



The Parish of Harpenden, St John

MEETING PAPERS

FOR THE

MEETING OF THE PARISHIONERS

AND THE

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

To be held via Zoom

On Sunday 11th October 2020

11.00 a.m.

V3 – Adds Reaching New People to Groups (4 October 11:10)

V2 – Adds Fabric Report to Groups (3 October, 15:15)

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AGENDAS

MEETING OF PARISHIONERS

*To be held via Zoom on Sunday 11th October 2020
at 11.00 a.m.*

- 1 Apologies for absence
- 2 Minutes of the Meeting of Parishioners held on 7th April 2019
- 3 Matters arising
- 4 Election of churchwardens

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

*To be held via Zoom on Sunday 11th October 2020
following the Meeting of Parishioners*

- 1 Apologies for absence
- 2 Minutes of the APCM held on 7th April 2019
- 3 Matters Arising
- 4 Electoral roll report
- 5 Churchwardens' report
- 6 Treasurer's financial review
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- 8 Election of representatives to the Parochial Church Council
- 9 Update on Project Phoenix
- 10 Ministry team review
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ST JOHN'S CHURCH, HARPENDEN

Minutes of the Meeting of Parishioners

held on Sunday 7th April 2019

in the Church Hall at 11.00 a.m.

Present – 55 members of the congregation were present.

1. Apologies for Absence

Anne Armstrong, Birgitta Clift, Pat Hudis, John and Muriel Hammond, Sue Holt, Michael & Doris Hughes, Neil Middleton, David and Heather Nye, Sarah Poppleton, Joy Steele, Lesley & Alan Tree

2. Minutes of the Last Meeting

Adoption of the minutes of the Meeting of Parishioners held on Sunday 29th April 2018 was proposed by Nick Lockett, seconded by Margaret Charlston and carried unanimously. The minutes were signed by Mary Jean as a correct and accurate record.

3. Matters Arising

There were none.

4. Election of Church Wardens

Two nominations had been received prior to the meeting:

James Hillman, proposed by Mary Jean and seconded by Jacky Dodd, and

Jane Donati, proposed by David Brown and seconded by Brenda Cottle.

In the absence of any other nominations, James and Jane were elected unanimously to serve as church wardens for the year 2019/2020.

Tom Venner gave a vote of thanks to Mary Jean and James Hillman for the huge contribution they have made as churchwardens in the last 12 months, both in time and commitment to the smooth running of parish life during the interregnum.

The meeting closed at 11.10 a.m.



ST JOHN'S CHURCH, HARPENDEN

Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting

held on Sunday 7th April 2019

in the church hall

1. Apologies for absence

Members present and apologies for absence were the same as for the Meeting of Parishioners.

2. Minutes of the last APCM

Adoption of the minutes of the meeting held on Sunday 29th April 2018 was proposed by Matt Barter, seconded by Dawn Mason and carried unanimously. The minutes were then signed by Mary Jean as a full and accurate record.

3. Matters Arising

There were none.

4. Electoral Roll

In the absence of Neil Middleton our Electoral Roll Officer, Mary Jean gave an overview of the Electoral Roll Report. This year, a full revision of the electoral roll was carried out, which meant that all existing members were required to confirm their wish to remain on the roll.

The new roll has 172 entries, a net reduction of 59 which is disappointing.

Points to note are:

- That there has been a very striking change in the ratio of those inside and outside the ecclesiastical boundary. The ratio was 1.2 to 1 and is now 1.9 to 1. Numbers inside the Parish have broadly remained stable.
- That the ratio between women and men remains much the same at 2 to 1
- This year we added 20, which is a lot more than we normally achieve, when we are just doing a top up
- A few people had moved away

- The previous roll had names on it that were not recognised when it was looked at last year by Nicholas and the churchwardens

Roger Carter commented that from his view from the organ loft, he believes that the numbers in the congregation are creeping back up again and that some of those who had stopped coming to St John's might intend to return.

Alison Gardiner reported that she had done the electoral roll for about 12 years and every year the number went down. David Brown agreed with this and added that the fact that there are 20 new names is a very positive sign and Matt Barter concluded that 80-90% of churches in England would be glad to have our numbers, it should not be viewed as negative at all.

Adoption of the electoral roll was proposed by Moira Carrington, seconded by Naomi Burnett and carried unanimously.

5. Churchwardens' Report

The report had been circulated in advance with the paperwork for the meeting on the website. James Hillman gave an overview to the meeting describing the last 12 months as a time of change, challenge, loss, celebration and a time to look to the future.

- Rotas remain an on-going challenge: lifts, sidesmen, coffee and servers all require more volunteers to assist with these weekly parish tasks and everyone was urged to consider stepping forward to sign up to help in any area they possibly could.
- The interregnum has seen St John's working together at its best. Producing a parish profile and organising the interviewing of candidates was a huge team effort, with help from the Bishop of Hertford and the Rural Dean
- Sadly, it has been a time of loss, with some much loved, long-standing parishioners recently deceased. We remember: Derek Satchell, June Jones, John Borthwick and Elizabeth Brown.
- We have celebrated the ordination of our curate, Rev James Brown and also David Halsey as Deacon. Cultivate was a successful and happy event last June and we have been fortunate in having a selection of guest preachers, including Bishop Stephen Venner on Christmas morning, Archdeacon Jonathan Smith, Rev Will Gibbs and Rev Denis Stamps, all of whom have added to and enhanced our worship at St John's.
- There is much to look forward to as we welcome our new vicar, Berkeley Zych at his Installation on Thursday 16th May as well as the parish centre, covered below.
- Thanks were given to James Brown for all he is doing during the interregnum, for his vision, energy and ministry. Thanks were also given to Mary Jean for her work as churchwarden, for her calmness, friendship and sincerity.
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6. Treasurer's Financial Review

The Financial Statements had been circulated with the paperwork for the meeting and were on the website after being independently examined by Tim Coleman and adopted at the last PCC meeting on 26th March. Steve Creasy provided a short overview of the money coming in and the money going out during 2018 and our net assets position at the end of 2018.

Income	2018		2017	
Planned giving	70%	£115k	47%	£122k
Hall lettings	12%	£20k	9%	£23k
Weddings & Funerals	5%	£8k	2%	£6k
Open plate	4%	£6k	2%	£5k
Magazine advertising	3%	£4k	2%	£5k
Donations & Appeals	2%	£3k	1%	£3k
Linwood Road property lettings	-	-	2%	£5k
Legacies	1%	£2k	32%	£84k
Everything else	3%	£8k	3%	£5k
Total	100%	£166k	100%	£258k
Expenditure				
Parish share	50%	£105k	53%	£105k
New Parish Centre	14%	£31k	5%	£10k
Staff costs	12%	£25k	12%	£24k
Outside charitable giving	6%	£14k	8%	£16k
Church running costs & maint	5%	£10k	4%	£8k
Hall running costs & maintenance	3%	£6k	4%	£8k
Grounds upkeep (new shed)	-	-	4%	£9k
Magazine printing	2%	£5k	2%	£5k
Weddings & Funerals	2%	£4k	2%	£3k
Parish office administrative costs	2%	£5k	2%	£5k
Everything else	4%	£9k	4%	£7k
Total	100%	£214k	100%	£200k
Net (Deficit)/Surplus		(£48k)		£58k

Compared to the previous year

In 2017, a net surplus was generated of £58k. In 2018, a net deficit of £48k was generated. Therefore, the difference between 2018 compared to 2017 is £106k which mainly relates to the following:

Downside

- Legacy income was £82k lower.

- Planned giving income was £7k lower.
- New Parish Centre costs were £21k higher (£31k in 2018 v £10k in 2017).
- Linwood Road property rental income was £5k lower (part year rental in 2017).

Upside

- Grounds upkeep costs were £8k lower (New shed in 2017).

Balance sheet

Total funds, or net assets, of the church at the end of 2018 were £235k, which is £48k lower than the funds of £283k at the beginning of 2018, due to the £48k deficit generated in 2018.

These funds consist of the following net assets:

- Property assets of £64k (Linwood Road property held at original cost).
- Remaining £171k:
 - Bank balance of £178k.
 - Debtors (which are amounts owed to St John's) of £13k (of which the main items is the amount due from HMRC for Gift Aid); and
 - Creditors (which are amounts owed by St John's) of £20k (of which the main item is the 10% Outside Giving payments which are made after the year-end).

Budget

2018 budget was a deficit of £30k. Actual deficit was £48k mainly because we didn't start fundraising for the parish centre, but incurred costs.

The budget for this year, 2019, is a deficit of £43k. This does not include any net cost for the Parish Centre, as the budget assumes any expenditure will be met by fundraising.

There were a couple of questions from the floor:

- From the treasurer's perspective, how do we stand, if we take the parish centre out of the equation?
The answer given was that there has always been a deficit and we have always had legacies; we cannot budget for these though.
- Clarity on the parish share was requested and whether we push ourselves into deficit in order to pay it?

The answer given was that the parish share is driven by the numbers on the electoral roll. We have always paid it in the past and a recent discussion at a PCC meeting endorsed that we would always meet it and, in an area like Harpenden, it would be inappropriate not to.

Adoption of the accounts was proposed by David Brown, seconded by Anne Edwards and carried unanimously.

Mary Jean thanked Steve Creasy for employing his time and expertise in managing the finances of the church so well and for presenting the accounts with such succinct clarity and in such excellent order.

7. Safeguarding Report

The report had been prepared by Jane Donati, our safeguarding lead on the PCC and had been circulated in advance with the meeting papers on the website. Jane gave a brief explanation about how we adopt the policies that come through the diocese and keep up to date with them all. There is a strict policy on DBS (Disclosure and Barring) checks; 25 had been undertaken since the last APCM. There is a blue file in the entrance porch if anyone would like to find out more, likewise Junior Church has information readily available to them as well. Jane was thanked by Mary Jean for her commitment to such a responsible and vital role here at St John's.

8. Report from Deanery Synod

The report had been prepared by David Nye and had been circulated in advance with the meeting papers on the website. There were no questions raised on it.

9. Election of lay representatives to the Deanery Synod

One nomination to serve as a representative of the laity to Deanery Synod had been received prior to the meeting.

David Nye Proposed by Michael Readman Seconded by Susannah Pyke

Mary Jean told the meeting that she is resigning from the Deanery Synod, so St John's currently has one further vacancy for lay representation (who does not have to be an elected member of the PCC); anyone interested was invited to come forward.

10. Election of lay representatives to the Parochial Church Council

Those whose term of office expired this year were Sarah Poppleton, Carol Cooke, Liz Swinscoe and Stephen Whiting. The reduction in the number on the electoral roll had an impact on the number of members we could have on the PCC. There were three vacancies.

