

Parish Profile

St John Baptist – Claines, Worcester



Growing the Kingdom of God

“Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I say, rejoice!”

Philippians 4v4

2012

Welcome

The Church of St John Baptist, Claines and its community are truly special. Everyone who visits the Church to worship, or seek quiet time, appreciates the peace and feels the comfort of all those who have worshipped and visited the Church over centuries.

The community values both a sense of tradition and new ways to worship. It is a very prayerful Church; members of the congregation celebrate and embrace their relationship with God and his son Jesus Christ, and do so joyously - in worship, in music and in Christian fellowship.

Many people speak of the welcome they receive at Claines; as an Open Church, that welcome is extended to all our visitors.

We seek to grow God's Kingdom – and feel outreach is vitally important for this. We continue to develop “fresh expressions” of church and aim to meet the needs of all ages.

A Christian community now in search of a Priest in Charge, we need a person who will build on our existing strengths and move us forward: someone who will offer us pastoral and spiritual leadership, service and friendship. We seek a Priest who will tap into the energy of our parishioners and - in full partnership with the people - move this parish to its next level of development and growth, working with St George and Mary Magdalene Church, and also St Stephen's. The post-holder's formal Job Title will be: “Priest in Charge at Claines St John Baptist and Curate in Charge of Worcester St George and Mary Magdalene”.

This suburban Parish three miles north of Worcester City serves a population of approx 5800. The Grade II listed Church has a ring of 10 bells in its Tower, and the Church Institute opposite hosts many Church functions. The Vicarage is a modern detached family house, a minute's walk from the Church. All buildings are in a good state of repair, including the Church Hall half a mile away. Ongoing maintenance is also planned.

The dedicated Ministry Team has ordained and lay members, ably supported by the part-time parish clerk and a host of enthusiastic volunteer members of the congregation. Musical tradition is very strong, with organ, choir and musicians playing an active role in services and community functions.

Close links are maintained with local schools, both State and privately funded.

Youth work is seen as vital to our Mission, with dedicated teams of leaders and helpers organising and guiding our young folk in appropriate age groupings. Our unique Mughouse Pub in the Church grounds plays an important part in Church and Community activities.

Claines is a vibrant Christian Community, with an active Events Committee that organises well-attended functions such as the Queen's Jubilee party, as well as much-needed fund-raising activities. There is also an established Amateur Theatre group which has sell-out attendances for its productions. This group made significant donations from ticket sales to our Sunday School and youth groups this year. Further details of these and other Community Activities follow.

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Vision, Mission and Future Direction

Strategic Objectives

1. To be prayerfully resolute in understanding the deanery discussions, ensuring that the needs, wishes and feelings of the people of Claines are clearly presented and that the ministry is not undermined through under resourcing.
2. To demonstrate that the Church in Claines is focused on using its resources to best effect in spreading its ministry beyond the Church doors and out into people's lives.
3. To respect Claines traditions but also to be creative, leading and welcoming positive change.
4. To encourage and welcome people to join in, by inviting them to try out any festival, service or activity.
5. To make the Church building accessible and useful to the people of the parish, for uses other than formal worship.
6. To increase the size of the congregation and reduce its average age.
7. To find new ways of returning to a good record of paying the parish share.

In the last twelve months there have been a number of excellent events and initiatives that have moved the Church forward. It is important that we build on these successes:

- Open Church – there is a need to offer more information on the Church for visitors to read and take away.
- Saturday Surgery – this has been a huge success for baptism families and wedding couples. We need to involve more members of the congregation in welcoming people to the Surgery and offer families a tailored information pack.
- Community use of the Church – in the last few months a Jubilee tea party was held for 200 children and 250 adults from the Claines Community, in the Churchyard and CATS held a concert on two nights within Church attended by a number of people who would not normally attend Church. We are looking at other ways the Church can be used by the community as a whole and need to provide kitchen and toilet facilities within the Church.
- Last September we held our first Pet Service, supported by the Scouts, Cubs and Brownies: the second is planned for this September. We look to increase our links with the Scout movement, inviting them to All Age Services and to once again parade their banners.
- This has been the first year of Messy Church, LinC and taking Open the Book into Claines School. We are hoping to develop closer links with Claines School and will be seeking to invite their Choir and musicians to All Age Services.
- We hold a large number of baptisms and weddings at Claines. We are seeking ways to increase communication with families, inviting them back and encouraging them to become part of our regular congregation.
- The first Alternative Eucharist held at 6.30pm on the Fifth Sunday, took place in July. We hope to use a range of alternative services at future Fifth Sunday Eucharists.

Person Specification: Priest/Curate-in-Charge St. John Baptist / St. George & Mary Magdalene

Our new Vicar will be an ordained Church of England priest, committed to ministry of the whole people of God. We seek an inspirational preacher: a spiritual leader with a tradition of central churchmanship; a teacher who is deeply rooted in Scripture, prayerfully dependent on God and filled with the Holy Spirit. We are praying for someone who is passionate about serving God, to steer us forward as holy places for the whole community, and work with us to grow God's Kingdom:

- An Inspirational preacher, story-teller and team-builder experienced in working collaboratively with worship teams, churches, schools and business. A person who will train and mentor new leaders, both the laity and those in training for licensed ministry, in the service of God; visible to and approachable by the whole community.
- Have excellent communication/interpersonal skills, engaging all age groups
- Recognise the need for - and be able to use - a variety of presentation styles
- Encouraging us to explore different ways of worship, to engage all people with the Gospel.
- Have strong organisational skills and a good grasp of Financial and Administrative matters.

We are looking for someone who will:-

- Help us to grow together in faith and empower us to share that faith in our community.
- Build and maintain good relationships within the congregation and the wider community.
- Be committed to the continuation and development of "fresh expressions" of church.
- Be involved in the local community: maintaining and developing links between it and the church; willing to undertake home visits or train and encourage others to do so including distribution of communion to the housebound.
- Prepared to play a visible role in the life of the Church Schools and with the young people in our communities.
- Give strong leadership and encourage the Laity in the preparation for Baptism, Confirmation and Marriage.
- Strengthen bridges between the parishes of St John Baptist and St. George's.
- Be committed to encouraging the mission for both church communities to be outward looking with an interest in world matters (social, political and technological).

