



The
United
Reformed
Church

St Andrew's URC Chesterfield

Annual Report and Accounts 2014-15

Sharing Good News

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Minister's Report

As we look back, sadly we all miss three people who have died in the past year – Ethel Revill, Douglas Cummins, and Margaret Harrow. These were bold, strong and hardworking people within the church fellowship and beyond. Since the end of the year we have also lost Emmie Symes. The respect in which all four were held was attested by the numbers filling the church for their various services. It is now to their example that we must look for inspiration and through that realise just how dearly they were loved and how deeply they will be missed by their families. Our hearts go out to these folks as we continue to surround them with our prayers.

Following the summer's (2014) vacation period we started the autumn by issuing our quarterly invitation to our surrounding locale, members and friends. It contained the outlines of the major events being held throughout the last quarter of the year with an invitation to come and attend at least one, if not more, of the service and events we had organized. This was all in conjunction with the annual 'Back to Church Sunday' campaign, only this time it was for the whole season of events throughout the autumn.

This year has seen Ian, and Eileen, working very hard to arrange and bring together the celebration for 2015 around the idea of the 60th anniversary of our current building. So far it has been extremely successful. Ian's attention to detail and thorough follow-through have ensured that all has gone to plan.

As ever there have been people stepping down from their responsibilities, but we can be thankful that others have stepped up to carry on the work. I know that at times it seems tedious, thankless or worse, and little to do with

worshipping God. But our eyes must be lifted to see that through Christ God is opening hope to all people and our job, through our inherited structures, is to make that known to as many people as possible. The boring bits, the repetitious small tasks that we each carry out are part of enabling that to happen. In essence it is all worship.

And indeed the work is showing the fruit of the kingdom for we have celebrated the baptism of Beatrix and brought into membership eight adults, including Beatrix' parents. It was a time of great thanksgiving on our behalf and a joy to see the church augmented by their commitment.



5 of our new church members

Later in the year we are thankful that one of those people, Liz Sharples, accepted nomination to the Eldership where her skills will be much appreciated. That leads me to say that the Elders, in the absence of finding one to serve as Church Secretary, coped well with the spread of jobs between them.

All of this was in straight contrast to the services held in November as we remembered the war dead. 2014 was the poignant year that commemorated the centenary of the start of what we know as the First World War. We held our normal Remembrance Sunday service followed by a reflective and interactive Armistice Day service at 11.00am on Nov 11th, 2014. This was attended by a small but appreciative number of people from the church and elsewhere.

We must not forget the hard work carried, almost single-handedly, by Peter, in restoring and bringing into full use the Janet Roberts Lounge(JRL). Well done Peter, thank you. With the leaks to the flat roofs we have been most grateful for the JRL being available for many occasions during the year. In the same vein it is good to see the area in front of the scout hut now finished with the hard stand and the surrounding area put to grass. The problems with the flat roofs came to a head late in 2014 and the Elders moved swiftly and the work is underway as I write. A magnificent amount of money has already been pledged to cover the cost and Synod has agreed a grant from the Mission Fund for the remainder. We are now reaching more people within the community and our outreach is beginning to look up. It needs more effort but with Dorothy's(Letting Officer's) hard work we are now working with many more local groups. This must not stop us looking to the future and we are awaiting a firm estimate of how much it might cost to replace the full pitched roofs of the church and hall. It has been estimated that they will need serious attention within the next 5 - 15years.

We occasionally work with our sister church within the pastorate at Holymoorside and a joint meeting was held in February 2015 to discuss the proposition from General Assembly regarding same sex marriage. Under the skilful facilitation of the minister from Wirksworth, Revd Camilla Veitch, the meeting gave the necessary space for all those who wished to contribute in a supportive, non-confrontational manner. The sharing with Holymoorside enabled both churches to enjoy a wider spread of ideas and concerns thus enabling a fuller picture to be reflected in our response to Church House.

We acknowledge Helen's move to become Synod Clerk. We will greatly miss her close care of our local church through

her in depth knowledge and experience that has benefited us in many ways. Whilst we have not lost Helen's skills altogether her day-to-day approach will be missed.