Three nominations to serve as members of the PCC for the next three years had been received prior to the meeting.

Andrew Harbord Proposed by Derek Curran Seconded by Sybil Thompson

Liz Macdonald Proposed by Dawn Mason Seconded by Caroline Warren

Liz Newell Proposed by James Hillman Seconded by Mary Jean Pritchard

There were no other nominations, rendering a ballot unnecessary, and the three nominations for the PCC were presented to the meeting 'en bloc', proposed by Emma Bresslaw and seconded by Naomi Burnett. The meeting unanimously elected the fore-named nominees to serve in the capacity and for the term specified above. The PCC has a maximum tenure of 6 years to ensure the membership reflects the membership of the congregation and is kept refreshed.

The terms of five existing members of the PCC will expire in 2020: Naomi Burnett, Dawn Mason, Bill Moore, Liz Sergeant and Tom Venner

Mary Jean thanked the outgoing members of the PCC for their time and contribution.

As no volunteers had come forward to take on the role of Treasurer, Mary Jean advised the meeting that Steve Creasy be co-opted back onto the PCC for a further year; this was proposed by David Brown and seconded by Richard Kwiatowski and carried unanimously.

Last year Emma Bresslaw was co-opted onto the PCC in her capacity as PCC secretary, as at the time no replacement could be found. Jacky Dodd has since taken on this role and Emma has now stepped down to pursue her Lay Leader of Worship (LLW) work, Lenten lunches, Tea @ 3 and other parish activities. Thanks were given for all her work and endless energy and support over many years in her role of PCC secretary.

11. i) Appointment of Sidesmen

The list of names of all those to be appointed to act as sidesmen for the coming year was read aloud. The list was agreed to be correct and when queried from the floor, confirmed that it includes all services. Adoption of all the names was proposed by Liz Sergeant, seconded by Roger Carter and agreed unanimously.

ii) Appointment of Independent Examiner

Due to the statutory prescribed financial limits, the PCC accounts do not require an auditor. Instead, under the Charities Act, the PCC can appoint an Independent Examiner to verify the accuracy of the accounts. Michael Coleby recently stepped down having acted in this capacity for us for nine years. Tim Coleman has kindly offered to take on the role. Andrew Harbord proposed that Tim Coleman be appointed as the Independent Examiner for 2019; this was seconded by Liz Sergeant and agreed unanimously.

12. Parish Centre Update

James Hillman addressed the meeting to give the current position of progress on the parish centre.

- Thanks were given to Matt Barter and David Christian who, amongst other things, have worked through the detail with the architects, conducted a travel survey, considered the effects on the environment and liaised with the diocese over our proposed parish centre. They have also produced a detailed visual representation of the building.
- A fund-raising consultant was appointed to advise on this aspect of the build.
- The planning application was submitted last month to the council.
- A recent press article highlighted the potential parking difficulties. A letter of support from a local resident was subsequently published, also in the Herts Advertiser, so demonstrating that objections are not universal. St John's has no intention of being bad or inconsiderate neighbours, the desire is to provide a mission-enabling, community-enhancing centre everyone will benefit from. The travel survey outlines when peak usage is and it should be noted that the greatest amount of traffic is on Sunday mornings or when there is a wedding or funeral taking place.
- The next step will be to start the fund-raising and this will be launched later this year.

13. Any Other Business

- It had been noted that problems are being experienced with the hot water urn in the kitchen. Ensuring we have something that is safe and practical to use for morning coffee and tea @ 3 amongst other things was delegated to the Standing Committee. It is unlikely that it will be replaced by an urn that requires plumbing in as these can be problematic due to the hard water; instead the thermostat on the current one will be looked at and if necessary, replaced or a similar new urn purchased.
- Liz Sergeant told the meeting to look out for Cultivate 2019 which will take place between 23rd – 30th June. St John's will be participating with another installation. There will be a programme of events which coincides with our Patronal Festival and a closing celebration.
- Michael Readman had attended a powerful talk by Bishop Alan at the Deanery Synod about fixed odd betting terminals. Bishop Alan is currently leading a bill through the House of Lords in an effort to change the current legislation.
- James Brown mentioned the Southdown Festival, a community-wide event taking place between 6 – 8 September 2019.

The meeting officially ended with a prayer at 12.30 pm.

14. The Life of St John's'

As there had been no Vicar's Report this year, at the end of the meeting, each table was given one of the priorities identified in our Mission Action Plan and asked to discuss what they felt were its challenges and opportunities. A spokesperson was nominated from each group to feed back to the meeting and this was noted on a flipchart. This will be shared with Berkeley when he starts as he is keen to hold 'soapbox' events and seek out points of view from the congregation, enabling him to get a feeling of where we are currently at. The priorities are:

- Worship
- Prayer and spirituality
- Evangelism and outreach
- Pastoral care and fellowship
- Community involvement and service.

Next year's APCM will take place on Sunday 19th April 2020

St John the Baptist Harpenden: Electoral Roll

Report for the Annual Parochial Church Meeting of 11th October 2020

For 2020, Church of England Rules required us to undertake an incremental refresh of the Electoral Roll; existing members of the Roll remain on the Roll unless they actively ask to be removed or both live outside the Parish and cease to attend without good reason. We had no removals in either of these categories.

Unusually, this Roll update covers a period of 18 months as this year's APCM has been deferred by 6 months due to Covid-19.

Our new Roll has 177 entries. This is a net increase of 5 on the March 2019 Roll. The net movement is as follows:

Last Year's Roll	172	
Passed away		-1

Carried forward		171
Added to the Roll for the first time [Ⓡ]		6
New Roll		177

The revised Roll will be displayed in the Church from today.

Of the 177 entries:

- 120 are female and 57 are male – a ratio of 2.1 to 1, virtually unchanged from last year.
- 115 are residents in the (ecclesiastical) Parish and 62 state that they have worshipped for 6 months or more – a ratio of 1.9 to 1, virtually unchanged from last year).

Neil Middleton
Electoral Roll Officer
25th September 2020

Ⓡ Including one person recorded in the Roll before the 2019 APCM but having their 16th birthday after the APCM and two who were added straight after the 2019 APCM as their forms were returned late.

The Electoral Roll will be open again for additions after the end of the APCM. Blank forms are available in the Church Porch or from stjohnsharpenden.org.uk/information/

CHURCHWARDENS' REPORT 2019-2020

(This report was due to be submitted to the APCM in April 2020, but owing to the pandemic, the APCM was postponed to October 2020, thus it looks back on the year from April 2019 to September 2020)

As churchwardens we are required to provide a report to the APCM summarising the main activities which have occurred at St John's during the past year. This report reflects those events up to the lock-down caused by the coronavirus pandemic. The church has continued its mission through the weekly online services, and from the beginning of August, through a Sunday service in church. Morning and evening prayers have also taken place. We would like to thank our deputy wardens, Bill Moore, Martin Myers and Heather Nye for their support to us over the year.

We are also grateful to members of the Standing Committee: Jacky Dodd has kept us in check as PCC secretary during the year, and Steve Creasy, our treasurer, has once again this year carried out the duties and responsibilities of Treasurer efficiently and professionally, managing our budgets, accounts and finances, and dealing with our day-to-day accounting procedures. Steve took a very well-earned "retirement" after many years in this role, and we thank him enormously for the clarity that he has brought to the finances over this time. Tim Coleman was co-opted by the PCC to be the new Treasurer in the spring.

Furthermore, we are indebted to the many and various teams of volunteers who gave us their support in sharing with us the work of caring for and maintaining the continuing work of St John's. During this year, as in every year, we have called on your time and talents in one way or another. In January we held a Volunteers' Fayre after the 9:30 service, and were particularly happy to have many people sign up to additional tasks and actions. We always need more, but it really is a case of many hands making light work! Please be assured that we are most appreciative of all the support we have received over this past year from everyone. Whether or not we have mentioned you by name in this report, we know who you are and we thank you!

Last April we were in vacancy, but were looking forward to welcoming Berkeley and Alex (and of course Gus) to the parish. This welcome was performed with pomp and ceremony at Berkeley's induction and installation on 16 May, overseen by Bishop Michael, and with Archdeacon (now former Archdeacon) Jonathan, and Will Gibbs who was standing in as acting Rural Dean at the time, both in attendance. Berkeley was formally greeted at the service by members of the congregation, clergy from other Harpenden churches, and representatives from local community groups. He was presented with the keys to the church and a map of the parish, and he marked the occasion by ringing the bell that was retrieved in 1906 from the old "Paper Church" after it burned

down. The service, together with the reception in the hall afterwards, was full of joy and optimism for the future.

The newly-elected PCC was commissioned at the 9:30 service on 19 May 2019, which appropriately was Berkeley's first 9:30am service, and we welcomed new members Andrew Harbord and Liz Newell. Berkeley was given the opportunity to introduce himself to us less formally later in the summer for an enjoyable evening of music and discussion, loosely in the style of Desert Island Discs with a break halfway through for some food. We packed the church hall and learned, among other topics, of his Czech roots, his passion for astrophysics and astronomy, his love of JRR Tolkien's fiction, his time and activities at theological college, and his diverse musical tastes, in conversation with Carla Creasy and one of the wardens.

James Brown, our Curate, departed for his own parish of All Saints in September 2020, and we thank him for the many initiatives and creative additions our church life over the last three years. We wish him success and happiness in his new role.

Over the year there has been a key focus of the PCC on Safeguarding and all members have undertaken the required level of training as provided by the Diocese. The PCC has also put in place a number of new policies during the year, relating to social media, conflicts of interest, legacies, financial reserves, complaints, expenses, and employment. We carried out a refresh of the inventory in the autumn. We continue to ensure that we are compliant with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and Charities Commission guidance.

Our Patronal Festival in June 2019 again coincided with the Cultivate Arts Festival organised by Harpenden Churches Together. Liz Sergeant and James Brown were the architects of St John's contribution to the festival which was, again, considerable, comprising an installation in the church, and related events including musical and poetry evenings. We welcomed over 800 visitors to the church over the course of the week to visit the church, including many children from Grove School. Throughout the week the stunning installation, symbolising the infinity and generosity of God's creation in the form of a fountain, was present at the back of the church. Roger Carter thoughtfully put together and performed a coffee concert that was similarly themed and Berkeley and Alex generously hosted a barbecue on their front lawn to celebrate the Patronal Festival. As always at St John's there was plenty to eat and drink, and it made for a celebratory atmosphere and relaxed occasion in the sun prior to a community Songs of Praise service in the church.