Claines and Surrounding Area

The Parish

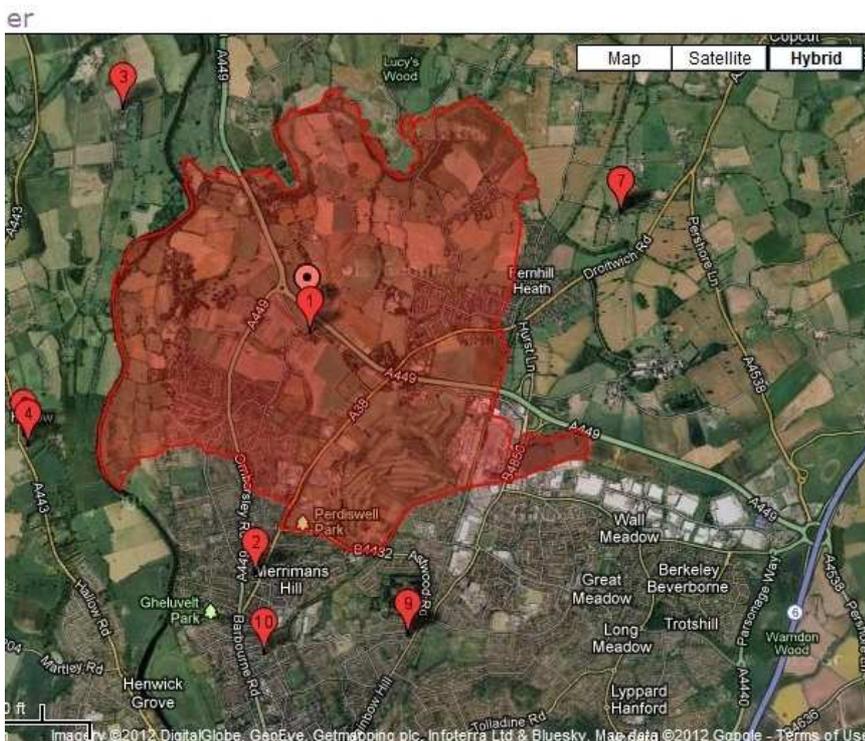
Parish Dimensions

Population circa 5800 Geographical area 3106 acres
Type of industry Retail and trading estates, light engineering, farming, garden centre.
Worcester East Deanery

Description

The parish is delightfully situated in a suburban area to the North of the City of Worcester. It comprises the outer edge of the City together with part of the village of Fernhill Heath and is surrounded by rural aspects which are actively farmed. There has already been housing development in the North of the Parish and there is likely to be further housing development surrounding the Church and towards Bevere as part of the South Worcestershire Development Plan <http://www.swdevelopmentplan.org>

At present the Parish comprises approximately 30% urban and 70% rural development. There is a broad range of housing available, some of which is on developed estates. Much of this is owner occupied but there is some social housing and rented accommodation. All the property is low rise. According to the Church Urban Fund, on their scale of deprivation, the Parish is 30th out of 181 in the Diocese of Worcester (1 is the least deprived).



Churches in your area

● A449, Worcester WR3, UK

Parish of Claines: St John the Baptist

- 1 St John Baptist, Claines (210 yards S)
- 2 St Stephen, Worcester (1.4 miles S)
- 3 St Bartholomew, Grimley (1.4 miles NW)
- 4 St Philip & St James, Hallow (1.6 miles SW)
- 5 St Peter & St Paul, Eastham (1.6 miles SW)
- 6 St Michael & All Angels, Martin Hussingtree (1.7 miles I)
- 7 St Michael & All Angels, Martin Hussingtree (1.7 miles I)
- 8 St Barnabas, Worcester (1.8 miles S)
- 9 St Barnabas, Worcester (1.8 miles S)
- 10 Saint George, Worcester (1.8 miles S)

There are several playgroups and pre-school nurseries in the Parish, two of which have been meeting in Church premises. School Bank Nursery visit church and hold special services in Church.

We have a good relationship with Morton House, a local nursing home in Fernhill Heath, into which we regularly take Communion, and where the Junior Bishop holds a Christmas service. The nearest Doctor's surgery is outside the parish boundary. There are several dentists. The main hospital, Worcester Royal Infirmary, is approx. 6 miles. There is a good bus service into central Worcester.

There are several parks and open spaces in the Parish some of which have child play equipment. Additionally there is the Royal British Legion building as well as the Scout and Guide building, both located on Cornmeadow Lane between the Church and Church Hall. There are a number of opportunities for leisure with walks along the River Severn as well as cycling and horse riding opportunities.

The Church itself is a building of special historical significance. As part of our Open Church policy we have discovered that it attracts visitors from around the world. It is also very popular with visitors to the 600 year old Mug Inn, which stands in the Church grounds. <http://www.clainesfriends.org.uk/MugHouse.html>



Near the Parish is the City of Worcester with its many attractions and tourist interests. We are also close to the M5 motorway and the Six Ways stadium, home of the Worcester Warriors rugby team.

People with Needs

We are very aware that, despite being in a relatively affluent Parish, we have a number of people with needs and special requirements including bereaved families, widows, people living alone, and single parents. It is hoped to establish a Bereavement Support Group to complement "LinC" lunches for those living alone (see p 29).

The Church Urban Fund gives a detailed breakdown of Claines Church within the Diocese. It is important to understand that despite our position in the Church Urban Fund league table, church income is dwindling and the congregation is ageing. Many of them are on fixed incomes. Despite this we are trying to do whatever we can.

Poverty Indicators	Lowest in diocese (on each indicator)	This parish (rank in diocese:)	Highest in diocese (on each indicator)
Child poverty (%of children in poverty)	2%	7% 38 out of 157	52%
Pensioner poverty (%of pensioners on low incomes)	5%	8% 43 out of 157	30%
Working age poverty (%of adults receiving key out-of-work benefits)	3%	8% 61 out of 157	30%
Life expectancy (boys) (life expectancy at birth)	71 years	78 years 91 out of 147	82 years
Life expectancy (girls) (life expectancy at birth)	77 years	83 years 111 out of 148	99 years
No qualifications (%of working age adults without any qualifications)	11%	25% 60 out of 157	56%
Social Housing (%of households living in social rented housing)	0%	4% 21 out of 157	58%
Lone parenthood (lone parent families as %of all families with children)	0%	12% 67 out of 157	51%
Ethnic diversity (%of population who are not white British)	1%	3% 67 out of 152	44%
Older population (%of population who are aged 65 and over)	4%	19% 97 out of 152	34%

<http://www.cuf.org.uk/>

Commerce and Industry

In view of our proximity to the M5, we have become a location for a variety of businesses, including within the Parish, Blackpole Business Parks. Just outside the Eastern edge of the Parish are located a number of famous names including Worcester Bosch, Mazak Machine Tools, N-Power etc. In view of their location outside the Parish we have not as yet developed links with them although a number of their staff are likely to live in our Parish.