We can say thank you to those who have completed terms of office or stepped down from their responsibilities during the year. It is a reminder to us that the tasks that need doing are the responsibility of us all and we must respond where we can, sharing the load. The catering group are an integral part of our fellowship and whilst we enjoyed some splendid meals catered from outside, the home team have come up trumps during the year



Serving teas at the Summer Fair and a Church lunch



Whilst we come as individuals it is only together that we become church and the people that God is calling to himself. And that reflects our one and only aim – to worship God, to give thanks for his unmerited grace and live as examples to the world of the hope God offers all who will come and follow him. So thank you to each and every one for all the jobs you undertake, many that happen unnoticed, sometimes un-thanked. We say thank you now.

Let's now look forward to all that the future holds for us under God's guidance and blessing as we continue to pray, care and work for God's people entrusted to us and those in the area surrounding our church.

God bless you; thank you.



Elders' Report

The Elders meet monthly to provide leadership and act as charity Trustees. All meetings are held in the context of prayer. Discussions cover worship, membership, work with children, finance, church events, premises, publicity and the wider church. Discussions often clarify issues which are referred to Church Meeting for decision.

Membership

Members	68
Children	16
Friends	25
Serving Elders	9

Numbers in Sunday morning worship: 40-50, including children. Special services such as Harvest, Remembrance and Palm Sunday attracted congregations of over 100. We welcomed eight new members, Shelley Barker by confession of faith, Joyce Ward by reaffirmation of faith, Jim and Bernice Wilson, Ann Blakemore, Liz Sharples and Martha and Barney Lawrence by transfer from other churches. We also welcomed several new people to worship and plan another membership course in the coming year.

Worship

Worship was celebrated every Sunday morning, usually led by our minister but with regular guest preachers, including a very well attended Palm Sunday service led by Rev Dr Rosalind Selby. Elders led worship themselves on four Sundays. On one notable Sunday we moved worship to the evening, when we discovered that roads throughout Chesterfield would be closed Chesterfield Marathon. We also held a few evening meditations. Music has been ably provided by our regular pianist, Margaret Cook, and from time to time by organists Brian Gibbs and Maurice Curzon. Elders and members have fulfilled their appointed duties on the rotas - vestry, door stewards, readers, flowers. Alison has valiantly produced the church magazine every two months.

Hall Users

Early in 2015, we had a sudden surge in regular hall bookings. It is a real pleasure to host the Jellybeans Toddler Group, which is growing rapidly and to see their lovely craft work decorating the end wall of the large hall. Karate 'Young Tigers' attracts group of children keen to develop their skills. The Chesterfield and District Soarers delight in the large space they have to fly their miniature model planes on alternate Sunday evenings. We held a 'Partners Meeting' for representatives of the church and user groups in September which led to cooperation between some of the badminton groups.

Activities

Two Bible Study Groups met regularly, one in the morning and one in the evening, with a weekly course during Lent. We have gone on supporting the Chesterfield Food Bank, through donations and volunteering. We opened the church for the Derbyshire Churches and Chapels Preservation Trust 'Ride and Stride' day in September and

several members took part in the sponsored walk. We supported Fair Trade through occasional stalls and the use of Fair Trade tea and coffee. We ran the Summer Fair and Christmas Bazaar, including for the first time an exhibition of art and craft work from local schools.



Schools Art and Craft Work at the Summer Fair

Representatives attended three North Derbyshire Cluster Group meetings. They heard a report from General Assembly, discussed the deployment of ministers and shared local church news.

Junior Church

Eight of us take the children out for Junior Church on a rota basis so that they can enjoy stories, discussion songs and craft work. The number of children varies between two and eight. It's a joy to have Grace and Charlotte Humphries joining us whenever they can.



Beatrix's baptism party in the park

Three of the children performed a short dialogue called 'The Star' during one of our pre-Christmas services. The younger ones dressed up and joined in with a hymn. We kept it very simple but it was delightful to see how dramatically the three 'stars' spoke their lines. We are glad that Ellie Purdy is taking an active role as a helper alongside the designated leaders.