Our Christmas celebrations were typically memorable: St John's was represented at the Southdown Lights-up celebrations; an evening of beer and carols were held in The Engineer pub; a hardy band of carol singers also ventured out into a somewhat cold evening up and down Cravells

Road; the Junior Church entertained us with their Nativity Play at the All Age service in the middle of December; our Advent and Christmas carol services were admirably led by our choir and we were joined by members of our wider community to read some of the nine lessons; and despite the persistent drizzle we had our largest ever turnout (over 130 people plus a few dogs) for our annual "Walking to Bethlehem" Nativity from the green in Southdown to St John's on Christmas Eve. Particular thanks are due to Tony at The Carpenter's Arms, who provided very generous and much-needed refreshment in preparation for the walk up the hill. On the Sunday after Christmas we had a more intimate afternoon service of Christmas carols and readings followed by mulled wine and mince pies.

Over the course of the year we have continued our work towards developing a new Parish Centre (Project Phoenix). After a huge amount of work, persistence and patience we received planning permission in September 2019. This gave us the green light to start fundraising, and a fundraising launch event was held on 29 February 2020, attended by Brian Ellis, Mayor of Harpenden, and Bishop Alan. Matt Barter and Liz Sergeant gave a presentation on the project, its aims and its benefit to both the church and the wider community in Southdown and Harpenden. The work continues to be taken forward with huge energy by a small but dedicated steering group. Although we have been unable to carry out public events, some smaller means of keeping the fundraising going have taken place. We continue to seek God's guidance on how we can use our facilities to further our mission in the parish, and hope to resume our work in this soon.

We are in a position where the financial pressure remains significant and the current economic, political and social uncertainty is causing additional difficulty. It continues to be a priority that we should be paying our Parish Share in full. Our income had increased over the year, primarily as a result of a one-off fundraising effort over Advent, and our outgoings were lower year-on-year, but this latter reflected the high spend in 2018 as we prepared for Project Phoenix. We must continue to be imaginative and energetic in the way in which we approach our stewardship in order that we can maintain and grow our ministry and reduce and remove the structural deficit that underpins our annual financial result. A stewardship campaign is planned for Harvest time (this year) and we have signed up to the Parish Giving Scheme, as explained in the Giving in Grace email and documents.

Stewardship of our church and God's creation of course goes beyond our financial contribution, particularly since over the past year there has been growing global realisation of, and reaction to, the climate emergency that is facing us all. Following the October 2018 resolution to join the Eco Church scheme and to work towards the initial bronze level certification (now achieved), a small team of committed "eco warriors" led with energy and passion by James Brown, has been working as a first important step to understanding how we might be able to take action.

We have always considered it important to maintain the delivery of our parish magazine free of charge to all in the parish, reaching about 4,000 households. Our thanks go to Anthony Armstrong for his efforts as our editor, and to Steve Whiting, who ensured the magazine was distributed to the team of distributors and then to those who deliver. Since the spring, Sophie Crowley has taken on the editor's role, and owing to the continuing pandemic situation, the magazine has been produced and sent online. We are grateful to you all.

We are also grateful to the group of parents who have been running Junior Church for the time that they have taken to plan, teach, look after, and entertain the younger members of our congregation over the year. The Nativity Play is always a highlight, and this year was coordinated by the Junior Church team, and others, who produced a lovely thought-provoking event. Junior Church online videos have been exciting, and they plan to continue to produce them on a theme of bible stories.

Music has always been an important part of life at St John's: our worship is usually enhanced by the choir at our 9:30 Sunday service as well as on other special occasions; the augmented choir sings at occasional All Age services; our Taizé services have included guitar, cello and violin accompaniments; we were joined by the fabulous sound of Amici Voices together with a period orchestra for a liturgical setting of a Bach cantata one Sunday evening in February; Roger Carter has continued to arrange his series of coffee concerts featuring (separately!) organ, cello, flute and harp; and the church has been used for a number of afternoon and evening concerts over the course of the year, with musicians and audience alike benefiting from the great acoustic that we are able to share. We look forward to a time when this rich musical enhancement will be restored.

Alongside the exciting, future-focused activities, the day-to-day work of the parish continues. We are particularly grateful to David Christian who has retired after many years leading the Fabric Committee, and also to those who do so much work behind the scenes in decorating, cleaning and otherwise caring for the church. In addition, the church and the existing hall require ongoing maintenance, whether that relates to heating, leaks, light bulbs needing replacement; we are fortunate to have a team of dedicated individuals who take pride in our splendid building and in the maintenance and repair of our hall and grounds. Julie in the Parish Office also deserves our thanks for all that she does to keep us on track, dealing with the hire of the hall, managing rotas and ensuring that there is a sufficient coffee supply, all while tolerating a leaky roof in her office.

The very popular *Tea at Three*, which took place in the hall once a month, continued to provide companionship, refreshment and entertainment to older members of the wider community. This has now been taking place for over five years and has become a popular and well-attended event. At the pre-Christmas event, Anna Pritchard and James Brown provided after-tea musical entertainment which was much appreciated by all. A new initiative this year has been *Soup for the Soul*, again taking place once a month. We are grateful to the volunteers who collect and bring

people each month, bake cakes, make soup, entertain, and wash up, all under the leadership of Margaret Creighton. These important events have been suspended owing to the pandemic, yet Margaret has turned her ever-effective efforts to the co-ordination of support to the vulnerable in our community.

As a result of the pandemic and lockdown, many members of our church have contributed to the amazing online video services which appear on You Tube, and we are indebted to those who have compiled them so professionally – Kris Dodd, Henry Poppleton, and Ian Pritchard, so far. We hope to continue these services that reach out far and wide beyond our usual congregation. It is a way of reaching new people that was a positive result of the pandemic.

We are pleased that we have been able to maintain our outside giving at 10% of our income and over the past year we have supported Embrace, Mencap, and the St Albans and District Food Bank. Additional contributions have been given to the Mothers' Union, Harpenden Citizens Advice Bureau, Azalea and Mildmay. Cash collections over the year have gone to the Bishop's Harvest Appeal and Christian Aid, and our Christmas collections were given, as usual, to Crisis. Our thanks go to all who continue to contribute items to the Food Bank and to those who deliver them on a regular basis.

And finally, it is appropriate at this time to remember the friendship and faith of those of our congregation whom we have lost in the past year, and to record our grateful thanks for their lasting influence and respective contributions that they made to the life and ministry of St John's over many years. Looking forward, with the fundraising efforts for our new parish centre, on temporary hold but ready to be relaunched when possible, we all have the opportunity to leave a fitting legacy for future generations.

Jane Donati

James Hillman



**THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF
THE ECCLESIASTICAL PARISH OF
HARPENDEN ST JOHN
REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

FOR THE YEAR ENDED

31 DECEMBER 2019

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The Parochial Church Council of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Harpenden St John is registered with the Charity Commissioners for England and Wales (Charity no. 1131603)

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HARPENDEN ST JOHN

TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2019

Aims and purposes

St John's Parochial Church Council ("the PCC") has the responsibility of promoting the whole mission of the Church within the ecclesiastical parish: pastoral, evangelistic, social and ecumenical. The PCC is also responsible for the maintenance of the Parish Hall. For the first part of the period under review we were in vacancy. Our new vicar, The Revd Dr Berkeley Zych, was inducted on 16 May 2019.

The PCC is committed to enabling as many people as possible to worship at our church and become part of our church community at St John's. The Ministry Team, comprising of our vicar, the Revd Dr Berkeley Zych, our curate in training, the Revd James Brown, and our Readers, Mrs Lauryn Awbrey, Canon David Nye and Anne Edwards, and our Local Lay Leader of Worship (and Reader-in-Training), Mrs Emma Bresslaw in conjunction with the PCC, maintains an overview of worship and makes suggestions on how our worship can involve the many groups that live within our parish. Our services and worship put faith into practice through prayer and scripture, music and sacrament.

As trustees of a registered charity, the PCC must report each year in our trustees' annual report on how we have carried out our charity's purposes for the public benefit, which we set out in this trustees' report. We consider that we have complied with our duty to have due regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on the meaning and scope of "public benefit", when exercising any powers or duties to which the guidance is relevant.

When planning our activities for the year, we have considered the Charity Commission's guidance and, in particular, the supplementary guidance on charities for the advancement of religion. In particular, we try to enable parishioners 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 Christ, the crucified and glorified Lord
- Provision and pastoral care for people living in the parish
- Missionary and outreach work.

To facilitate this work it is important that we maintain the fabric of the Church of St John the Baptist and the Parish Hall.

Achievements and performance

The PCC is keen to offer a wide range of services during the week and over the course of the year that our community may find both beneficial and spiritually fulfilling. For example, we offer Common Worship Morning and Evening Prayer on weekdays, but in Ordinary Time have also used the Northumbrian Community's Daily Celtic Prayer.

We continue to offer All Age Worship on the first Sunday of the month which involves more people in the planning and execution of these services. In addition we continue to offer a range of evening worship, including Parish Evensong from the Book of Common Prayer, as well as Taizé-style and Northumbrian-style worship at least once a month which continues to be well received.

The church is open from daily from 9am to 5pm during the week for private prayer and personal reflection.

We welcome children of all ages in to our services but their own spiritual well-being is specifically targeted in our Junior Church, which operates during the first half of the 9.30 a.m. Parish Communion (except on Sundays when there is an All Age service to which they are specifically invited).

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HARPENDEN ST JOHN

TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2019 (continued)

Achievements and performance (continued)

The PCC seeks to ensure that all are welcomed at our regular services. At present we have 174 on the Church Electoral Roll, 118 of whom are resident in the Parish and 56 of whom have stated their eligibility is due to six months or more habitual worship. Since the previously reported number of 172, 1 member has passed away and 3 were added. The average weekly count of all regular services during October was 178 adults and children, and attendance during the Easter and Christmas periods increased again. We continue our practice of hosting school carol services.

In addition to 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 amazing gift of life, in marriage services public vows are exchanged with God's blessing and through funeral services family and friends express their deep sorrow but also give thanks for the life which is now completed and to commend the person into the gracious hands of God. This year, we celebrated 9 baptisms, 3 weddings and held 11 funerals in church.

Faith and Light, which provides an opportunity for adults with learning difficulties to worship in an appropriate and accessible environment, continues to hold a monthly Sunday afternoon service ably led, as it has been for many years, by Mrs Lauryn Awbrey.

Our new vicar, The Revd Dr Berkeley Zych, was inducted to the parish by the Bishop of Hertford on 16 May 2019.