There are a few small shops in the Parish. The nearest large supermarket (Sainsbury) and out-of-town commerce (Elgar and Blackpole Retail Parks) are two miles from the Vicarage. The Centre of Worcester City is three miles away. There is also a Tesco supermarket four miles away.

Schools and Education

We are fortunate to have several schools in the Parish. We have strong links with Claines CE Primary School. See <http://www.claines.worcs.sch.uk/>

We have been able to build on the strong links that have resulted with the previous Vicar being the Chairman of the Governors. A member of the congregation is on the Board of Governors. Twice every month members of the congregation present "Open the Book" to the children and these sessions are always very popular.



Members of the clergy regularly take school assemblies, and their special events such as the Leavers Service, Harvest and Christmas take place in the Church.

We have strong connections with The Grange; an Independent Preparatory part of Worcester Royal Grammar School. <http://www.rgs-worcs.org.uk/rgs-the-grange/> and King's Hawford School <http://www.ksw.org.uk/hawford>

We also have close links with Bishop Perowne the nearby Church of England Performing Arts College <http://www.bishopperowne.co.uk/home> and The River School, in Barbourne, Worcester – an independent Christian School for children and young people aged from 3-16 <http://www.river-school.co.uk/page/home>

Ecumenical Links

In Ecumenical terms Claines is very isolated, as there are no other Churches within the Parish, however close links are maintained with Fernhill Heath Baptist Church and Ombersley Road Methodists. We do meet with other Christians in the North Worcester Group of Churches and share worship and fellowship.

Claines joins the Ombersley Road Methodists, Soroptomist International, St George's and St Stephen's for the Women's World Day of Prayer and Claines hosted the service in 2012.

In response to the 2016 Deanery Plan, the three local Churches of Claines, St George's and St Stephen's, met together two years ago to share information about their Churches and Mission and look to the future – this day session was called *Future Search*. Further small meetings were held to take ideas forward particularly how the three churches could work together. At that time St George's was already in a period of interregnum.

With the current vacancy at St John Baptist, Claines, it has been possible to commence the establishment of a group of Churches, to include Claines and St George's, who will share a Vicar, and with St Stephen's who are keen to share and support in the Mission of the Northern Wedge Churches.

Church Buildings



St John Baptist Church, Claines

The first priest of Claines was recorded in 957, though we only know details about the later Church built under the Bishopric of Wulstan (1075-95), little of that remains: a pillar from the 12th Century in a niche beneath the tower and a Norman coffin lid in the main aisle, in front of the font. There is also an ancient font, currently situated in the North Porch, made of a similar stone to the pillar in the tower.

The Church building we see today is an early 15th Century rebuild with many additions. In the North Porch 15th Century tiles have been mounted on the wall. The two chapels came later in the 16th Century, when the South Chapel was endowed as a Chantry Chapel (The Lady Chapel) and the North Chapel, dedicated to St Catherine. From the Catherine Chapel there is access to a former rood gallery and two squint holes. On the South side of the Sanctuary is the table tomb of John Porter, thought to have been a macebearer for Queen Elizabeth and on the South wall is a stone memorial to Edward Smart, who died in 1620. There are marriage records for Claines from 1538.

There is little evidence of rebuilding through the 17th and 18th Century, though there was extensive work undertaken in 1887, by the architect Aston Webb who extended the North side of the Church, creating a new aisle, designed the Jesse Tree on the Chancel floor and the present pews. The Jesse Tree is thought to be the only one of its kind in the country. There are a number of beautiful Victorian stained glass windows, which if followed in order around the church tell the story of the life of Jesus.

Claines originally served a large parish stretching into Worcester city centre, however in the Victorian era two further churches were built, St Stephen's and St George's (also designed by Aston Webb).

There are a number of important memorials inside the Church and in the churchyard. These include the Wakeman family who were Claines lay rectors and benefactors; the Dyson Perrins family; Elgar's maternal grandparents and John Thomas who died freeing West African slaves. By 1880 it is estimated that there were 15-20,000 burials within the churchyard. The carved lectern is in memory of Roland Cartland who died in the First World War, brother of Barbara Cartland.

The Church is Grade 2* listed and currently has the seating capacity for 250 people.

Claines Church Hall and Institute

The Hall and the Institute form an important part of the life of Claines and are used both by the Church and a variety of other organisations. The Hall and Institute are run by the Hall and Institute Management (HIM) Committee which is attended by representatives of the users of the facilities.



Claines Church Hall

Since it was built just after the Second World War, the Hall has met a variety of needs in the area. It contains a main hall licensed for 100 persons together with a stage, a kitchen, a study, toilets and outbuildings as well as a small area of land (currently used as an allotment). Its location, about 1km from the Church, places it in the middle of the residential area.

Church users of the hall include LinC, Little Fish, Mothers Union, Youth At Claines (YAC), and Messy Church. Other users include Cornmeadow Nursery (vacating in November 2012), zumba, line dancing, tap/ballet, slimming, Irish dance. It is also the home for Claines Amateur Theatrical Society ("CATS" - see Community Activities) who perform popular productions several times per year. It is also let to families and others for parties and private functions. Generally the Hall is well used.

As part of the planned refurbishment programme, the Hall is being redecorated and the kitchen refurbished. Other aspects of the work in the future will be the replacement of the electrical installation, a new heating installation and other works around the perimeter.



Claines Institute

The Institute building is located opposite the Church and is also used by the community.

Its main user during the week is a playgroup. During evenings and weekends it is used by a number of organisations including Sunday School, Mothers Union, chess club, film club and craft club. It is also available for Parish meetings when required.

It is fitted with a modern kitchen and toilets.

Work is required as part of the ongoing maintenance of the building and the site. This is being undertaken as part of a maintenance plan, to include replacement of loose tiles, making good cracks in walls, and works to the car park and site perimeter.

Institute Apartment

As part of the Institute there is a small apartment. This is being let at present to raise further income.



Claines Bells

Claines Church is unusual in that it has ten bells:

“A ring of ten, Tenor 13-3-26 in F sharp”.

The first mention of bells at Claines Church is found in the Church registers in 1380, so there is a tremendous history to ringing at Claines – records show they were rung in 1805 for the Battle of Trafalgar and most recently for the start of the London Olympic Games, at 8.12 in the morning, on Saturday 27 July, 2012.

Mostly however the bells are rung out at weddings and on the first Sunday of the month, prior to the 11 am service, when our ringers can be supported by Droitwich ringers. Sadly like so many towers across the country, there is a real shortage of ringers, and Claines is always seeking people willing to be trained at Worcester Cathedral’s teaching centre.