Audrey

Pastoral Care Group

The Pastoral Carers meet 4 times each year in the Michael Room. Previously, the meetings were held at Ethel's who was the Convenor for the group. It was with great sadness and loss that she passed away last December. The Revd John Cook was the Convenor for an interim period, and now Pat Hornblower has taken over the job. All members and adherents and anyone connected to the church, including the groups which meet regularly in the hall, are covered by the Carers. At the meetings, each Carer goes through each person on their list, and any concerns are shared with the other Carers. This is done in strict confidentiality. Also, visits and phone calls are made by each Carer to people on their list to provide support and give them the opportunity to share any concerns – or good news. People whose names are added to the Prayer Board in church are prayed for at the monthly prayers for healing service on the second Wednesday each month.

Pat

Anniversary Celebrations

Marking the 60 Anniversary Year of the Dedication of St Andrew's Church Building

Songs of Praise

The Year of Celebration to mark the 60th Anniversary of the Dedication of the St Andrew's Church building began on Sunday 11 January with a Songs of Praise. There was a good attendance including the Mayor and Mayoress of Chesterfield, members of the Rotary Club of Chesterfield and a number of folks from other Churches. Accompanied by Brian Gibbs on the organ the congregation sang hymns, introduced by the Minister, which had been selected by a number of members of St Andrew's Church. Overall there was a great feeling of friendship and fellowship which became even more apparent when the congregation adjourned to the hall for refreshments - it was buzzing. All in all it was a good start to Celebration Year.

The Burns Night Celebration

On 13 February a number of St Andrew's members, guests from other churches and the Chesterfield and District Caledonian Association, met to celebrate the birthday of Scotland's national poet Robert Burns. The minister introduced the evening with prayer and continued with Burns' "Grace before Meat". Tim Cobb, Past President of the Chesterfield Caledonians gave the Address to the Haggis. This was followed by the traditional meal of Soup, Haggis, Neeps and Tatties, Trifle and Cheeseboard provided by caterer Eleanor Longden. After the meal there was a programme of entertainment including The Toast to the Immortal Memory of Robert Burns ably given by Liz Sharples. Bill and Nancy Steel respectively gave the Toast the Lasses and the Response. There then followed a number of songs, readings and recitations.

Concert

The concert on 7 March featured two different musical styles: Take Note, a four part harmony 21 member choir and "Lah di Dah", a close harmony group comprising of four ladies. An appreciative audience enjoyed a selection of songs and varied styles of singing. The concert was followed by refreshments.

Ian

Premises

The exterior of the premises was painted, and we thank the Derbyshire Churches and Chapels Preservation Trust for their £500 grant towards this. The contractors also completed the interior redecoration of the church by painting the gallery, stairs, lobby and the chancel wall. A radio-controlled thermostat was installed in the sanctuary which seems to help control the heating.

The troublesome plumbing in the men's toilet was finally solved by the installation of a new water heater. Hand driers were installed in the toilets, thanks to a generous gift from Wendy in memory of her daughter.

We purchased and had installed a new noticeboard which greatly improves the presentation of the church and its activities. Robert Lee solved another on-going problem – by repairing and reinstating the old illuminated cross on the front wall.

Our cleaner Andrew left as he was able to return full time to his professional career as a graphic designer. Emma Purdy took over the job in October. We also recruited a new gardener, Roger Penney from Holymoorside.

The leaking roofs were repaired – and leaked again - and again. So we agreed to renew and insulate all the flat roofs, including the skylights. Six contractors provided quotes and we chose Marcus Lonsdale of Safehand's Roofing and Construction who started work in mid-March. We took a leap of faith that we could raise the money and thank everyone for their generosity.

Group Reports

St Andrew's Guild

Meetings of the Guild take place on the last Wednesday afternoon of each month and are open to men and women and we would gladly welcome more members. Members take turns to open the meeting with a Bible reading and Prayer while others bring refreshments to enjoy.