Structure, governance and management of the PCC

The PCC is a corporate body established by the Church of England. It operates under the Parochial Church Council Powers Measure and is a registered charity. The appointment of PCC members is governed by and set out in the Church Representation Rules. All members of the congregation are encouraged to register on the Electoral Roll and stand for election to the PCC. Certain members of the PCC are allocated specific responsibility for some of the matters which affect the parish, e.g. Safeguarding and Health & Safety. These individuals attend appropriate training courses provided by the Diocese where necessary and report back to the PCC as a body.

The PCC meet six times a year with attendance at meetings approximately 70% of the maximum possible number of 24.

Prior to each PCC meeting, a Standing Committee (comprising the incumbent, churchwardens, deputy churchwardens, PCC Treasurer and Secretary) meets to draw up the agenda of items to be discussed. Approximately two weeks before a meeting, all PCC members receive the agenda, the minutes of any sub-committee meetings that have taken place since the last meeting and any briefing documents for items under discussion. Within two weeks of a PCC meeting, minutes of that meeting are circulated to all members. These minutes go on public display on the noticeboard in the porch, once they have been formally approved at the following PCC meeting.

The PCC devolves much of its work to teams and all members of the PCC, as well as further members of the congregation with particular skills or interests, are invited to sit on the teams, which meet on a regular basis (or liaise electronically). The teams are: Communications, Reaching New People (Evangelism), Worship, Pastoral, Ecochurch, Children & Youth, Fabric, and Parish Centre. Each team has a chair and secretary and operates within agreed terms of reference, produces written notes, and brings proposals to and provides updates at PCC meetings. Members of the PCC sit on both Deanery and Diocesan Synods providing an important link between the parish and the wider structures of the Church of England.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HARPENDEN ST JOHN

TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2019 (continued)

Structure, governance and management of the PCC (continued)

A large number of group activities take place at St John's, led by volunteers of both talent and commitment. These provide a range of services to benefit members of the congregation and the wider parish community. Details of these groups can be found on our website (www.stjohnsharpenden.org.uk). We publish a free parish magazine quarterly which is distributed to every home and business within the parish and this publicises our church service times and forthcoming events and contains articles and reports of interest. We also communicate news and events to members of the congregation via an e newsletter.

Main focus of the PCC this year

At its meetings this year, the PCC has carried out the necessary formalities such as appointing its officers and reviewing its committee structure. There was an increased focus on Safeguarding and all members of the PCC undertook the required level of training as provided by the Diocese. The Safeguarding and Health & Safety policies were both reviewed and updated where necessary. A considerable amount of the PCC's time was spent planning and discussing the plans for a new parish centre, Project Phoenix. Significant progress was made and a feasibility study produced by our appointed architects. This major project continues to require considerable thought and effort and the PCC is indebted to those members of the planning committee who have committed a great deal of their time and imagination to achieve all that they have done so far.

The PCC put in place a number of new policies during the year relating to Social Media, Conflict of Interests, Legacy, Reserves, Complaints, Expenses, and Employees.

The new vicar and PCC ran a series of Soapbox evenings on various aspects of Church life at St John's, which is feeding into the work of the various PCC teams, as well as providing the basis for a renewal of the PCC Mission Action Plan, which is taking place through the end of 2019 and into the beginning of 2020.

The General Data Protection Regulation (2018) has been implemented. The church complies with the requirements and it will be reviewed when and as necessary.

Church Concerts

The PCC is keen for the church to be kept open to the community for personal prayer and are also are delighted to use it for musical events. Our well-established annual series of Coffee Concerts held on Saturday mornings at 10.30 a.m. continue to flourish. A couple of these were held in the afternoon this year, as well as in the morning, as an experiment. There is no entrance charge, but the retiring collections offset expenses and the profits are put into the organ fund for long-term expenditure such as pipework cleaning and other restoration. The usual format is around 45 minutes of music followed by refreshments at the back of the church. This provides a relaxed opportunity for the audience, which is usually made up of both members of St John's and a good many from further afield, to chat with both the performers and each other. Whilst the organ features most frequently, recent concerts have also been devoted to vocal music and have featured the cello, flute and harp. We have been privileged to hear superb performances from several outstanding young professionals in the early days of their careers. There have also been excellent concerts this year from the Lee Singers, the Hardynges Choir, and Amici Voices.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HARPENDEN ST JOHN

TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2019 (continued)

The Parish Hall

The Buzby Mae Pre-School closed in July 2018. We are currently advertising for more weekday bookings for the hall. Little Acorns, a group for toddlers and their carers, meets on a Thursday afternoon, and continues to flourish. The Daylight Club use the hall during the day on most Wednesdays, The Harpenden Musical Theatre Company use the hall on Tuesday and Thursday evenings for rehearsals and Slimming World hold weekly sessions on Wednesday evenings. Rainbows/Brownies meet on a Thursday evening.

A variety of additional church and local groups also use the hall. We have held a couple of social events for the congregation and other members of the parish which have been well attended and greatly enjoyed. A highlight was 'desert island discs' with our new vicar and hosted by James Hillman and Carla Creasy.

Pastoral Care

Some members of our parish are unable to attend church due to sickness or age. Those who request it have received Home Communion from Revd Berkeley Zych, Revd James Brown, Mr David Nye and Mrs Heather Nye. The congregation continue the practice of donating a plant each Sunday to a sick or aged parishioner, a rota organised by Mrs Briony Linsell.

We hold *T@3* on the last Friday of each month to provide companionship over afternoon tea for the elderly or lonely in the parish, this is well attended by a mixture of members of the congregation and others from the wider parish.

A new initiative called *Soup4TheSoul* began on the second Thursday of each month, beginning with a midday communion service and followed by a soup lunch, which has been well received.

A group of trained volunteers, the St John's Visitors visit the sick or housebound to offer support and friendship. Members of the Mothers' Union and others also visit the sick or those unable to get out and keep them in touch with church life. The MU is a happy and busy group meeting monthly on a Wednesday evening usually with speakers and monthly on a Wednesday morning to celebrate a Corporate Communion. They welcome non-members to their meetings and outings and raise money to help families worldwide.

Mission and Evangelism

Helping those in need is a demonstration of our faith, and the PCC will donate a part of its stewardship income received in 2019 mainly to the following charities - St Albans and District Foodbank, EMBRACE the Middle East, Mencap, and Citizens' Advice in Harpenden.

In June, St. John's hosted a large-scale art installation as part of the Cultivate Arts Festival, organised by Harpenden Churches Together. This included a wide range of musical and other artistic events exploring a Christian understanding of the environment, and especially the significance of water and issues with access to clean water throughout the world. Many local groups such as the Brownies, Rainbows, and the local primary school were involved in contributing to the festival.

St John's also contributed to, and helped to organise, the Southdown Festival for the second year running; a weekend of local community events. The church hosted a songs of praise service, and helped organised a fete at the local Junior School.

The Fellowship and Study Group, led by Mrs Anne Edwards, continued to meet in blocks of five or six weeks on Monday evenings. The group engages with a wide range of ideas, information, history, how the Bible came to be and how it can be interpreted, in a supportive and convivial atmosphere and continued to encourage and support one another as they share their faith journeys.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HARPENDEN ST JOHN

TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2019 (continued)

Ecumenical Relations

The church is a member of Harpenden Churches Together, and the Revd Berkeley Zych and the Revd James Brown have regularly attended the monthly Harpenden Ministers' Meeting and the fortnightly Ministers' Breakfast. This had led to the establishment of a town-based Harpenden Alpha Course which has encouraged some to attend other church activities and services. The ministry team at St John's continues to have meaningful links with Southdown Methodist Church, the ministers meeting regularly for coffee, and sharing in events through Lent and Advent.

Financial Review

Total income during 2019 was £204,169 (2018 £166,303), an increase of £37,866 from the prior year. The largest contributor to this income was donations to the regular planned giving scheme of £119,035 (2018 £115,468) including the tax reclaimed. However, we also raised an additional £30,204 of general funds in December 2019 relating to the 'Advent Challenge', and £10,000 of donations towards the Parish Centre.

Total expenditure during 2019 was £199,823 (2018 £214,103), a decrease of £14,280 from the prior year. The largest item of expenditure was the parish share of £104,834 (2018 £105,370). Expenditure in 2019 included £12,765 relating to the development and planning of the new parish centre (2018 £30,700). Our planned missionary giving of 10% of our stewardship income and open plate collections to outside charities in 2019 was £12,705 (2018 £12,200).

The net of the total income and total expenditure for 2019 is a net surplus of £4,346 (2018 net deficit of £47,800). Therefore, total net assets as at 31 December 2019 of £239,370 are £4,346 higher than total net assets as at 1 January 2019 of £235,024. Total net assets are represented by general, designated, and restricted funds.

General funds increased by £1,812 from £61,536 as at 1 January 2019 to £63,348 as at 31 December 2019.

Designated funds decreased by £7,466 from £168,817 as at 1 January 2019 to £161,351 as at 31 December 2019. This decrease consists of a reduction in the Parish Centre fund of £12,356, an increase in the legacy fund of £4,000, an increase in the organ fund of £877, and an increase in the flower guild fund of £13.

Restricted funds increased by £10,000 from £4,671 as at 1 January 2019 to £14,671 as at 31 December 2019, wholly relating to donations received for the Parish Centre.

Outlook for the future

The financial position of the PCC as at 31 December 2019 is relatively healthy, although for many years now we have relied on legacy income to cover certain running and repair costs of the church and the church hall.

The trustees consider that the PCC is a going concern as at the date of approving the 2019 accounts. This is based on considering the level of funds held, the breadth and financial position of its donor base, known or anticipated future changes to either income or expenditure, and planned future capital projects. When taking into account the budgeted deficit (excluding any anticipated legacy income) for 2020, it is expected that the PCC's funds at the end of 2020 will still be significant.

We have firm plans for a new parish centre to replace the existing church hall and the PCC has obtained planning permission. This will require specific and significant fundraising following the official fundraising launch held in February 2020. The timing, extent and cost of the work will ultimately be determined by the success of the fundraising activity.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HARPENDEN ST JOHN

TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2019 (continued)

Reserves policy

The PCC seeks to operate on a balanced budget basis but periodically sets aside such amounts as it deems prudent to meet anticipated abnormal expenditure. Such amounts are held in designated funds and are represented by bank balances and accounts receivable within the general assets of the PCC. It is the policy of the PCC to hold in general reserves at least the equivalent amount of two months of general running costs, which is currently approximately £30,000.

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

St John's Church is situated on St John's Road, Harpenden, Hertfordshire. It is part of the Diocese of St. Albans within the Church of England.

The PCC is a body corporate (PCC Powers Measure 1956, Church Representation Rules 2006) and a charity registered with the Charity Commission, number 1131603.