<http://www.clainesfriends.org.uk/tower.html>

The Vicarage

A detached family home overlooking the Church, with views across farm land to distance views of the Malvern Hills. Large lounge, dining room, kitchen, utility and cloak room; second living room and separate study. Four double bed rooms, bathroom and separate W.C. Good-sized rear garden backing on to fields; front garden has a fish pond and there is off-road parking. The Diocese has plans to modernise and improve the house and this is likely to cause disruption to the initial accommodation arrangements. Detailed plans are available on request.



The Vicarage

Church Buildings - Condition

With the exception of the Hall and Institute, where maintenance is required, the state of repair of the Church property is generally good.

The Quinquennial Report was last undertaken in October 2008. It highlighted a number of issues, the chief one being the very poor and dangerous state of the lighting and power installations. The rewiring and relighting of the Church has been undertaken as a special project completed in 2010 with fundraising achieved with grants and a significant amount from parishioners' donations. The heating of the Church is by electric tubular heaters and these all now work effectively.

A regular maintenance regime has been undertaken to address many of the points raised in the Quinquennial although there are still minor works to be done. The main one is the replacement of a couple of the mullions in the windows.

There have been a number of thefts of lead on the roof, all of which has been replaced, lead for lead, although we have investigated the use of alternative materials which may be used if thefts persist. We have also installed a new monitored anti-theft system in May 2012 based upon Diocesan recommendations, to replace the previous one which had been defeated by the thieves and was unreliable. The condition of the roof is good although we suffered from a small leak during recent bad weather. This was due to the lead capping being overworked and it has been replaced. Other areas may suffer from this in time.

The exterior lighting around the Church is adequate and the Church is floodlit at Christmas with the aid of volunteers. The Church grounds are kept in good condition by the local authority (the cemetery surrounding the Church is closed and maintained by the local authority) and by working parties for the cemetery on the far side of Mug Lane. There is an area in this cemetery for the interment of ashes and this is looked after by a member of the congregation. We have an arrangement with an organisation that clear and tidy this cemetery twice a year at modest cost. This arrangement has been used once this year and appears to work well. There are several dead trees which are in the process of being removed.

Sunday and Weekday Services

MONTHLY SERVICE STRUCTURE

Tuesday			4.30 Evening Prayer	
Thursday		10.30 Said Communion BCP		
First Sunday	8 am Said Communion	11am Eucharist and Sunday School		6.30 Evensong
Second Sunday	8 am Said Communion	11am All Age Service	3pm Baptisms	6.30 Evensong
Third Sunday	8 am Said Communion	11am Eucharist and Sunday School		6.30 Evensong
Fourth Sunday	8 am Said Communion	11am Eucharist and Sunday School	3pm Baptisms	6.30 Evensong
Fifth Sunday	8 am Said Communion	11am Matins		6.30 Alternative Communion

Average attendances at services

SERVICE	Total adults	Total children under 16 years
Thursday 10.30 am	12	0
Sunday 8am	20	0
Sunday 11am	75	25
Sunday 6.30pm	20	0

Style of Main Services

The Sunday 8:00 communion is a traditional said service following a printed order booklet. It includes a short sermon. There is a server in attendance and the Peace is an important part of the service with the whole congregation greeting each other. The relatively small numbers attending make this possible.

For the 11:00 Communion there is normally a procession with hymn in and out when the choir is present. There is a cross bearer and three servers/acolytes. The children normally attend Sunday School or God's Own Pub Club and join the service for a blessing at the Altar rail. At the end of the service, the Officiant will involve the children by asking them what they have been doing. The monthly All Age service is aimed specifically at the children (who are present throughout) and special orders of service are often used. The children's groups bring banners to the Altar. Refreshments are served after this service.

Evensong is usually part sung (responses and psalms) with prayers. Intercessions at each service may be led by the clergy or a member of the congregation.

The Thursday morning communion service is said and based upon the Book of Common Prayer.

The style of each of the main services varies depending on who is leading it and what resources are being used. Many of the congregation positively enjoy the services that they attend and may be known as the "8 o'clockers", "the 11 o'clockers" etc. The challenge is to attract these members of the congregation to other services and for them to experience other styles of worship.

On the Fifth Sunday, a traditional Choral Matins service is held at 11 o'clock and an Alternative Eucharist Service at 6.30pm, such as an Iona Service.

All clergy and servers are robed as are the choir when present.



Palm Sunday Procession

Electoral Roll

There are 240 people on the Electoral Roll – 77% live within the Parish. Of the 33% that live outside the Parish, the majority live in neighbouring parishes.

Other Services

Additional services

Advent

United Service
Installation of Junior Bishop
Young People's Advent Service
Carol Service followed by Mulled wine and Minced Pies
Junior Bishop Service, Morton House Nursing Home
Christingle and Blessing of the Crib

Christmas

First Communion of Christmas
Christmas Day – Sermon by Junior Bishop

[total congregation attendance 552
[total communicants 140
[combined figures both services

Lent

Women's World Day of Prayer
Mothering Sunday and distribution of flowers

Palm Sunday

Palm Sunday Procession and the Reading of the Passion

Easter

[total congregation 243; communicants 140
Maundy Thursday: Holy Communion 10.30am; Eucharist and Vigil 7.30pm
Good Friday: The Last Journey of Jesus: All Age 11am; Reflection on the Cross 2.00pm
Holy Saturday: Holy Fire and Easter Liturgy
Easter Sunday: Eucharist and Easter Egg Hunt
Rogation Sunday: Beating of the Bounds

Pentecost

Pentecost All Age Service

Trinity

Back to Church Sunday
Harvest Festival
Pet Service

Before Advent

Remembrance Sunday

Baptisms

There are approximately 65 baptisms per year at Claines: babies, children and adults. Baptism services are usually held on Sunday afternoons, but lately baptisms have been included in the Sunday morning family Eucharist services. The Mothers' Union has for many years been very involved in the Baptism Services at Claines. Members act as welcomers and assist the clergy during the service. All children baptised at Claines Church are remembered with a baptism anniversary card sent every year for three years after their baptism. The Mothers' Union ensure that the parents of each child are given, at the ceremony, a greetings card which also contains details of the services, clubs and meetings which include children held at the church. After the initial written request for a baptism, the clergy visit or invite the parents to Saturday Surgery at church.

Confirmation

Children and adults are prepared for confirmation once a year. The annual Confirmation service is held in one of the three Churches in our Group: St John Baptist, Claines, St George's and St Stephen's - Claines hosted Confirmation in 2012..

Weddings

Between 30 and 35 couples are married at Claines Church each year. Following their initial application to get married (some couples apply two years in advance), they are invited to our Marriage Preparation Day (see next page). Held twice yearly, these events give the couple an opportunity to meet the clergy, look at the church, discuss their wedding plans, meet other couples planning their wedding at our church and together discuss the important step they are planning to make. They also have an opportunity to talk over lunch with couples from our congregation who have been married for several years.

