, a talented young lady with lots of bright ideas and patience. We shall welcome Claire back in the autumn in time to make Christmas cards.

*Ann*

## **St Andrew's Ramblers**



Group members come from many churches, not just St Andrew's. We have enjoyed regular weekly walks of 5 or 6 miles throughout the year, both fairly locally and across the Peak District, stopping for lunch at beauty spots such

as Rivelin dam, pictured. Other walks have been to Ogston Reservoir, Lathkill Dale, Buxton Country Park, Padley Gorge and Eyam Moor. Come and join us!

*Janet*

## **Christian Aid**



Christian Aid continues to help the world's most needy, in ways that build their capacity and resilience. It is quick to help when any natural disaster

devastates a country. Aid to help survivors of the typhoon that wrecked areas of the Philippines is still ongoing to enable the people to rebuild their homes and

lives. Across the globe, Christian Aid partners address violence and help to build peace, including in Syria, Iraq, South Sudan, Kenya and Afghanistan. Partners are promoting women's rights in many countries. In Columbia they seek to make an improvement in bringing perpetrators of sexual violence to justice by helping women to speak out.

In Britain the 'IF' campaign has pressed our government to create a public register of company owners and following that Euro MPs have recommended new measures to tackle tax dodging. This is a great step forward in the fight against phantom firms that rob poor countries of billions of dollars, causing food poverty and undermining their ability to provide education and health care. Another important concern of Christian Aid is the impact of climate change on the world's poorest people. They are calling on world leaders to push for a concrete global climate deal. Communities which are already badly affected, such as Bangladesh, are being given practical help and advice.

Our church really strives to send good contributions to Christian Aid. We sent £410 from the collection at the Carol Service. This May we were able to send £1386 after Christian Aid Week, of which £241 was given by church members. Fourteen people took part in the house-to-house collection but we were unable to cover many roads in our area hence the amount we collection was £300 down compared with last year. It would be good to have some more – and younger- volunteers. Thank you very much to all who helped with the collection and all who contributed financially.

*Audrey*

## Commitment for Life

St Andrew's does well in supporting the URC's Commitment for Life programme. It enables them to maintain the funds for Christian Aid's



work in the four partner countries and the work of the World Development Movement in campaigning for justice and change.

We chose to support Zimbabwe and our gifts have helped so many people to work their way out of poverty by learning new skills for work, education, health care, business and politics. Christian Aid's partner the Dabane Trust has supported communities in Zimbabwe by ensuring they have a water supply to irrigate their land, either by building dams or digging wells. New agricultural techniques have been developed especially to grow food in near-drought conditions. It is called 'conservation farming' and although farmers were reluctant at first to change from their old methods, they have rejoiced in producing five times as much maize and twenty-five times as many groundnuts as previously.

It was good to hear first hand about the work of Commitment for Life from Linda Mead, the programme co-coordinator, when she visited us last October. Our gifts to Commitment for Life at that service amounted to £645 and with the Gift Aid tax return sent to them in September of £115, we have donated a total of £760.10 (more than £100 up on last year).

*Audrey*

## **Month's Good Cause**

Contributions to the charities nominated for the month's Good Cause have been dropping. After consultation with the Treasurer, the Group recommended Church Meeting to end the scheme and this was agreed. Appeals for Commitment for Life and Christian Aid continue and there are one off appeals for various charities, some met from congregational contributions and some from church funds. In the course of the year, total charitable contributions amounted to £2268, plus £651 sent directly to Christian Aid, a total of £2919.

## **Recycling News**

During the year £5.00 has been raised from recycling computer ink cartridges. £40 is needed to purchase another Revolving Loan from Bible Lands to help a family to become self sufficient.

300 million people living in the developing world need spectacles to live an ordinary life. In response we have recycled 13 pairs of spectacles this year. The spectacles are taken to Specsavers in Chesterfield. The spectacles are cleaned and graded and sent to Third World countries for distribution to prescription matched recipients.

Lots of used batteries have been given to Chesterfield Borough Council to be recycled.

The Church Newsletter has been recorded onto audio tapes for use by the visually impaired at both St Andrew's and Holymoorside Churches. The tapes are continually reused until they naturally deteriorate.

*Denise*

## **Church Hall Hire Report 2013 - 2014**

### **Regular Church Hall Users**

Monday	Beavers 6.00pm – 7.00pm Badminton 7.30pm – 9.30pm
Tuesday	Craft Group 7.00pm – 8.30pm
Wednesday	Badminton 7.30pm – 9.45pm Ladies Badminton 10.00am - 11.00am
Thursday	Caledonian Badminton 7.00pm – 10.15pm
Friday	Bowls during Winter 9.30pm – 12.00pm Ladies Badminton 2.00pm – 4.00pm Cubs and Scouts combined 7.30pm – 9.30pm

### **Individual Events**

- 5 Children's Birthday Parties
- 3 Full days by Diana's Dancing School
- 1 Day for Polling Station
- 2 Church Social Events
- 2 Church Fairs

**The usual Badminton, Bowls, Beavers, Cubs, Scouts meet during the whole year but not August.**

***Dorothy Graham***