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

Vicar

Berkeley Zych (from May 2019)

Curate in training

James Brown

Readers

Lauryn Awbrey

Anne Edwards (also Diocesan and Deanery Synods)

David Nye (also Deanery Synod)

Churchwardens

James Hillman

Jane Donati (from April 2019)

Mary-Jean Pritchard (until April 2019)

Secretary

Jacky Dodd (from Jan 2019 - also Council member)

Treasurer

Steven Creasy (also Council member)

Council Members

Naomi Burnett

Carol Cooke (until April 2019)

Bryan Coventry

Jane Donati

Andrew Harbord (from April 2019)

Paul Jessop (until April 2019)

Nick Lockett

Liz Macdonald

Dawn Mason

Bill Moore

Martin Myers

Liz Newell (from April 2019)

Heather Nye (from April 2019)

Sarah Poppleton (until April 2019)

Liz Sergeant

Liz Swinscoe (until April 2019)

Tom Venner

Stephen Whiting (until April 2019)

Deanery Synod Members

Michael Readman

Trustees Report approved by the PCC on 9 March 2020 and signed on their behalf by:

Rev Berkeley Zych
Chairman

James Hillman
Churchwarden

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HARPENDEN ST JOHN

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE PCC OF ST JOHN HARPENDEN

I report to the trustees on my examination of the financial statements of the PCC for the year ended 31 December 2019, which are set out on pages 9 to 19.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the PCC you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act'). The PCC considers that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Act and that an independent examination is needed.

I report in respect of my examination of the PCC's financial statements carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the PCC as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the financial statements do not accord with those records; or
3. the financial statements do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the financial statements to be reached.



Tim Coleman

13 Elliswick Road
Harpenden
AL5 4TP

Date: 10 March 2020

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HARPENDEN ST JOHN

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2019**

		Unrestricted Funds		Restricted	TOTAL	2018
	Note	General	Designated	Funds	2019	(Note 15)
		£	£	£	£	£
INCOMING RESOURCES						
Incoming resources from generated funds:						
Voluntary income	2	158,032	4,000	11,903	173,935	126,721
Activities for generating funds	3	17,485	1,286	-	18,771	25,523
Investment income	4	938	-	-	938	697
		<u>176,455</u>	<u>5,286</u>	<u>11,903</u>	<u>193,644</u>	<u>152,941</u>
Incoming resources from church activities	5	<u>10,022</u>	<u>503</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>10,525</u>	<u>13,362</u>
Total incoming resources		<u>186,477</u>	<u>5,789</u>	<u>11,903</u>	<u>204,169</u>	<u>166,303</u>
RESOURCES EXPENDED						
Cost of church activities						
Missionary Giving	6	12,704	-	1,903	14,607	14,140
Parish Share	6	104,834	-	-	104,834	105,370
Fabric and Running Costs	6	28,315	-	-	28,315	25,562
Mission & Education	6	7,550	-	-	7,550	6,071
Staff Costs	6	25,246	-	-	25,246	24,509
Other costs	6	6,016	13,255	-	19,271	38,451
Total resources expended		<u>184,665</u>	<u>13,255</u>	<u>1,903</u>	<u>199,823</u>	<u>214,103</u>
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources before transfers		1,812	(7,466)	10,000	4,346	(47,800)
Transfers between funds		<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Net income/(expenditure) for year		1,812	(7,466)	10,000	4,346	(47,800)
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS						
Total funds at 1 Jan 2019		61,536	168,817	4,671	235,024	282,824
Total funds at 31 Dec 2019		<u>63,348</u>	<u>161,351</u>	<u>14,671</u>	<u>239,370</u>	<u>235,024</u>

The notes on pages 11 to 19 form part of these financial statements.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HARPENDEN ST JOHN

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2019

	Note	2019 £	2018 £
FIXED ASSETS			
Tangible assets	8	63,888	63,888
CURRENT ASSETS			
Debtors	9	15,398	12,791
Bank and cash balances		179,751	178,068
		195,149	190,859
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Creditors payable within one year	10	(19,667)	(19,723)
NET CURRENT ASSETS			
		175,482	171,136
TOTAL NET ASSETS			
		239,370	235,024
THE FUNDS OF THE CHARITY			
Unrestricted income funds:			
General	11	63,348	61,536
Designated	12	161,351	168,817
Total		224,699	230,353
Restricted income funds:	13	14,671	4,671
		239,370	235,024

Prepared by:



Steven Creasy
Treasurer

Approved by the Parochial Church Council on 9 March 2020 and signed on its behalf by:



Rev Berkeley Zych
Chairman



James Hillman
Churchwarden

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HARPENDEN ST JOHN

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2019

1 ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparation

The PCC is a public benefit entity within the meaning of Financial Reporting Standard 102 (FRS 102). The financial statements have been prepared under the Charities Act 2011 and in accordance with the Church Accounting Regulations 2006 governing the individual accounts of PCCs, and with the Regulations' "true and fair view" provisions, together with FRS 102 (2016) as the applicable accounting standards and the 2016 version of the Statement of Recommended Practice, Accounting and Reporting by Charities (SORP (FRS 102)).

FRS 102 and the SORP (FRS 102) were adopted for the first time in 2016. Their adoption had no material impact on the financial statements and no previously reported amounts have been restated.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention. The financial statements include all transactions, assets and liabilities for which the PCC is responsible in law. They do not include the accounts of church groups that owe their main affiliation to another body, nor those that are informal gatherings of church members.

These financial statements are prepared on the basis of the PCC being a going concern. The trustees make their own assessment of the PCC's ability to continue as a going concern to assure themselves of the validity of this assumption when preparing accounts. In making this assessment, the trustees take into account all available information about the future for at least, but not limited to, 12 months from the date the accounts are approved. There are no material uncertainties about the PCC's ability to continue. In addition, as at the date of approval of these accounts, there are no contractual commitments in relation to the new Parish Centre, and its development will be conditional on successful fundraising.

Funds

Unrestricted funds represent the remaining income funds of the PCC that are available for spending on the general purposes of the PCC, including amounts designated by the PCC for fixed assets for its own use or for spending on a future project and which are therefore not included in its general reserves as disclosed in the trustees' report.

Restricted funds represent income funds that must be spent on restricted purposes and details of the funds held and restrictions provided are shown in the notes to the accounts.

Incoming resources

Income and endowments are included in the Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) when:

- the PCC becomes legally entitled to the use of the resources;
- and inflow of economic benefit is probable; and
- the monetary value can be measured with sufficient reliability.

Planned giving, collections and donations are therefore generally recognised when received. Tax refunds are recognised when the incoming resource to which they relate is received.

Grants and legacies are accounted for when the PCC is legally entitled to the amounts due.

Rental income from the letting of the church, the church hall, and the property in Linwood Road is recognised when the rental is due.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HARPENDEN ST JOHN

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2019 (continued)

1 ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)

Incoming resources (continued)

Interest income is accrued.

All other income is recognised when it is receivable.

Resources expended

All other expenditure is generally recognised when it is incurred and is accounted for gross.

Liabilities are recognised as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation and settlement is probable and quantifiable.

The diocesan parish share is accounted for when due.

Fixed assets

Consecrated and benefice property is not included in the accounts in accordance with s.10 (2) (a) of the Charities Act 2011. Movable church furnishings held by the vicar and churchwardens on special trust for the PCC and which require a faculty for disposal are inalienable property, listed in the church's inventory, which can be inspected (at any reasonable time). Such assets are not valued in the financial statements. All expenditure incurred during the year on consecrated or benefice buildings and moveable church furnishings, whether maintenance or improvement, is written off as expenditure in the statement of financial activities.

Complete cost information is not available for the Church Hall, so is included in the accounts at a deemed cost (estimated from the insurance valuation in 1968 when it was built, plus the cost of the extension completed in 1984) less depreciation to date. It is now fully depreciated.

The Linwood Road property is held at cost. The land element of the property is not depreciated in accordance with the applicable financial reporting standards. Whilst buildings are ordinarily depreciated, no depreciation is provided on the building element of the property as the currently estimated residual value of the property is not less than its carrying amount and the remaining useful life of the property currently exceeds 50 years, and therefore any depreciation charge would be immaterial.

At each reporting date an assessment is carried out of whether there is any indication that an asset should be written down (i.e. whether the carrying amount on the balance sheet is more than its recoverable amount). If there is no indication that an asset should be written down, it is not necessary to estimate the recoverable amount.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HARPENDEN ST JOHN

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2019 (continued)

	Unrestricted Funds		Restricted Funds	TOTAL	TOTAL
	General	Designated	Funds	2019	2018
	£	£	£	£	£
2 VOLUNTARY INCOME					
Planned Giving:					
Gift Aid donations	84,697	-	-	84,697	83,958
Tax recoverable	21,534	-	-	21,534	20,988
Non gift aid donations	12,804	-	-	12,804	10,522
Collections (open plate)	6,414	-	-	6,414	5,176
Tax recoverable on collections	1,601	-	-	1,601	1,332
One-off stewardship campaign	25,004	-	-	25,004	-
Tax recoverable on one-off campaign	5,200	-	-	5,200	-
Donations, appeals etc.	778	-	1,903	2,681	2,745
Legacies	-	4,000	-	4,000	2,000
Parish Centre fundraising	-	-	8,000	8,000	-
Tax recoverable on Parish Centre funds	-	-	2,000	2,000	-
	<u>158,032</u>	<u>4,000</u>	<u>11,903</u>	<u>173,935</u>	<u>126,721</u>
3 ACTIVITIES FOR GENERATING FUNDS					
Church Hall lettings (non-church activities)	13,541	-	-	13,541	20,096
Church Hire	1,964	-	-	1,964	2,000
Fundraising Events	-	877	-	877	294
Other Income and funds generated	1,980	409	-	2,389	3,133
	<u>17,485</u>	<u>1,286</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>18,771</u>	<u>25,523</u>
4 INVESTMENT INCOME					
Bank interest	938	-	-	938	697
	<u>938</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>938</u>	<u>697</u>
5 INCOME FROM CHURCH ACTIVITIES					
Flower Guild income	-	503	-	503	772
Income from Social events	546	-	-	546	364
Parish Magazine advertising	5,234	-	-	5,234	4,335
Fees for Weddings & Funerals	4,242	-	-	4,242	7,891
	<u>10,022</u>	<u>503</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>10,525</u>	<u>13,362</u>

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HARPENDEN ST JOHN

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2019 (continued)

