

ST GREGORY THE GREAT, MORVILLE

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER 2019

Aim and Purposes

Morville Parochial Church Council (PCC) has the responsibility of co-operating with the Team Rector, the Reverend Prebendary Simon Cawdell, in promoting the whole mission of the Church, pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical, in the ecclesiastical parish.

Objectives and Activities

The PCC is committed to enabling as many people as possible to worship at our Church and to being part of our parish community at Morville. The PCC maintains an overview of worship throughout the parish and makes suggestions on how our services can involve the many groups that live in our parish. Our services and worship put faith into practice through prayer and scripture, music and sacrament.

When planning our activities for the year, we have considered the Charities Commission's guidance on public benefit and, in particular, the supplementary guidance on charities for the advancement of religion. The PCC seeks to enable people in the parish to live out their faith as part of our parish community through:

- Worship and prayer; learning about the Gospel; and developing their knowledge and trust in Jesus.
- Provision of pastoral care for people living in the parish.
- Activities that bring the community together.

To facilitate this work it is important that we maintain the fabric of the Church of St. Gregory the Great and its surrounding churchyard.

During the year the PCC prepared a Mission Action Plan (MAP) which identified strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges. The Plan determined a vision for the next five years and set priorities to be achieved. These priorities included continuing to hold weekly services and encouraging greater involvement in the community through activities with Morville Primary School. The MAP is displayed in the church.

Achievements and Performance

Morville PCC is keen to offer a range of services during the week and over the course of the year which our community find both beneficial and spiritually fulfilling. There is a weekly service at 11.00 am on Sunday. We held two Holy Communion Services, a Family Service and a Healing Service each month. Where there is a fifth Sunday in the month this is also a Family Service. Our services are led by Reverend Hugh Patterson who has supported Morville Parish for many years. Music is provided by our organist Mrs Alison Foxall who is an active member of the church community. Mrs Angela Jones also provides the music in Mrs Foxall's absence. Morning coffee is provided after service on the second and fourth Sunday of each month by members of the congregation on a voluntary basis.

The church is cleaned weekly, brasses are cleaned and flower arrangements provided. All these tasks are carried out by the members of the PCC, congregation and the local community for which we are very grateful.

In addition there are several special services which include Lent, Easter, Christmas, St Gregory's Feast Day (Evensong), Harvest Festival and Remembrance Sunday.

The Church has also been used by Morville Primary School for special services and assemblies during the year. Morville PCC has supported the school by providing free refreshments for the children and their families at the various assemblies, Harvest Service and Christmas events.

St. Gregory's Church does not hold a Sunday School at the present time but hopes to re-establish this in the future. To achieve this we need to encourage families with children into the church, and the school assemblies and services are the first steps towards this.

The PCC organised events to raise money for St Gregory's church which included:

- Teas in church in support of the Morville Gardens open day for the National Garden Scheme.
- Teas in church to support the National Trust opening of Morville Hall (eight days in total).

The PCC is extremely grateful to all the local people who donate their time and energy to organising and managing all our fundraising events, and in particular the generosity of the many bakers in the parish who provide a continuous supply of cakes for the frequent teas in church.

After 18 years as Church Warden of St Gregory's Church, Mr Barry Jenkinson retired both as Church Warden and PCC member due to ill health. In recognition of the many years that Mr Jenkinson gave to the church the PCC, at his request, presented him with a wooden lectern, chosen by him, which he in turn donated to Morville Church for use by the school children at school services and by the wider congregation. Sadly Mr Jenkinson subsequently died at the end of the year and is greatly missed.

There is a regular bell ringing team, led by the Bell Tower Captain Ian Rowe, which supports the weekly service and holds other bell ringing events. Bells are also rung for weddings and funerals on request. The bells of St Gregory's Church attract bell ringers from other areas which also helps to raise funds for the church.

All are welcome to attend our regular services. There are 26 parishioners on the Church Electoral Roll, some of whom are not resident in the parish. The average weekly attendance, counted in October, was 12 but this number increased significantly at special services held during the year.

As well as our regular services, we enable our community to celebrate and thank God at the milestones of the journey through life. Through baptism we thank God for the gift of life, in marriage public vows are exchanged with God's blessing and through funeral services friends and family express their grief and give thanks for the life which is now complete in this world and to commend the person into God's keeping. This year we have celebrated 3 baptisms and 2 weddings at St Gregory's church. We also held 6 funeral services and 2 burials of ashes.