The prospective couple are invited to attend church to hear Banns being read, they talk to the organist with regard to music, the lady from the church flower guild about floral arrangements in the church on their special day and attend a rehearsal one week before the wedding. The majority of our bride and grooms chose to enhance their wedding with our wonderful choir and bell ringers. All guests and the bridal party are met at the church door by ushers and a church welcomer.

After the wedding, the couples receive an anniversary card for two years.

Funerals and Burial of Ashes

Claines has a very good relationship with all the funeral directors in the locality. It is aimed to provide a dignified spiritual funeral or memorial service that fits the requirements of the families with regard to readings, homilies and music. A memorial book is also maintained in church - open at the page displaying the current date - and always on show for visitors.

Renewal of Marriage Vows

Several of these services are carried out at Claines every year. Again, couples are encouraged to design their own service with personal readings and music.

Saturday Surgery

On most Saturdays of the month between 10am and 12pm the Church is open for anyone wishing to enquire about a wedding or baptism service to drop in to discuss the possibility of holding their service at Claines and to complete any necessary application forms or paperwork. In addition to a member of the Leadership and Ministry Team being available, there is often a member of the Church to provide a warm welcome and hospitality and refreshments.

Marriage Preparation Days

Twice a year (usually in March and May) we offer a marriage preparation day in the Claines Church Institute for those couples getting married at Claines Church. The day is run by the clergy who conduct weddings at Claines Church with assistance from members of the congregation. Between seven and nine couples attend each of the marriage preparation days which follow Andrew Body's 'Growing Together' course and finish with a trip to the Church to go through a few general questions about the wedding and the day closes with tea back in the Institute. Feedback from couples attending the day is always hugely positive. Not least because of the delicious hot meal provided by our church members for all those attending!

Occasional Offices

Average numbers in a year:

Baptisms:	65
Weddings:	35
Funerals:	60

Support Available

In addition to a Priest in Charge the following support is available:

- One retired priest
- One Ordinand
- A Lay Reader Emeritus
- A Lay Reader
- A Lay Reader in training

There is lay assistance with readings, intercessions and assistance with the chalice. There has also been lay assistance leading house groups.

Over the last 6 years Claines has had two Curates in training.

Musical Support

CHOIR

Background

There is a long tradition of choral singing at Claines Church, with generations of boys and men leading worship each week both at Eucharist and Evensong. The social changes of recent years have gradually made it harder to recruit and retain boys to church and cathedral choirs, and sadly Claines was not exempt from this. It was decided to form a new, combined choir (The MUGgle Choir) that would offer a choral opportunity to all members of the congregation, initially singing just once a month. In its early days, this group ran parallel to the male choir and had its own identity. It quickly proved popular enough with members and the congregation that the number of services increased.

Where we are now

The combined choir currently comprises around 24 members of varying musical experience, aged from 12 years upwards. The choir generally sing at one Eucharist and one evensong each month and may be booked to sing at weddings as required. (This a popular option for our wedding couples.) In addition, they lead worship at special services and celebrations.

Future plans

At present, only the men continue to sing at services when the combined choir are not present. Numbers are often small, but it is hoped that the ladies may in the future be happy to sing at any

Eucharist they are attending, and that the presence of the combined choir may increase accordingly. We plan to continue to recruit members from the congregation, including encouraging some of our young people to join us, especially as they become too old for Sunday School and Pub Club.

ORGANISTS

Our principal organist plays at the majority of our Sunday Services to a high musical standard and helps to ensure other guest organists play for the remainder of our Sunday Services and occasional services.

INSTRUMENTAL GROUP

Background

The instrumental group was formed following on from a music workshop run at Claines. Initially comprising three young members of the congregation playing occasionally during Communion, it quickly grew in size and scope.

Where we are now

The group now includes a mix of adults and young people on a variety of string, wind and brass instruments and of hugely varying musical experience. Like the choir, they are united in their enthusiasm and sense of common purpose and enjoy leading worship where possible. Participation in services varies from playing during communion to accompanying a whole service.

Future plans

The group has played less of late whilst their musical director has been establishing leadership of the choir, but it is hoped that they will soon be able to resume regular participation in services.

Junior Bishops

One of the most popular and widespread customs of the Church in the Middle Ages was that of Boy Bishops, taking office on the Feast of St Nicholas, with authority lasting until Holy Innocents Day.

The tradition at Claines was re-established in 1971. The Claines Bishop has an alb, cope, mitre and stole made by members of the congregation, wears a cross and ring and carries the Claines Crosier.

The 37th Boy Bishop, Louis Warburton played a leading role in the installation of Bishop John in 2007.

From 2011 the Boy Bishop at Claines became known as the 'Junior Bishop' to reflect the fact that Claines was keen to offer both boys and girls of the Parish the chance to apply for the role. Charlotte Jeavons became the first Junior Bishop:-



– her Christmas Day sermon can be read here: <http://www.clainesfriends.org.uk/bishop2011.html>

Administrative Support

This is given by the Parish Clerk, working on a part-time basis on Mondays and Fridays. Currently the Parish Clerk works in the Vicarage Study, but will be moving to an office in the Church Hall in November.

Verger's duties at Weddings and Funerals are undertaken by the Parish Clerk and one other person on a rota basis. Representatives from the Mothers' Union offer support at Baptisms.

Caretaking duties are undertaken by someone who receives an honorarium and general cleaning duties are undertaken by members of the congregation on a rota.

Support at Sunday services is undertaken by Sidespeople and the Churchwardens.

Youth and Children's Work

At Claines Church we aim to welcome, support and develop young people and children both from within our Church family and in the local Community.

In the Church itself there is a Children's area with a small table and chairs and various quiet toys and games where the children can play before, during and after services. Parents and carers can sit in pews close to this area if they choose to. For those children who prefer to remain seated elsewhere in the church with their parents and carers, there are "Busy Bags" which contain paper, pencils, quiet toys and games to occupy the children at times when it is difficult for them to participate fully in the service.

On the 2nd Sunday each month is an "all-age" 11:00 service which aims to be fully accessible to even our youngest members. The Sunday School and Pub Club regularly contribute to the service by reading lessons and prayers and leading the singing. At major festivals such as Easter and Advent they will take responsibility for leading the whole service.

There is no crèche facility at present but young babies can be brought to the Institute Hall (where Sunday School meets) if they are not able to remain in church for some reason, e.g. nappy change or feed time and their parent or carer remains with them. There are a few toys appropriate for these children, but usually parents bring along the babies' own familiar toys.