	Unrestricted Funds		Restricted	TOTAL	TOTAL
	General £	Designated £	Funds £	2019 £	2018 £
6 COSTS OF CHURCH ACTIVITIES					
Missionary and Charitable giving (also see note 7)					
Missionary societies	4,258	-	-	4,258	4,055
Relief & development agencies	4,070	-	1,076	5,146	4,389
Home missions	4,376	-	827	5,203	5,696
	<u>12,704</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,903</u>	<u>14,607</u>	<u>14,140</u>
Parish share	<u>104,834</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>104,834</u>	<u>105,370</u>
Fabric and running costs:					
Church running costs	5,025	-	-	5,025	6,069
Church maintenance	4,003	-	-	4,003	3,547
Depreciation of fixed assets	-	-	-	-	1,112
Organ/piano tuning & maint.	1,018	-	-	1,018	1,138
Grounds upkeep	3,960	-	-	3,960	50
Hall running costs	1,962	-	-	1,962	3,369
Hall maintenance	4,968	-	-	4,968	2,749
Linwood Road property upkeep	608	-	-	608	587
Upkeep of services	2,008	-	-	2,008	2,274
Parish Office Admin Costs	4,763	-	-	4,763	4,667
	<u>28,315</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>28,315</u>	<u>25,562</u>
Mission & Education					
Parish magazine	5,254	-	-	5,254	5,183
Pastoral and MAP	432	-	-	432	-
Education	1,864	-	-	1,864	888
	<u>7,550</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>7,550</u>	<u>6,071</u>
Staff Costs					
Working expenses of incumbent	450	-	-	450	104
Assistant staff expenses	190	-	-	190	87
Wages and salaries	23,614	-	-	23,614	23,522
Social security costs	992	-	-	992	796
	<u>25,246</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>25,246</u>	<u>24,509</u>
Other costs					
Flower Guild expenditure	-	490	-	490	885
Promotional and communications	340	-	-	340	275
Sundry expenses	3,314	-	-	3,314	2,292
Wedding & funeral fees to Diocese	1,798	-	-	1,798	3,365
Vacancy costs	-	-	-	-	934
Bank charges	564	-	-	564	-
Development of new parish centre	-	12,765	-	12,765	30,700
	<u>6,016</u>	<u>13,255</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>19,271</u>	<u>38,451</u>

During the above years the PCC employed an organist, church hall cleaner, and a parish office administrator. There are no employees who received employee benefits of more than £60,000.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HARPENDEN ST JOHN

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2019 (continued)

7 MISSIONARY AND CHARITABLE GIVING			2019	2018
The missionary and charitable giving is made up of the following donations			£	£
Missionary societies				
Embrace the Middle East			3,811	3,660
Mothers' Union			447	395
Relief and development agencies				
Bishops Harvest Appeal			406	569
St Albans & District Food Bank			3,544	3,175
Christian Aid			302	-
Azalea			447	395
Mildmay			447	250
Home missions				
Crisis			827	1,246
Mencap			3,176	3,050
Harpenden Citizens Advice Bureau			1,200	1,400
			<u>14,607</u>	<u>14,140</u>
8 TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS	Linwood Road property	Church Hall	TOTAL	
			2019	2018
Actual/ deemed cost:	£	£	£	£
Brought forward at 1 January	<u>63,888</u>	<u>48,299</u>	112,187	112,187
Carried forward 31 December	<u>63,888</u>	<u>48,299</u>	112,187	112,187
Depreciation:				
Brought forward at 1 January	-	(48,299)	(48,299)	(47,187)
Charge for year	-	-	-	(1,112)
Carried forward 31 December	<u>-</u>	<u>(48,299)</u>	(48,299)	(48,299)
Carrying value at 31 December	<u>63,888</u>	<u>-</u>	63,888	63,888
The Curate's House at 2 Linwood Road was independently valued on 2 March 2010 at £380,000				
9 DEBTORS			2019	2018
			£	£
Gift Aid Tax recoverable			11,754	5,880
Prepayments and accrued income			3,644	6,911
			<u>15,398</u>	<u>12,791</u>
10 CREDITORS			2019	2018
			£	£
Outside giving			12,699	10,550
Accruals and deferred income			5,840	8,681
Other creditors			1,128	492
			<u>19,667</u>	<u>19,723</u>

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HARPENDEN ST JOHN

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2019 (continued)

	2019	2018
	£	£
11 GENERAL FUNDS		
Brought forward at 1 January	61,536	26,020
Transfer from Legacy fund	-	55,000
Other movements in general funds	1,812	(19,484)
Carried forward at 31 December	<u>63,348</u>	<u>61,536</u>
12 DESIGNATED FUNDS		
The PCC operates seven Designated Funds:	£	£
Parish Centre	7,634	19,990
Organ - Reserve to fund future organ repairs	21,045	20,168
Legacies - Legacies received and spent	43,906	39,906
Flower Guild	426	413
St John's Players	700	700
Fabric reserve	23,752	23,752
Church Hall	-	-
Linwood Road property	63,888	63,888
	<u>161,351</u>	<u>168,817</u>

The movements on the Designated Funds during 2019 were as follows:

	Parish Centre	Organ	Legacies	Flower Guild	St Johns Players
	£	£	£	£	£
Brought forward at 1 Jan 2019	19,990	20,168	39,906	413	700
Income	409	877	4,000	503	-
Depreciation	-	-	-	-	-
Expenditure	<u>(12,765)</u>	-	-	<u>(490)</u>	-
	7,634	21,045	43,906	426	700
Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
Carried forward at 31 Dec 2019	<u>7,634</u>	<u>21,045</u>	<u>43,906</u>	<u>426</u>	<u>700</u>
		Fabric	Hall	Linwood Road property	TOTAL 2019
		£	£	£	£
Brought forward at 1 Jan 2019		23,752	-	63,888	168,817
Income		-	-	-	5,789
Depreciation		-	-	-	-
Expenditure		-	-	-	(13,255)
		<u>23,752</u>	-	<u>63,888</u>	<u>161,351</u>
Transfers between funds		-	-	-	-
Carried forward at 31 Dec 2019		<u>23,752</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>63,888</u>	<u>161,351</u>

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HARPENDEN ST JOHN

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2019 (continued)

12 DESIGNATED FUNDS (continued)

The movements on the Designated Funds during 2018 were as follows:

	Parish Centre	Organ	Legacies	Flower Guild	St Johns Players
	£	£	£	£	£
Brought forward at 1 Jan 2018	-	19,249	142,906	526	700
Income	690	919	2,000	772	-
Depreciation	-	-	-	-	-
Expenditure	(30,700)	-	-	(885)	-
	<u>(30,010)</u>	<u>20,168</u>	<u>144,906</u>	<u>413</u>	<u>700</u>
Transfers between funds	50,000	-	(105,000)	-	-
Carried forward at 31 Dec 2018	<u>19,990</u>	<u>20,168</u>	<u>39,906</u>	<u>413</u>	<u>700</u>

	Fabric	Hall	Linwood Rd property	TOTAL 2018
	£	£	£	£
Brought forward at 1 Jan 2018	23,752	1,112	63,888	252,133
Income	-	-	-	4,381
Depreciation	-	(1,112)	-	(1,112)
Expenditure	-	-	-	(31,585)
	<u>23,752</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>63,888</u>	<u>223,817</u>
Transfers between funds	-	-	-	(55,000)
Carried forward at 31 Dec 2018	<u>23,752</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>63,888</u>	<u>168,817</u>

The PCC approved on 22 March 2018 the transfer of £55,000 from the Legacy fund to the General fund, and the transfer of £50,000 from the Legacy fund to a new fund for the new Parish Centre.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HARPENDEN ST JOHN

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2019 (continued)

13 RESTRICTED FUNDS

The PCC accounts include certain Restricted Funds, where the monies can only be used for the specific purpose for which they were entrusted to the PCC. These monies are not at the disposal of the PCC for any other purpose, and represent:

	2019 £	2018 £
Parish Centre	10,000	-
Choir Fund	3,671	3,671
Education Fund	1,000	1,000
	<u>14,671</u>	<u>4,671</u>

The movements on the Restricted Funds during 2019 were as follows:

	Parish centre £	Education Fund £	Choir Fund £	Charity £	TOTAL 2018 £
Brought forward at 1 January 2019	-	1,000	3,671	-	4,671
Voluntary Income	10,000	-	-	1,903	11,903
Expenditure	-	-	-	(1,903)	(1,903)
Carried forward at 31 December 2019	<u>10,000</u>	<u>1,000</u>	<u>3,671</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>14,671</u>

The movements on the Restricted Funds during 2018 were as follows:

	Parish centre £	Education Fund £	Choir Fund £	Charity £	TOTAL 2017 £
Brought forward at 1 January 2018	-	1,000	3,671	-	4,671
Voluntary Income	-	-	-	1,940	1,940
Expenditure	-	-	-	(1,940)	(1,940)
Carried forward at 31 December 2018	<u>-</u>	<u>1,000</u>	<u>3,671</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>4,671</u>

14 PAYMENTS TO TRUSTEES

Members of the Ministry Team who were also members of the PCC were reimbursed working expenses, relating primarily to travel expenses, totalling £640 (2018 £191).

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HARPENDEN ST JOHN

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2019 (continued)

**15 STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2018**

		Unrestricted Funds		Restricted	TOTAL
		General	Designated	Funds	2018
		£	£	£	£
INCOMING RESOURCES					
Incoming resources from generated funds:					
Voluntary income	2	122,781	2,000	1,940	126,721
Activities for generating funds	3	23,914	1,609	-	25,523
Investment income	4	697	-	-	697
		<u>147,392</u>	<u>3,609</u>	<u>1,940</u>	152,941
Incoming resources from church activities	5	<u>12,590</u>	<u>772</u>	-	13,362
Total incoming resources		<u>159,982</u>	<u>4,381</u>	<u>1,940</u>	166,303
RESOURCES EXPENDED					
Cost of church activities					
Missionary Giving	6	12,200	-	1,940	14,140
Parish Share	6	105,370	-	-	105,370
Fabric and Running Costs	6	24,450	1,112	-	25,562
Mission & Education	6	6,071	-	-	6,071
Staff Costs	6	24,509	-	-	24,509
Other costs	6	6,866	31,585	-	38,451
Total resources expended		<u>179,466</u>	<u>32,697</u>	<u>1,940</u>	214,103
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources before transfers		(19,484)	(28,316)	-	(47,800)
Transfers between funds		<u>55,000</u>	<u>(55,000)</u>	-	-
Net income/(expenditure) for year		35,516	(83,316)	-	(47,800)
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS					
Total funds at 1 Jan 2018		26,020	252,133	4,671	282,824
Total funds at 31 Dec 2018		<u>61,536</u>	<u>168,817</u>	<u>4,671</u>	235,024

WHEATHAMPSTEAD DEANERY SYNOD 2019

Wheathampstead Deanery Synod met three times in the year under the leadership of the Rural Dean, the Revd Richard Banham, Rector of St. Helen's, Wheathampstead, and the Lay Chairman, Mr. Jim May. It is made up of parish clergy and a number of lay representatives elected according to the size of the parish, as well as members of Diocesan Synod (who are also thereby members of Deanery Synod and their PCC).