A newsletter is produced and delivered to all the homes in the four parishes within the Morville Group of Parishes. 380 copies are printed and distributed to local homes each month 33 of which are provided by email, 15 of which are to people outside our parishes including one to America. The number printed increases at Easter, Christmas and special events when we have more visitors. The newsletter provides details of services to be held at Morville Group churches together with messages, local news and events. The aim is to include everyone, not just churchgoers. It is produced by Mrs Carol Skinner and distributed by local volunteers and is self-financing, relying on local advertising and the occasional donation. The PCC would like to take this opportunity to thank Mrs Skinner and all concerned for the continuing production and distribution of the newsletter.

The PCC has continued to carry out Health and Safety requirements including risk assessments and emergency evacuation procedures when major events have been held in the church and churchyard, in line with Ecclesiastical Insurance requirements and guidance. The PCC's Health and Safety Policy document was updated and reissued in 2019.

Deanery Synod

A member of the PCC sits on the deanery synod and reports back to the PCC at following meetings. This provides an important link between the parish and the wider structures of the Church.

Bridgnorth and Morville Parishes Team Council

We also have two PCC members who sit on the Team Council, having an input into the decision making of the Bridgnorth ministry. The council is involved in the selection of clergy for the benefice of Bridgnorth and Morville Parishes Team Ministry and receives regular reports on the progress of the Ministry. One area of particular interest is the working party looking at PCC costs, potential areas for savings, best practices and the pooling of information on suppliers and local trades people. This work is ongoing.

Pastoral Care

Some members of our parish are unable to attend Church due to sickness or age. Reverend Hugh Patterson has visited all Church members who have requested it to celebrate communion with them either at their homes or in hospital.

Church Fabric and Furnishings

St Gregory the Great Church is a Grade 1 listed building (List Entry Number: 1053840) dating back to 1118.

The next quinquennial inspection is due in 2020. The PCC's insurers, Ecclesiastical Insurance, undertook their regular 5 year survey in September.

An asbestos management review was carried out in June by a specialist consultant, Sutton Asbestos Surveys, to identify any asbestos in the building and action required by the PCC in accordance with the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012 (CAR2012). Asbestos (Amosite/Chrysostile) in a damaged and unsealed condition was located in the external boiler room as lagging to the old boiler system. Access to the boiler room has been sealed to meet safety requirements. The PCC intends to remove the asbestos and clean the old boiler using specialist contractors when Diocesan approval has been obtained together with grant funding should this be available.

The Tower Captain, Ian Rowe, organised additional welding to strengthen the bell clappers following a bolt shearing off from the crown staple. In addition preservative was applied to the bell frame timbers. Thanks are due to the Tower Captain and local firm AV Birch for this work.

A test of the lightning conductor was undertaken by a specialist contractor but repairs were found necessary including installation of a new earth rod. Following completion of this work a pass certificate was issued. Annual servicing of the fire extinguishers and organ was also completed.

In conclusion to the celebrations of the 900th anniversary of the Church, the carpet in the chancel was replaced and a time capsule, having been sealed by the children of Morville School, was placed behind a wooden screen on the third floor of the tower; not to be opened for 100 years.

Churchyard Maintenance

Following removal of the dead sycamore tree in the NE of the churchyard, archdeacon's approval was obtained for planting an English Oak between the church and the stump. The tree has been donated and planted by the Heatley family and is much appreciated.

Grass cutting has been undertaken very effectively throughout the year by Mr Martin Gretton in his second year as groundsman. The standard of upkeep has continued to draw compliments.

Two churchyard working parties took place during the year. These dealt with a series of tasks including gutter clearing, laying out of a new ashes area, strimming and various other tidying and maintenance tasks. A gravestone stability check was undertaken in June. Thanks to everyone who helped out.

Morville School Trust

The Trust owns the freehold of the property comprising Morville School, by virtue of a trust deed dating back to 1855 when the property was generously donated by the Acton family for school use.

There have been longstanding issues surrounding the Trust including an inability of the Trustees to carry out their legal obligations due to lack of accurate guidance from Hereford Diocese as to the precise legal status of the School Trust and the responsibilities of the Trustees. Furthermore, the Trust and the Trustees' responsibilities for the use of the property, have not been recognised by Shropshire Education Authority, Hereford Diocese and latterly Bishop Anthony Education Trust. This made it necessary for legal advice to be sought by the Incumbent from the Registrar to Hereford Diocese as to the recommended way for this unsatisfactory position to be resolved.