On all other Sundays in the month we have two groups which cater specifically for the children and Young People.



Sunday School



Sunday School is aimed at children from 3 to 9 years. The session runs from just before 11am (when the church service begins) and ends by joining the whole congregation at the communion table towards the end of the service. There is great fun learning about God and our Christian faith through stories, songs, prayers, games, arts and crafts. Claines' mission is to encourage the children to come to know Jesus as their friend and saviour.



God's Own Pub Club



Our mission with this group of "older" children (School Year 5 and above) is to develop their relationship with Jesus. Due to lack of space in the Church Institute where the Sunday School meet, sessions are held in The Mug House or in the Churchyard itself, depending on the weather. This group is a stepping stone between Sunday school and the Adult Church and the young people are encouraged to participate in services wherever possible.

Lots of fun takes place learning about our faith and exploring what it means to be a Christian through Bible reading, prayers, quizzes, games and running fundraising events. The annual "Good Friday Breakfast" is hosted by the youngsters in the Church Institute, and raises money for their chosen charity. This year's beneficiary was the Worcester Maggs Day Centre for the homeless.

As part of our support and encouragement of children and young people in the Parish the church also runs two “non-Sunday” groups:-



YAC (Youth At Claines) is the youth group catering for youngsters aged 9 years and over. It meets on alternate Fridays, usually at the Church Hall, Cornmeadow Lane, from 7.30 - 9.00 to enjoy a variety of games and activities. There is also a “God Slot” through which the youngsters are encouraged to develop their Christian faith, and a very popular (and inexpensive) tuck shop. There is a small charge of 50p per week which helps to fund the group. Some children who are not part of our God’s Own Pub Club attend this group and are encouraged to join in with Church activities aimed at their age group. In particular they have been involved in the annual Pub Club Breakfast which is held on Good Friday and has raised substantial amounts over the years for various church and non-church charities. This helps the children learn about being of service to their community as a response to their faith.



The Little Fish Club is a monthly Celebration Service in The Church Hall, Cornmeadow Lane, for babies, toddlers pre-schoolers and their parents, grandparents and carers. Stories, songs, craft activities and games are used to tell the children and those accompanying them about God’s love for them. There is the chance for adults to meet each other, socialise and have a chat over some light refreshments.

Our aim is to have fun, to enable everyone to get to know one another and to learn what it is to be part of the family of God.



Little Fish Easter Activity Day

Also

On a regular basis, several times a year, the Leaders of the Youth and Children’s Groups organise family events inviting all those who have taken part in any of the groups named above. There have been FOG (Friends of God) days with lots more time to get to know one another and explore our faith further, through stories, songs, games and craft activities. We have also enjoyed Advent and

Pentecost parties which have been very well attended, giving everyone the opportunity to explore and develop their relationships with Jesus and one another.

8th Worcester Scout & Guide Group

Since 1969 Claines Parish have had a Scout and Guide group based at the Scout Hut in Cornmeadow Lane. Children and young people aged between 5 and 14 years of age meet during the week in their sections and enjoy activities based on the philosophy of scouting. We have a strong group of voluntary leaders and a committee of parents who work together fundraising to keep the building in good condition, therefore allowing children and young people to experience this wonderful movement. The Church has been pleased to involve Scouts and Guides in Pet Services and is seeking to develop closer links with them in the future.



Messy Church

Messy Church at Claines began in March 2012 (initially on a 3 month trial basis) following a period of assessment and consultation with Claines Church members and families, local schools and organisations and the Diocesan Children's Officer and Regional Messy Church representative. It is a small (40+) but growing congregation of families and peoples of all ages who meet on the first Saturday of the month in the Church Hall on Cornmeadow Lane to explore the Bible in various wonderful, fun (and messy) ways and to share in a short time of Christian celebration followed by a cooked sit-down meal. A core team meet monthly to plan and prepare the service from the published Messy Church materials and several others assist on the day. Messy Church is aimed principally at families in our parish with younger children and in engaging the whole family in worship - particularly those who would not ordinarily attend one of our regular more traditional and liturgical Sunday services. Messy Church is supported and subsidised by the PCC and by 'Messy Grocers' who sign up each month on the list in Claines Church to provide items for the Messy Church meals. Displays of each Messy Church are also shown in Church.



Open The Book

We have a small team of volunteers who go into our primary school twice per month. They act out and explain Bible stories as prescribed by the National Open The Book Programme. The children are also involved in the "production", thoroughly enjoy the sessions and are heard to say "When are you coming again?"



Church Groups and Activities

Spiritual Growth

Lent and Advent courses are run each year at Claines Church and are usually attended by a dozen or so participants. Annual Confirmation courses also are run for some 5 to 10 candidates. A weekly House-group meets for prayer and bible study and has about 9 members. "Daily Bread" bible notes and Diocesan Prayer diaries are made available to all the congregation as well as weekly prayers, reflections and bible notes being included in the weekly notice sheet. Claines Church also supports and participates in Worcester Alpha at the Old Palace. A spirituality group meets periodically as a sub-group of the PCC, to advise on and explore opportunities to deepen spirituality, for example, by providing facilities for gathering and responding to prayer requests from parishioners and visitors alike. Church service intercessions are led by a team of church member intercessors, with help from youngsters during the all-age service and Christmastide. The Parish website provides online facilities for visitors to the site with easy access to daily prayer notes and scripture readings.

Faith and Fellowship

Making Claines a Welcoming Church

A Welcoming Group was set up in 2009 with the aim of making the church a more 'Welcoming' place for visitors and regular worshippers. A start has been made in this mission by having the Church open every day (since April 2012), by establishing a space for quiet prayer in the Lady Chapel, and providing prayer books and candles for visitors.

Over the last two years the Church has identified many needs, including space to provide refreshments for the congregation both after services and during the week, storage for service sheets, fair trade goods and children's toys, a space for the fair trade stall, an expanded children's area, an area for notice boards and information display and a flexible space in which it would be possible to hold small meetings. Following discussions with representatives from the Diocesan Advisory Committee and English Heritage there is agreement that the Church is "over-furnished" and would benefit from some reordering.

The Welcoming Group has a number of proposals relating to the reordering and over the next few months is proposing to involve the congregation in a consultation process on re-ordering the North aisle, and will continue to look at providing toilet facilities within the Church. These plans will form a major project for the future of Claines Church and will necessitate approaches to grant-making bodies.