Synod meetings take place in a different parish each time and the host parish has the opportunity to talk briefly about its life and work. One soon realises the individual nature of every one of our nine parishes and twelve churches. The deanery joins together for worship on Ascension Day each year, and holds a Deanery Evensong in the autumn. Everyone is very welcome at these special occasions, and indeed at its regular meetings.

Our first meeting, on 25th March at All Saints, Harpenden, featured a thought-provoking and worrying presentation "*Don't bet on it*" by Bishop Alan. He told us, among other things, that the enormous increase in the prevalence and prominence of gambling since 2005 is leading to enormous harm. Charities estimate that 400 deaths have resulted over the last three years, with one or two suicides every week. The good news is that the Bishop's proposal for a Lords Enquiry into the effects of the 2005 Gambling Act has recently been one of only four selected from a huge number of similar issues put forward.

The Deanery Ascension Day service was held at Harpenden St Nicholas.

Our second meeting on 16th July at Mary's, Redbourn, focused on Vocations. Our guest speaker - the Reverend Charles Burch, our Diocesan Vocations Officer, spoke of the challenge we face. 61% of clergy are 50+. 100 – 120 will retire in the next 10 years. In response to this, the '50%+' challenge aims to maintain clergy posts by becoming a net exporter of ordinands, not a net importer, by recruiting younger ordinands (as well as older ones). The target is to go from 16 to 20 per annum. That's 1 per Deanery per year....every year.

The Deanery Choral Evensong was held in October at Harpenden St John.

Our third meeting on 14th November at St Leonard's, Flamstead, included a presentation from Phil Bryson, the Lay Ministry Officer for the Diocese and Annie McTighe from the Reaching New People team. They spoke about the various training options available for lay people, including training for Readers, Lay Leaders of Worship and Lay Pioneers. As we would expect Wheathampstead Deanery is at the top end of the league table for producing Readers and LLWs.

Jim May
Lay Chairman
11 March 2020

REPORT ON SAFEGUARDING
ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST CHURCH, HARPENDEN

prepared for the APCM 19th April 2020
edited on 15th September 2020

The PCC of St John's has a duty to have '*due regard to guidance issued by the House of Bishops on matters relating to the safety of children and vulnerable adults*' (from Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016).

Policy

The PCC have adopted two policy statements: one for Safeguarding Children and one for Safeguarding Adults when they are Vulnerable. An additional policy on Responding Well to Domestic Abuse (2017), including practical guidelines, has also been adopted. The document - Promoting a Safe Church 2017 - has been passed through the PCC too. All of these will be reviewed at the next PCC meeting.

St John's has adopted the Church of England's 'Protecting All God's Children: The Policy for Safeguarding Children in the Church of England', 4th Edition, 2010, Church House Publishing.

A Policy for the Safe Use of Images, devised and passed in 2018 in accordance with Diocesan advice, is in place too.

The Safeguarding Lead regularly checks the diocesan newsletters and website for any relevant updates in this area.

All policies and relevant documents are available as hard copy in the blue file in the entrance hall.

Disclosure and Barring Checks

St John's subscribes to the 'Thirty-one eight agency' for DBS checks, which is recommended by the diocese. This was previously known as CCPAS, which changed its name to reflect "*God's call to 'speak out on behalf of the voiceless, and for the rights of all who are vulnerable' as described in Proverbs 31:8*".

All checks are completed online, and identification documents checked by the Safeguarding Lead or Deputy. Usually a check lasts for five years. There is a system to remind those with out of date checks to renew, if necessary. 6 DBS checks were made since the last APCM.

Safeguarding in practice

There has been one safeguarding concern over a child and family which was referred to the Diocese, and their advice resulted in the matter being successfully resolved, with no further action required. There was also one issue regarding an adult who might be vulnerable, which again was referred to the Diocese for advice and was resolved satisfactorily.

The current focus is upon recognising and instituting good practice as regards safeguarding, and health and safety, through the means of risk assessments for church activities. These documents are available in the Risk Assessment File in the church porch and are signposted on our website. As practice is updated or changed, so these risk assessments will also be kept up to date, or at least reviewed annually.

At Junior Church, systems are kept under review. The Safeguarding Lead attended a session and some minor issues, such as the location of the First Aid Box, have been addressed, through the risk assessment and a poster on the inside of the Junior Church cupboard door.

An appendix for hirers of the church premises to raise their awareness of safeguarding is in place.

There is now also a duty upon the PCC to ensure reporting of any 'serious incidents' not only to the diocese, social services, police etc, but also to the Charity Commission, as the church is a registered charity. In the year to December 2019 there were no such incidents to report.

Naomi Burnett has undertaken to be the Deputy Safeguarding Lead, and there are plans to ensure she has full information to do this effectively.

Training

The PCC has undertaken the first stage of the online training in safeguarding. The Lead has completed the second level training, and the C2 face-to-face training, as recommended by the Diocese. Some members of the Junior Church need to undertake the training, and some of them, as well as some members of the PCC will need to renew training this year, as it needs to be revisited every three years.

However, despite the many measures taken, we cannot be complacent, and not only will we formally review our policy and procedures at the next PCC meeting, but also recognise that this area permeates all our activities.

To reiterate, hard copies of our policies and procedures are in a blue file in the entrance and there is a dedicated area on the website too. If you have any questions or queries, please contact:

Jane Donati
Safeguarding Lead

Naomi Burnett
Safeguarding Deputy.

Sidespersons at St John the Baptist Church, Harpenden – March 2020

Di Borthwick

Naomi and Stuart Burnett

Moira Carrington

Bryan and Elizabeth Coventry

The Creasy Family

Margaret Creighton

Sophie Crowley

Jane Donati

Anne Edwards

John Hammond

John and Carol Harbord

James and Henrietta Hillman

Betty Hollows

John Jones

Jo Klein

Gudrun Ledwith

Dawn Mason

Kate Netherton

Mary Jean Pritchard

Julia Smith



Group Reports

Church Cleaning

Dorcas

Eco Church

Fabric Committee

Faith and Light

Flower Guild

Junior Church

Little Acorns

Project Phoenix

Reaching New People

St Luke's Cell

T@3 & Soup4TheSoul

St John's Church Cleaning

The church is kept looking beautiful thanks to the hard work of members of the congregation, men and women, who take on an area of the church and work a rota system to clean and tidy their area. We were delighted to get more volunteers to join the team of cleaners at the Volunteer Celebration and Fair in January. This helped to spread the load as we were struggling up until then. Then came lockdown and we weren't able to enter the church but as soon as we were able to go in, a group of us tackled the spider webs and the dust and flies that had accumulated in our absence. It was amazing how dirty it was! It is now different again as the cleaning is done by a rota of people who pop in at the end of each day and sanitise any pews that have been used.

Thank you so much to everyone who helps with the cleaning. It must save St John's a considerable amount of money that they would have to spend to employ professional cleaners. We can always do with more help as many of the team are "not as young as they used to be"! Do please offer if you have some time to spare. It can be as little as half an hour a month and as soon as life gets back to normal, we can add you to one of the rotas. Better still, ask a friend or partner to volunteer with you as it is a good way to catch up on chat while you work! All the equipment is provided.

Di Borthwick

DORCAS

Our group of sewers and embroiderers have increased with two new members which is wonderful.

We have been working on a new all-season altar frontal for The Lady Chapel but all has been put on hold since March 2020 due to COVID 19 restrictions on groups meeting.

When we do meet again, we hope to complete the frontal reasonably quickly and move on to new projects along with maintenance of robes and other church fabrics.

Helen Davies

Eco Church report for St John's APCM, 2020

Members of the Eco Church team: James Brown, Margaret Charlston, Tina Crawford, Anne Edwards, Andrew Harbord, Debbie Knight and Martin Myers.

Eco Church has met a few times this year, led by James Brown. In July 2019 Andrew Harbord and Martin Myers joined the team, as PCC representatives. Margaret has taken over the leadership of the group now that James has left.

A Rocha church Audit: Much of our time has been spent on completing the A Rocha church Audit, to apply for the Eco Church Award. This is an award scheme for churches in England and Wales, and looks at what we, as a church, are already doing to care for God's earth, and suggests areas for improvement. The audit covers Worship and Teaching, Lifestyle, our Buildings and Land, and Community and Global engagement. We have discovered that many things are already going on that we didn't know about, for example Steve who cares for the Church gardens is very knowledgeable about solitary bees, and is growing many plants to encourage them. We just missed getting the Bronze award, so are putting a few more things into place, especially encouraging the church community to become more sustainable. We aim to re-submit for the award early next year.

Creationtide: The Eco Church team have been involved in our worship during Creationtide in both 2019 and 2020, contributing prayers and the last sermon in the series, and giving examples of practical things we can all do to live more sustainably. In 2019 there were a series of Learning and Prayer sessions on Creationtide on Monday evenings, with the themes of Creation, our faith and ecology. We enjoyed a thought-provoking film 'Finding St Francis', about the life of St Francis, including a discussion led by David Bagott, one of the actors in the film. We led a session on our response to the challenges of Global Warming, including the use of clean energy and Christian Aids 'The Big Shift' campaign.

Eco tips: We set up an Eco Church notice board in the Church Hall, 'Caring for God's World' and have used this to suggest tips for the congregation to live more sustainably. During Creationtide in September 2020 we have been using the weekly newsletter to share Eco Tips. Any suggestions always gratefully received. James has also given suggestions in the Magazine, for example on celebrating a Green Christmas.

Recycling: Anne found out about a scheme to recycle old candles, and there is now a box in the porch to collect them. We have also been making enquiries about how to improve recycling in the hall.

We are all indebted to James for setting up the Eco Church group and inspiring us to try to turn St Johns into a thriving 'green' place. We will miss his enthusiasm and commitment but hope that in the future we may be able to do some joint activities with All Saints.

If anyone would like to join our group, please contact Margaret Charlston

margaret.charlston10@virginmedia.com

Traidcraft. Margaret Charlston and Anne Edwards have been holding Traidcraft stalls after the 9.30am service every six weeks or so for many years. We sell a range of fairly-traded foods, tea and coffee, cards, handicrafts and paper goods. Some were supplied on a sale or return basis by Wesley's at High Street Methodist church. At the end of 2018, it looked as if Traidcraft might have to fold, but due to huge support from its many supporters it has survived, and last year celebrated 40 years of Fair Trade. It was set up in 1979 as a Christian response to trade injustice, with a mission 'to fight poverty through trade, practising and promoting approaches to trade that help people in developing countries to transform their lives'. It has been a driving force behind the Fair-Trade movement, and the certification scheme and Fair-Trade logo that we can now find on many goods in the supermarket. We encourage you to actively select Fair Trade whenever you can.