Members have enjoyed interesting Speakers introducing topics such as photography, their latest book and also The Eisteddfod, as well as a musical afternoon with Margaret Johnson, a visit to the Guild Ladies at Tideswell Church, a trip out to the Peak Shopping Centre, a pancake party and a very enjoyable Christmas Party. In January the members generally bring something to the meeting and we each talk about what we have brought and do the meeting ourselves.

The Guild members also provide the cakes for the cake stall at the church fairs.

Denise

The Monday Club

During the past year we've had a lovely variety of meetings and the attendance has been very good. We normally meet in the Michael Room but are indebted to St Andrew's for allowing us to use the church until the roof was repaired. Talks of local interest have included Reg Hobson's 'The Sheffield Flood' and Marjorie Dunn's 'The French Invasion of Chesterfield'. We went further afield with John Simmonds' talk on Shetland and Andy Firth's 'Cornwall, Devon and Dorset'. It was very stimulating to see Roger Barnes' lovely photographs of natural history, many taken in his own garden. In January Keith and Shirley Thomas showed us slides of the National Memorial Arboretum, which whetted our appetite to go and see for ourselves, so we arranged a visit in August. Other speakers we've enjoyed are David Davis reading a variety of poetry and John Grub telling us about the RNLI. Last August we visited the Sheffield Botanical Gardens on a lovely warm afternoon. At the December meeting we held our Christmas Party and we had lunch once again at the Olde House in February.

We are already planning next year's programme and everybody is welcome to join us.

Audrey

The Craft Group

The group has met six times since the last AMG. Once again at our November meeting a dozen ladies enjoyed Christmas card-making, under the very capable direction of Clare Taylor. One of our members has finished knitting a small blanket which has been donated to Sands, a stillbirth and neonatal death charity. They use these blankets to line memory boxes for bereaved parents. A

second blanket is well on the way to completion. We have also produced a selection of items which have been sold at the Christmas and Summer Fairs.

From our monthly subs, we shall be able to donate another £50 towards church funds. Attendance at the last two meetings has been disappointing, and we shall have to reconsider the viability of the group for next year.

Ann

St Andrew's Ramblers

We have approximately 18 members who meet once a week to enjoy a walk of between 5 and 7 miles. We meet at the church and share cars to get to the starting point. Some walks are local, others range across Derbyshire, and occasionally even into Staffordshire. We have been to Ogston Reservoir, Lathkill Dale, Padley Gorge, Three Shires Head, Chesterfield Canal, Hardwick Park, Monsall Trail, Lumsdale, Tissington and many more beautiful and fascinating areas. We've experienced rain, snow and sunshine and shared picnics or pub lunches to sustain us on the way.

Janet

1st Highfield St Andrew's Scouts

It is good to report that the Scout group continues to provide a varied and at times challenging programme for all the youngsters in the group. This is due in the main to a band of dedicated and enthusiastic leaders who are to be highly commended for their efforts. It is to be hoped that, in time, the beavers, cubs and scouts will appreciate what is being done for them. Parent support in each section is vital.

Scout Section

Two highlights over the past year are the summer camp where our Danish friends joined us on camp & also 3 scouts (Hayley Heath, Kai Lowens and Charlotte Jones) achieving their Chief Scout Awards. In the coming year the scouts will be travelling to Kandersteg in Switzerland in July & to Denmark at Easter 2016. A balanced program will continue to be provided for the young people in the belief that it will help them become more confident, independent & well-rounded individuals. Apart from the formal badge work there have been plenty of camps and participation in District competitions.

Cub Section

This last year cubs have had a stable leadership team and because of this have had a most successful year. Due to their time, effort and creativity the team has delivered an exciting programme of events and badge work. During the year the cubs have camped at Spikewinter and Torksey and both were very successful and all the cubs learnt new things and received new badges. A Sixer & Seconder weekend helped them understand their particular role and how they helped the group. As expected some cubs moved on to scouts and received their chief scout silver award. More camps and activities are in preparation including a 4 day trip to Disney Land Paris.

Beaver Section

There are now 24 beavers on the register, which is a huge increase from only 8 following the leadership crisis and now there is a waiting list in place. They have worked towards 6 badges and 2 challenges and have had 2 camps, visited Tesco Farm to Fork, a farm and the park. On the more

adventurous side they have been caving and enjoyed a hike. They have also attended the St Georges Parade with the rest of the group.