A request was made to Hereford Diocese to indemnify the Trustees, but this was rejected. The dialogue has continued during the year. Consequently none of the eligible congregation were prepared to stand for election as Church Warden at the 2019 Vestry meeting since this role necessarily encompasses that of Trustee of Morville School Trust. The Incumbent, Preb Revd. Cawdell, continued as the sole trustee, there being no Church Wardens in post during the year.

Financial Review

Morville PCC remains in a sound financial position due to regular giving and fundraising activities.

Total receipts of the General fund for 2019 amounted to £19,692, (2018 - £44,321) and are detailed in the Financial Statement for the year. The significant decrease year on year was mainly due to grants received for the windows and masonry repair work carried out in 2018.

In addition -

- Regular giving of £6,757, a reduction of £514 from 2018 (£7,271).
- Donations to the church of £315, a reduction of £1,097 from 2018 (£1,412).
- Church fees totalled £3,805 (2018 - £3,584).
- The net income from fundraising events was £4,604 (2018 - £5,728). See details below.
- £ 1,467 of gift aid was recovered this year (2018 - £1,691).
- Listed places of Worship VAT refund of £1047 for Lightning Conductor repair work in 2019 of £228 together with £819 for 2018 building works.
- Morville Church Building Trust grant of £690 for Lightning Conductor work
- Interest on investments and dividends of £732 (2018 - £645)

- Other income of £276 which includes the residue of the Morville 900 account (£136) and £140 for sale of Morville 900 trolley tokens.

Total payments for the year were £18,930 which was a reduction of £23,965 on the previous year:

- The parish offer increased to £10,400 in 2019 (2018 - £10,000).
- Church running costs increased to £4,137 from £3,774 in 2018.
- Churchyard maintenance costs £1,287 (2018 - £2,220)
- Charitable Donation payments for the year totalled £1,666 (2018 - £1757).
- Church building maintenance £1,440 compared to £24,512 in 2018 which included windows and masonry work.

The PCC met its full commitment for parish offer payments of £10,400 and all fees due to Hereford Diocese for 2019 have been paid.

PCC Fundraising: In 2019 the Morville Festival, the Harvest Supper and Shropshire Historic Churches Trust teas were not held. As a result the funds raised by the PCC in 2019 reduced from £5,728 in 2018 to £4,604 (after event costs of £126).

Included in this total:

- NGS teas - £817
- £3,587 for teas provided for National Trust visitors to Morville Hall.
- Teas for the Regional Furniture Society (private event) of £200

Charitable Donations: Our fundraising allowed the PCC to donate to other charities. Our charitable donations for 2019 totalled £1,666 and included:

- The Cherish Fund (£210) – collection taken at the Harvest Festival service.
- Royal British Legion (£289) – Remembrance Sunday collection,
- Hereford Diocesan Bell Fund (£32),
- Crowsmill Craft Centre CIC £225 (an organisation which works with people with various physical and mental issues).
- The Salvation Army (£225)
- Shropshire Deaf Children’s Society (£225)
- Bishop James Almasi Charity (Kwitonji Bible College) (£225)
- Voices in Harmony for the Advent Carol Service (£50)
- Save the Children (£185)

Morville 900 Fund (designated): At the end of 2018, the anniversary year, we had £1,115 remaining in the Morville 900 fund. During 2019 the final tasks to complete the marking of our 900th year were completed. These included a replacement carpet runner for the chancel and a time capsule, to be opened in 2118. The PCC closed this fund during the year and transferred the residue of £136 to the General Fund.

Morville Parish Charity: The Morville Relief in Need Charity was formed in 1980, simultaneously with the identically formed Morville Church Charity, in an agreement between Morville Parish Council (not the Parochial Church Council) and The Charity Commission. Until 1980, Morville Parish Council were the trustees of five separate Morville Charities, dating back to the early 17th and late 18th centuries, and based on gifts which are all detailed on the benefactors boards which hang on the walls above and either side of the vestry door in Morville Church. These boards contain many other much smaller gifts of money made over the years, but those gifts were obviously spent in full, and were not big enough to make into enduring charities.