Mothers' Union

Claines Mothers' Union was first founded at Claines Church just over 120 years ago. We presently have 29 members and hold two meetings each month. One in the afternoon for our older members and one in the evening for our younger members. All are welcome, married, single, divorced and need not have had children. We work towards four objectives:

- Promoting and supporting marriage and family life
- Encouraging parents in their role to develop the faith of their children
- Maintaining worldwide fellowship of Christians, united in prayer, worship and service
- Helping those whose family has met with adversity

Our groups enjoy each others' company and meetings involve a time of worship followed by talks and discussions covering Mothers' Union activities including projects here and abroad. Topics such as parenting and prison work, literacy programmes, wedding fayres and campaigns, including the most recent "Bye, Buy Childhood". We join with our fellow members across the diocese at festivals and functions. We hold social events with shared meals 'in house' and at local restaurants. Fundraising is very important, as is supporting Church events. Claines MU have close links with the MU group at St Georges and meet several times during the year for fellowship and worship.

LinC

Lunch in Company, (LinC), was launched in our parish in March 2011. It's aim is to provide a good meal and pleasant company to any in our community, (of any or no faith or church affiliation), who live alone. Meetings are held in the church hall on the second Saturday of each month and currently have around 30 regular diners.

Fair Trade

St John Baptist is a fair trade church committed to using fairly traded products wherever that is possible. There is a fair trade stall selling goods at all services on each second Sunday of the month, including the 11 o'clock family service. The congregation is very supportive: the stall raises over £1,000.00 per annum for fair trade. It is a future aim to have the fair trade goods available at all services and for all visitors to the church.

Pastoral Care

At Claines there is a great belief in the power of prayer, and our prayers for those who are ill, who have any special need of prayer, those bereaved and those who have died are kept up to date and are remembered in services.

Recently the Lady Chapel has been identified as a place in Church for quiet prayer. A prayer book is available for anyone to request prayers to be said, and these are remembered especially at Tuesday evening prayer and within Holy Communion on Thursday. Since we have been an Open Church, we know that many members of the congregation, members of the parish and visitors, come into Church and use the Lady Chapel, many lighting a candle.

***The Prayer for Peace which concluded Bishop Koenwald's grant of land
in Claines to Behstan the Priest in AD 957:-***

Pax in Coelo	Peace in Heaven
Pax in Terra	Peace in Earth
Pax in Plebe	Peace in Christian
Christiano Hodie	People today
Cras et Cotidie	Tomorrow and Every
Alpha and Omega	Day from First to Last
Amen	Amen

Members of the Ministry team and some members of the congregation undertake home visits and hospital visits. Communion is taken into people's homes and currently we are seeking more members of the congregation to be involved in this. Claines is keen to communicate with the congregation and the wider parish; the weekly pew sheet and monthly magazine are important for this.

Parish Magazine

The magazine is published 10 times a year, with July/August and December/January being joint issues. Circulation is 550 copies and the cost is 30p per copy or £3.00 for a year's subscription. "Home Words" is included in the magazine as a loose-leaf insert. An edited version (fewer graphics) is posted on the church website. The cost of producing the magazine is subsidised by the generosity of a wide range of local advertisers. The income also helps to meet the extra cost of an Easter leaflet, which includes news about the church and local community organisations and

goes out free to all 3,000 homes in the parish. Communication locally, nationally and worldwide is maintained through the website.

The Claines Church Website

The Claines Friends Website is now in its 6th year and attracts a regular and growing audience, having received 55,000 visitors since it began, from all over the world. We continue to receive many queries through the site for Church details and services and numerous family history and Church records questions. We have a loyal group of “Bloggers” from Sunday School, Pub Club, YAC and Little Fish. All of these sit alongside the regular news items; the electronic version of the Parish Magazine, PCC minutes and agendas, and the historical feature articles as well as a recently added Parish Calendar. <http://www.clainesfriends.org.uk>

Ecumenical Links

The Claines-Kandago Project

In 2006 the Vicar of Claines, a Reader, and a Church Warden explored the possibility of extending the church’s outreach. It already supported a number of charities, but it was felt that a more personal involvement would be beneficial, not only to the recipients but also to the parishioners. After many meetings, discussions and enquiries, contact was made with the Reverend Gad Twinamugisha, Parish Priest of Kandago, who also serves the churches in Kirimbe and Rwaburimbira. These churches are in the Ugandan Diocese of Kigeze, which has links with the Mothers’ Union in the Worcester Diocese.

Revd. Gad was delighted to form a link with Claines and, on being asked how we could best help his parishioners, suggested sponsorship for the secondary education of some of their young people. Secondary education in Uganda is not free. The people of Kandago are mostly poor farmers who cannot afford to pay, which means that their children leave school at the age of 11. The Claines-Kandago Project thus came into being, and the first students were sponsored in 2007. It costs £100 per year to sponsor a student, most of whom are boarders; money is sent to Kandago at the beginning of each school term. When the scheme started it was possible to sponsor 25 students; this number has increased, and for the last two years 34 students have received secondary education as a result of this project.

In Kandago the scheme is organised by the Parish Priest who is the Overseer, the Revd. Jackson Rutoosha, Director and the Head of Laity (Church Warden). Each year they decide which students should receive sponsorship and whether or not this should be continued for specific students. The current Priest of Kandago, the Reverend Jack Tumutwgyereize, has written to Claines: “We greatly cherish the good work you are doing for us to maintain our children at school, most of whom would otherwise constitute school drop-outs”. We very much hope that Claines can continue this project in the future.

Deanery Synod

The Worcester East Deanery Synod is an elected body. It enables Claines and the other parishes within the City boundary to the east of the River Severn to have a forum in which to discuss issues affecting this part of the Diocese. Currently there are four elected members to the Deanery Synod

and one of those is at present the Deanery Secretary. The Vicar of Claines was the Rural Dean at the time of his departure.

Community Activities

Regular users of Church

Claines Primary School and School Bank Nursery hold services in Church.

Claines has established close links with the Lifeboats Association (RNLI), who hold their Annual Service in Church and the British Legion who hold their Annual Remembrance Day Service at Claines and other special services. The previous vicar was the Chaplain of the British Legion.

Claines Arts & Social Society (CASS)

CASS was formed 25 years ago. Ladies meet on the first Wednesday evening in the month at the Church Hall and enjoy guest speakers, outings, mystery trips and an annual dinner. During the monthly meetings there are approximately 70 members who range between 50 and 80 years of age. The monthly meetings start with refreshments and a chat. Throughout the year money is donated to local charities. This is a diverse group that always welcomes new members.

Claines Amateur Theatrical Society (CATS)

CATS was formed in 1997. They perform a summer musical show and a February pantomime each year at the church hall in Cornmeadow Lane, Worcester.