Between April 2019 and March 2020, we held six stalls and have sold nearly £600 of goods. Thank you to all who have supported us over the years. Margaret is continuing to take orders and deliver goods in Harpenden, so do look at the on-line catalogue <https://www.traidcraft.co.uk/> or give her a ring (01582 462024) There is a 10% discount and no P&P if you order through her! She is happy to take orders for Advent Calendars and Christmas goods. Margaret.charlston10@virginmedia.com

Fabric Committee

The Fabric Committee has only been able to meet a couple of times over the past year, however our work has continued unabated.

Earlier in the year David Christian, who has been Chair of the Fabric Committee for many, many years, decided to step down, and we thank him for his faithful and dedicated service. We have also been joined by a new member of the team, Stuart Burnett, although due to Covid 19 he has yet to experience a committee meeting!

Along with the usual work of the committee looking after the general maintenance of the building and ensuring statutory compliance, we have faced a number of challenges this year. The condition of the Church Hall is continuing to deteriorate and a number of temporary repairs have been attempted to the leaking roof above the Parish Office. Unfortunately, whilst initially successful, these repairs have failed again and we are currently considering the most cost-effective way forward.

Earlier in the year the committee began looking at disabled access compliance to the Lady Chapel and the altar within the church to ensure compliance with regulations. It is proposed to provide ramped access to the Lady Chapel through the rear external door, this has been agreed with the PCC and will be progressed shortly. Within the church, it has been proposed to remove a number of pews to provide locations for wheelchair users to sit within the congregation and we are also exploring the possibilities of ramped access to the communion rail.

Again, earlier in the year, a project to replace all the high-level spot lights in church with efficient LED's was successfully undertaken, and we are now investigating sourcing an LED replacement lamp for the chandeliers, to further increase efficiency.

We are very grateful to Steve for continuing to maintain the grounds around the church along with the team mowing and leaf clearing! This year we have undertaken some extensive tree maintenance works and unfortunately two trees to the front of church have had to be removed. We will be undertaking research to consider the correct course for the replanting of these trees.

A big thank you to all who sit on the Fabric Committee for all they have done over the past year and we look forward to meeting in fellowship again when the opportunity arises.

Matt Barter

Acting Chair

Faith and Light

Our last meeting in 2020 was in February. It was with a heavy heart that we cancelled the March and April meetings... and have not met since. The Chaplain has kept in touch with all of the members of the group through a monthly phone call and by providing a monthly mailing that includes a reflection, prayers, activities and simple crafts. Morale within the group seems high, and we should offer a special prayer of thanksgiving to the staff of Harpenden Mencap who have worked tirelessly to keep the people in their care safe and happy.

All things being equal, we hope to meet in November for a short worship service in church, keeping the necessary social distances and observing safety measures. There will be no crafts or tea, but members are keen to at least see one another, and we hope that monthly worship will be possible going forward.

Lauryn Awbrey

Flower Guild Report 2020

We contributed to the Church Art Installation in June by creating river bank scenes on radiator shelves which included fish made by children from Grove school , together with a an interpretation of “ Fountain “



Maureen Randall gave a workshop on how to do pedestals which proved useful in that there were several extra arrangements in place to welcome Berkley on 16 May and also that now we have several people willing to do them We now have 27 ladies on the rota which is an increase of 8



In March we had a demonstration on how to be more eco-friendly by cutting down on the use of oasis. Sarah Allen is particularly in favour of this and gave a very informative and imaginative demo with the view of ordering supplies and doing a workshop in the Autumn. An old wooden pedestal was reconstructed and was made suitable for arrangements without oasis which is now used as well as the sanctuary pedestal



We are always available to arrange flowers in Church for weddings and last year there were three happy occasions

Elizabeth Curran

Junior Church

Junior Church has been very active, even during the pandemic. Prior to March 2020 we were meeting weekly and holding special events such as the Picnic for the Congregation on the Common and a very successful nativity.

Unfortunately, we have been unable to meet since March, but there has been a weekly junior church online which has included a number of junior church members telling stories, reading prayers and taking part in fun activities at home. We have also now started meeting in church for a 15-minute service once a month and will supplement this with stories online at other times.

Sally Styles

Little Acorns

In case you don't know:

This is a friendly toddler group for pre school children and their carers. A session includes tea/coffee and biscuits for adults and healthy snacks for the children. Activities include bikes, ball pool, playdough, singing and much more.

There are normally 3 volunteers per session. There is a rota for each term and at the moment it comes around about 3 times a term. We take it in turns to buy milk and 2 types of fruit. (money can be claimed back)

The role includes setting up the hall with toys, preparing hot drinks for the adults, talking to the adults and playing with the children. This does not mean you have to sit on the floor! Some of us do and some sit on chairs. In the last part of the session we clear up the toys and serve fruit and other healthy snacks while sitting round a table. We finish with a story or singing.

2019 -20

Our aim during this time has been to raise our profile within the church and community. This was because our numbers can vary from 0 to 10 which makes planning hard. With the help of James and Berkeley we had a poster delivery run within Southdown and the town centre. I contacted the Harpenden Parents Network and the Mum's guide to Harpenden who highlighted our opening on a Thursday afternoon. James and I also put regular articles in the Church Magazine with pictures of what we were doing.

We have very loyal volunteers who I cannot thank enough for the way they have given up their time to make this group happen. I also want to thank James and Berkeley for their support and ideas. We look forward to working with Berkeley in the future.

In consultation with James and Berkeley we decided that we would bring a Christian focus to our main festivals. So at Harvest time I told the story of Handa's Surprise By Eileen Browne with props of a variety of fruits. This caught the imagination of the children and we reinforced how God had provided the environment for the fruits to grow. Christmas saw us following the stars to find the baby Jesus in the manger in the church. When we walked into the church one of the boys yelled "Wow". A very special moment. Each child was given an age appropriate book about the first Christmas.



Our last celebration before Lockdown was Pancake Day. We celebrated with pancake races, with everyone who took part getting a medal and then trying the pancakes.!!!

I miss the children and the friendships that were made over the 2 years we were open. We look forward to welcoming toddlers to our group as soon as we are able.

Project Phoenix - a transformational project for the church and the local community

Since the last APCM, we are pleased to report that the campaign for the new Parish Centre has reached a significant milestone.

Following a successful launch event on Saturday 29th February 2020 and presentations and prayers in church in early March, the total funding and pledges (including Gift Aid) reached **£500,000 of our £1.6m target.**

Reaching such a large portion of the target in the first year is a significant step, and grateful thanks go to our team of fund-raising ambassadors and our generous supporters. Particular thanks also to the project team whose energy and enthusiasm enabled us to reach this milestone.

During lockdown our attention turned to helping our community stay connected, as the pandemic made us all rethink our ways of being, working and relating to each other. In the post-COVID era, we envisage our new Parish Centre will help us continue adapting to and supporting the needs of our community.

But whilst larger fund-raising events have been put on hold since March, we have been delighted that members of the congregation have raised funds through the sale of face masks, jams, and on-line activities such as quizzes. The fundraising programme will resume when it is safe and appropriate to do so.

Liz Sergeant

Reaching New People

The Reaching New People Committee at St John's have been meeting as an initiative of the St Albans Diocese 'Fresh Expressions' (Making new disciples of Christ by developing fresh expressions of Church and equipping leaders), where we are looking at ways to encourage people to come to St John's and also to take Church out into the community.

During 2019 and the early part of 2020 the RNP Committee met several times to review the outcome of a workshop held to canvass ideas from the St John's community following a Saturday morning workshop. We were then able to take the output from the Mission & Worship Soapbox sessions that Berkeley held to build on this with further ideas.

We registered all the wonderful ideas & initiatives as a list, which reached a 'heady' 57 items! (It was wonderful to see the extent of the thoughts and passion of our congregation).

Through this list we were able to progress ideas such increasing publicity through fliers, walking events, pub quiz nights (regular team at the Engineer), not only for the St John's congregation, but for all.

Obviously, we needed to look at prioritising the ideas and were able to sign-post some initiatives to some of the other committees such as the worship, communications or children and youth committees where they could be progressed further.

Next, we started developing a 'pathway' chart, where we could focus on specific events in the church calendar & how we could use these to advertise & encourage attendance at future events e.g. drawing competitions at Mothering Sunday service for Children, with prizes & display for all at the entries at the Easter Service, with encouragement to go to Junior Church.

In parallel we were continuing to progress ideas on our list, such as signposting for the Church and litter picking parties, which could be linked to our commitment as an Eco-Church.

Like many initiatives, COVID-19 has paused our committee and the planned events, but in these difficult times I believe that the actions of our ministry team and the church volunteers have actually continued the ethos of reaching new people without even realising it, through their natural generosity and reaching into the community.

Dawn Mason

ST LUKE'S CELL PRAYER GROUP REPORT FOR 2019-20

We pray for anyone in the parish who has asked for our prayers for themselves or their loved ones, including those mentioned in the weekly pew sheet. St Luke's Cell prayer group is named after the disciple and physician Luke, who is the patron saint of doctors, and has members drawn from St John's and Southdown Methodist churches. Every month each of us prays for a different group of about five people.

At present we are unable to meet monthly but have continued to pray individually and to keep in contact with each other by email or letter. We always welcome new members (including those who would be unable to come to meetings), as well as news of people in need of prayer. If you would like us to pray for you or someone else then please contact Michael Hughes 01582 765576.

T@3 and Soup4theSoul - A short resume

May 2019 - April 2020

T@3 and Soup4theSoul

T@3 continued on the last Friday of each month with an average attendance of 25. We were delighted to be entertained with songs from James Brown and Anna Chambers at our Christmas tea and Berkeley distributed small gifts to all attendees. Soup4theSoul, a new initiative, was launched in August to be held on the third Thursday of the month. A service of Holy Communion is celebrated in the Lady Chapel at mid-day followed by a simple soup lunch in church. This attracted an average of 14 attendees each month providing spiritual comfort and fellowship. Thanks must go to all who provided splendid food for afternoon teas, delicious, wholesome, home made soups and also to those who gave lifts, served food and tidied up.

Inevitably as Covid 19 changed all our lives in March 2020 these monthly events were cancelled. Since then, we have attempted to stay in touch with the lonely and vulnerable, offering our friendship and support during these unprecedented and difficult times.

Margaret Creighton