The Richard Geary, John Guest (Senior), John Guest (Junior) and Arthur Weaver charities were all fairly small, and based on cash sums given by those local benefactors for the benefit of the poor of the parish. The one significant charity The Burte & Acton Charity was based on a few acres of land (known as the Stubby Moor) purchased with £100 given by Thomas Burte and £100 by Walter Acton, circa 1631. For reasons no longer clear, this land purchase was in the parish of Claverley. The annual rental income from it was to be shared equally by the Vicar of Morville, and the poor of Morville, but as it was totally surrounded by another farmer's land, this field could only be rented to that farmer (as no one else could access it), and as a result, the rent was poor.

The other four charities produced very little interest, and so in 1980 the Parish Council successfully applied to have the land sold, and the sale proceeds (along with the bits of money from the other four charities) invested in units in the Charities Official Investment Fund (COIF), 942 in the name of the Morville Relief In Need Charity, and an identical 942 units in the name of the Morville Church Charity. This reflected the original gifts equally benefiting the vicar and the poor of the parish.

As the income is relatively small (£469 in 2018) and as there is no longer felt to be a local need for such relief, the Trustees of the Morville Relief in Need Charity offered the financial assets to Morville PCC on the basis that the interest paid by COIF would still be used to benefit those in need. The 942 units were sold in December and the proceeds (£16,674) transferred to Morville PCC. This amount will be invested in income bonds with COIF in 2020, the income from which to be used solely for donations to people in need, in the spirit of the original gifts. Consequently the PCC has created a restricted fund within the accounts called the Morville Parish Charity.

Bank Balances: In summary, the bank balance for unrestricted funds carried forward at 31st December 2019 totalled £28,620 (£3,128 general fund; £22,885 deposit account, Morville Festival Committee Fund £1,084, the Bellringing Fund £1,523 and the Morville 900 Fund £0). For restricted funds, the Bell Maintenance Fund ended the year at £6,640 and the Morville Parish Charity Fund at £16,674.

Financial Policies

It is PCC policy to invest the balance of our funds with the CBF Church of England Deposit Fund whenever possible, also to maintain a balance on unrestricted general funds of £20,000 as a hedge against emergency situations.

Structure, Governance and Management

The method of appointment of PCC members is set out in the Church Representation rules. At Morville, the membership of the PCC consists of the incumbent, Team Clergy, Churchwardens and members elected by those members of the congregation who are on the electoral roll of the Church.

All those who attend our services/members of the congregation are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and stand for election to the PCC. The PCC members are responsible for making decisions on all matters of general concern and importance to the parish including deciding on how the funds of the PCC are to be spent. The full PCC met five times during the year with an average attendance of 55% (62% in 2018). There were no sub committee meetings in 2019.

Administrative Information

St Gregory the Great Church is situated in the village of Morville, Shropshire near Bridgnorth. The church comes within the benefice of Bridgnorth and Morville Parishes Team Ministry which in turn

is part of the Bridgnorth Deanery. The Deanery comes within the Archdeaconry of Ludlow of the Diocese of Hereford. Rev'd Prebendary Simon Cawdell is Team Rector of the Team Ministry.

The Morville Parochial Church Council (PCC) is a body corporate (PCC Powers Measure 1956, Church Representation Rules 2011) and a charity currently excepted from registration with the Charity Commission.

PCC members who have served at any time from 1st January 2019 until the date this report was approved are:

<i>Team Rector</i>	Rev'd Prebendary Simon Cawdell – Chairman
<i>Church Wardens</i>	None appointed
<i>Representatives on the Deanery Synod</i>	Mrs G Medland
<i>Bridgnorth Team Council</i>	Dr S Dunmore, Mr T Morris
<i>Representatives</i>	
<i>Secretary to PCC</i>	Mrs H Smith
<i>Treasurer to PCC</i>	Mrs K Renshall
<i>Elected members</i>	Rev'd H Patterson (Vice Chairman) Mr T Heatley (Deputy Lay Vice Chairman) Mrs J Brick, Dr S Dunmore, Mrs F Dunmore, Mrs A Foxall, Mrs C Heatley, Mrs J Jenkinson, Mrs G Medland, Mr T Morris Mrs K Renshall, Mrs H Smith, Mr S Wadlow.

**Approved by the PCC on 2020 and signed on their behalf by
Rev Preb Simon Cawdell**

----- (PCC Chairman)