A few enthusiastic amateur dramatic performers back in the summer of 1997 thought a local theatre group, affiliated to their church, would be a great way to help entertain parish members and friends. Their first production, "The Hoe Down", was presented at the church hall to capacity houses. CATS were so well-received it didn't take long for the group to start production of its first pantomime, and since then it has not looked back.

The aim since formation was to create fun, interesting shows using the skills of their loyal members. It is hoped that the support of families and good friends in the parish - and further afield - will continue for many years to come. All abilities are welcomed, on and off stage, from ages of 10 upwards!

In February 2012 CATS performed "Panto in the Jungle" and their summer musical production was called "Reflections" - a collection of rock and pop songs with a twist! This was the first time that CATS performed inside the church.

Ragbags 4 Church

The 'Rag Bag' recycling scheme has been developed to provide regular fundraising for Claines Church.

The scheme increases awareness about textile recycling and thus recycling rates. The four-fold aim is to divert tonnage away from landfill; help the environment; provide good quality clothing to some

of the poorest developing nations in the world, and provide money for the church and mission in Claines.

Events Committee

St John Baptist has a very active “Events Committee” who meet regularly in order to organise a variety of social and fund-raising events throughout the year. Whilst not all activities are for fund raising those that are contribute a vital source of income to the church. On average around £3,000.00 per annum is raised, though in some years substantially higher totals have been reached.

Regular events include: Harvest supper and concert, or shared lunch; Coffee mornings both at the hall and in congregation or committee members homes; Summer Fayres held annually and the main fund raising event: a very popular annual fish and chip quiz night. This year it is planned to hold a Christmas Fayre within the church grounds in December 2012 – a new venture.

Less regular events include an exceptionally successful “promises auction” which raised £3,000.00+; A “Biblathon” – sponsored 24 hour bible read, and Treasure Hunts in the local environs. Special events such as the recent Jubilee tea party have proved especially popular with the local community and attracted large numbers of families.



Jubilee Celebration



Bible Marathon

The events committee is also called upon to provide refreshments for a variety of after-service events such as post-confirmation teas.

In the past coach trips to national theatre shows have also been organised.

The committee of approximately 12+ committed members is ably supported by helpers from the congregation. However, it is constantly looking to recruit new members, especially younger people with new ideas.

The previous vicar had a significant input into various events and attended many meetings – something that it is hoped will continue in the future.

In addition to raising funds the events committee sees its work as an important form of outreach for the church. Indeed many of the local community's first point of contact with St John Baptist has been via an organised event.

Volunteers

Flower Guild

Claines Church Flower Guild was formed with willing lady volunteers, to arrange the flowers in church. With Claines being a popular church, these ladies are kept very busy, arranging for the many weddings held. Also, with the exception of Lent, the church is decorated with flower arrangements throughout the whole year. This is to give an uplifting welcome to the congregation and visitors.



Congregation

A number of volunteers from the congregation help in so many ways, for example: ordering wine and wafers; changing altar frontals; cleaning the Church; obtaining, decorating and dismantling the Christmas Tree; putting up Advent floodlights; serving refreshments; Serving; reading Intercessions; Bible readings; Eucharistic Assistants; Sidespersons; Churchyard working parties and maintenance of the Memorial Garden; magazine editing and delivering; maintaining the website; banking money; Committee Members; PCC members; The Choir; musicians and welcoming; Leaders and helpers with our Sunday School and youth groups...**to mention just a few !**

Finance

Support For Managing Finances

In addition to the work of the PCC Treasurer, there is a Giving Secretary; a recently appointed Stewardship Officer and volunteers: one of whom banks collections each week and another that deals specifically with cheques for weddings. The Hall and Institute Management Committee has a Treasurer, who manages the income and expenditure for the two buildings separately, though the accounts are reflected in the Church Accounts. One meeting has taken place of a newly formed Finance Committee; it is hoped to hold regular meetings in future and for this group to help with strategic planning and projects relating to finance. The PCC have appointed a new Independent Examiner of the accounts.

Parish Share

Claines had a tradition of paying the Parish Share in full; however in the year ending 2011, this was not possible. £37,450 was paid; our allocated share was £72,620. This was due to the death of a number of very generous givers and the need to replace stolen lead. In previous years reserves had been used to ensure payment in full; however we no longer have reserves to call upon.

Clergy Expenses

Clergy Expenses are paid in full

Stewardship & Planned Giving

The Parish uses the Diocesan 'Giving For Life' programme. There are currently 83 sets of weekly envelopes issued and a further 37 contribute by 'direct giving'. 82 of the contributors are listed for gift Aid. In 2011, 267 contributions were made under 'Casual Gift Aid'.

Missionary Giving

Members of the Congregation sponsor the education of young people in Kandago, Uganda. A couple in the congregation co-ordinate the Christian Aid house to house collections with a group of volunteers and this year we also held a cake sale, to boost income for this. The Church supports Maggs Day Centre, for homeless people in Worcester City, both with fund-raising e.g. the profit from the Big Breakfast and donations of cash and food. Other food donations are given out following Harvest Festival, to needy persons and the local Hospice.

Reserves

The Church currently has no reserves.

Restricted and Designated funds held

A number of restricted and designated funds held include a Forces Fund for the benefit of the Church Hall; an Institute Fund and funds for the maintenance of specific graves, the Tower and the bells. Other small funds are held.

The Annual Accounts for the year ending December 2011 are available on request.

Organisation

- **Claines PCC** meets 6 times a year
- The **Standing Committee** meets 5 times a year
- The **APCM** is held at the end of April and usually follows an 11am service
- Other committees that report to the PCC include: -
The **Welcome Group** which meets 6 times a year; the **Events Committee** meets approximately 6 times a year, but more often to plan major events, such as the Jubilee; the **Hall and Institute Management Committee (HIM)**, who meet approximately 4 times a year. The **Worship and Spirituality Group** have not met recently but it is hoped they will be re-launched. The **Finance Group** have met once and it is hoped they will establish a regular pattern of meetings, in support of the PCC Treasurer.
- **The Leadership and Ministry team** meets once a month.

A position for you?

We sincerely hope that having read our Parish Profile, you will be as excited as we are about the future of Claines Church. If, after prayerful consideration, you feel you would be able to work with us and would like to continue your Ministry here at Claines please contact:-

warden@clainesfriends.org.uk

You may find the links within the Parish Profile useful for additional information, and also the following websites:-

Worcester Diocese - <http://www.cofe-worcester.org.uk/>

St George's Church - <http://www.stgeorgesbarbourne.org.uk/first.html>

St Stephen's Church - <http://www.barbourne-ststephen.org.uk/>

Worcester City Council - <http://www.worcester.gov.uk/>

Worcester Tourist Information - <http://www.visitworcester.com/>