Peter Dawson – scout group liaison

Christian Aid



As well as all its regular commitments, Christian Aid has been working hard to help people affected by the Ebola crisis in West Africa. The Ebola Crisis

Appeal raised almost one million pounds, which has been used to provide food, hygiene materials and household goods (because in homes affected clothes, furniture and documents were all burnt as part of infection control measures). Christian Aid's long-term partners in Iraq, Syria and Lebanon continue to respond to the needs of thousands of people, including many children, living in terrible conditions in refugee camps.

We sent £511 from the collection at the Carol Service. Our house-to-house collection raised £1647, of which £264 was given by members of the church.

On Sunday 2nd May, just two weeks before Christian Aid Week, we had a collection in response to the urgent appeal for Nepal after the earthquake there which resulted in £250.50 being sent immediately.

Thank you very much to all who contributed in any way to these collections.

Audrey

Commitment for Life

In Zimbabwe our partner, the Dabane Trust has installed eighteen solar powered water pumps helping people establish thriving market gardens. In one area 70% of the land is now being cultivated successfully, compared to 40% previously. The farmers can produce a diverse variety of crops including maize, green vegetables, onions, beetroot, tomatoes and carrots. The proceeds have enabled many families to improve their living conditions and send their children to school.



During the past year we have sent £761.50 to Commitment for Life. £609.15 was collected on Commitment for Life Sunday and £152.35 was from the previous year's Gift Aid tax return. This shows it is worth signing the Commitment for Life envelope if you are able to gift aid your donation.

Audrey

Recycling News

Ink sponge-filled cartridges, which can be recycled, have been replaced by solid plastic cartridges which are impossible to recycle, thus creating more waste and greater use of resources. Just £1.50 has been raised all year from recycling ink cartridges because there have been so few sponge-filled cartridges. Ink Express, where I take the ink cartridges to be recycled, is considering closure due to the fact that most of his business has been taken away. **It will not, therefore, be possible to continue to recycle ink cartridges.**

We can still recycle spectacles. We have recycled 12 pairs of spectacles this year. They are taken to Specsavers in Chesterfield. The spectacles are cleaned and graded and sent to developing countries for distribution to prescription matched recipients. Lots of used batteries have been given to Chesterfield Borough Council to be recycled. We can still recycle used candles by taking them to Samaritan's Purse.

Denise

Church Hall Hire Report 2014 - 2015

Regular Church Hall Users

Monday	Beavers 6.00pm – 7.00pm Badminton 7.15pm – 9.30pm
Tuesday	Karate Young Tigers Club 6.00pm – 7.00pm Craft Group 7.00pm – 8.30pm
Wednesday	Jelly Beans Toddlers Group 9.30am – 11.30am St Andrew's Badminton 7.00pm – 9.45pm
Thursday	Ladies Badminton 10.00am – 11.00am Caledonian Badminton 7.00pm – 9.00pm
Friday	Bowls during Winter 9.30pm – 12.00noon Ladies Badminton 1.30pm – 3.30pm Cubs and Scouts combined 7.30pm – 9.30pm
Sunday	Chesterfield District Soarers 6.00pm – 8.00pm

Individual Events

- 7 Children's Birthday Parties
- 1 60th Wedding Anniversary Party
- 3 Full days by Diana's Dancing School
- 1 Day for Polling Station
- 1 Scouts Competition Awards
- 5 Church Social Events
- 2 Church Fairs

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

Note. After being with us for 30 years, sadly, Diana's Dancing School will be leaving us next year in order to join forces with her daughter. The combined dancing school will in future be using the larger hall at Rose Hill Church, which is now leased as a dedicated arts space.

In the Autumn a new Bowls Group intends to join us.

Dorothy



The church in its new paintwork Summer 2014

Income and Expenditure 2014-15

Income **£64,562**

Expenditure **£48,785**

Surplus **£15,777**

Note

Roof Fund c/f £13,563