



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 18th April 2021

11.00 a.m.

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 - *PCC Treasurer's Report*

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The following Group Reports follow at the end of this pack of papers

- Eco Church
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AGENDAS

MEETING OF PARISHIONERS

*To be held via Zoom on Sunday 18th April 2021
at 11.00 a.m.*

- 1 Apologies for absence
- 2 Minutes of the Meeting of Parishioners held on 11th October 2020
- 3 Matters Arising
- 4 Election of Churchwardens

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

*To be held via Zoom on Sunday 18th April 2021
following the Meeting of Parishioners*

- | | | |
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ST JOHN'S CHURCH, HARPENDEN

Minutes of the Meeting of Parishioners

held on Sunday 11th October 2020

Via Zoom at 11.00 a.m.

Present: James Hillman (Lay Chair), Anthony Armstrong, Lauryn Awbrey, Matt Barter, Di Borthwick, David Brown, Naomi Burnett, Moira Carrington, Roger Carter, Margaret Charlston, Tim Coleman, Carol Cook, Brenda Cottle, Bryan Coventry, Derek & Liz Curran, Jacky Dodd, Jane Donati, Anne Edwards, Pat Hudis, Christine Kenyon, Gudrun Ledwith, Nick Lockett, Liz MacDonald, Dawn Mason, Neil Middleton, Bill Moore, Martin Myers, David Nye, Mary-Jean Pritchard, Michael Readman, Liz Sergeant, Julia Smith, Julia White, Tom Venner

1. Apologies for Absence

There were none.

2. Minutes of the Last Meeting

Adoption of the minutes of the Meeting of Parishioners held on Sunday 7th April 2019 was proposed by Liz Sergeant, seconded by Lauryn Awbrey and carried unanimously. The minutes were signed by James Hillman 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 Keith Slinn and seconded by Jacky Dodd, and

Jane Donati, proposed by Jacky Dodd and seconded by Anne Edwards.

In the absence of any other nominations, James and Jane were elected unanimously to serve as church wardens for the year 2020/2021.

The meeting closed at 11.08 a.m.



ST JOHN'S CHURCH, HARPENDEN

Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting

held on Sunday 11th October 2020

Via Zoom

Due to Covid-19, this year's APCM was deferred from 19th April 2020. As there are still restrictions in place, the meeting was held via Zoom as it was felt to be a safer and more appropriate method of conducting it.

1. Apologies for absence

Members present online were the same as for the Meeting of Parishioners and there were no apologies for absence.

Having opened the meeting, James Hillman (Lay Chair) gave an update on the health of our vicar, Berkeley Zych. He explained that having contracted shingles quite early in the period of lockdown, Berkeley has subsequently been struggling with some mental health issues including anxiety and depression, that the shingles helped him to realise. James passed on reassurance from Berkeley to the St John's community, that this is in no way related to his experience at St John's Church, which has been universally welcoming and supportive. Berkeley is receiving very good support and help from Archdeacon Jane and from the diocese, and is looking forward to returning to work, but this will most likely be in the new year. Both James and Jane Donati are also in touch with Archdeacon Jane who is working through ways in which we can be supported as a parish and a congregation during this time.

Berkeley sends his best wishes and prayers to us and James asked that we continue to hold him and Alex in our thoughts and prayers too.

2. Minutes of the last APCM

Subject to a written amendment under item 4, clarifying Alison Gardiner's comment that referred to a full revision of the Electoral Roll,

Adoption of the minutes of the meeting held on Sunday 7th April 2019 was proposed by David Brown, seconded by Anne Edwards and carried unanimously. The minutes were signed by James Hillman as a full and accurate record.

3. Matters Arising

There were none.

4. Treasurer's Financial Review

Tim Coleman

The accounts for 2019 had been available to view on the website. These were prepared by Steve Creasy and reviewed by Tim Coleman, who was the Independent Examiner at the time.

Tim ran through the major items of Income and Expenditure, the position at the end of 2019 and a quick update on the current position.

1. Income & Expenditure

	2019		2018		Increase/ Decrease
	£'000	%	£'000	%	
Income					
Planned giving	119	58%	115	69%	+3%
Open plate	8	4%	7	4%	+14%
Advent Challenge	30	15%	0	0%	
Hall lettings	14	7%	20	12%	-30%
Legacies	4	2%	2	1%	+100%
Parish Magazine	5	2%	4	2%	+25%
Weddings & Funerals	4	2%	8	5%	-50%
Parish Centre	10	5%	0	0%	
Other	10	5%	10	6%	+0%
Total income	204	100%	166	100%	+23%
Expenditure					
Parish share	105	53%	105	49%	+0%
Staff costs	25	13%	25	12%	+0%
Mission & charitable giving	15	8%	14	7%	+7%
Fabric & running costs	28	14%	26	12%	+8%
Parish Centre	13	7%	31	14%	-58%
Other	14	7%	13	6%	+8%
Total expenditure	200	100%	214	100%	-7%
Surplus/(deficit)	4		(48)		
Excluding Parish Centre	7		(17)		

Income

- Planned Giving is by far the most important source of income. Up by 3%, but a smaller proportion of the total owing to the Advent Challenge, which generated £30k (including Gift Aid), and transformed the financial picture for the year
- Hall Lettings are significant at £14k, but down by 30% due to the Buzby Mae pre-school closing in July 2018
- Legacy income grew to £4k, whilst Wedding & Funeral incomes fell to £4k

- Parish Centre fundraising commenced, generating £10k. The ongoing financial position of the church is tracked separately to Project Phoenix, although both sets of activities are combined in the accounts
- Overall income grew by 23% to £204k, due mainly to the success of the Advent Challenge

Expenditure

- Most underlying costs were broadly stable year on year
- The Parish Share is the most significant cost, representing over half of our costs
- Mission & Charitable Giving costs were up, in line with increased voluntary income
- Parish Centre costs were £18k lower in 2019 after significant early stage planning costs in 2018, meaning overall costs were £14k lower for the year at £200k.
- Overall, there was a small surplus of £4k. However, without the Advent Challenge, and excluding Project Phoenix, the deficit would have been £23k, up from a £17k underlying deficit in 2018. The £4k surplus compares to a deficit of £48k in 2018, an improvement of £52k.

2. Change year-on-year

	<u>£'000</u>
Deficit in 2018	(48)
Church Hall - Pre-school closed 2018	(7)
Parish Centre costs lower in 2019	18
Parish Centre fundraising in 2019	10
Advent Challenge in 2019	30
Other changes	1
Surplus in 2019	4

3. Funds position

The £4k surplus meant that at the end of 2019 our overall funds balances had increased to £239k, compared to £235k at the end of 2018.

	<u>£'000</u>
Opening funds	235
Increase in debtors	2
Increase in cash	2
Closing funds	239
General	63
Designated	161
Restricted	15
Total funds	239
Represented by:	
Property at Linwood Road	64
Cash	180
Debtors	15
Creditors	(20)
Net assets	239

The funds are split into several categories, with the General Fund being used for the general ongoing benefit of the Church. The PCC's policy is to maintain 2 months of running costs in the General Fund – this is around £25k.

There are also 7 Designated Funds, the largest of which are:

- Linwood Road property £64k
- Legacies £44k
- Organ Fund £21k
- Fabric Reserve £24k

The main Restricted Fund is for the Parish Centre, which is where the net fundraising income is channelled, and which has grown significantly in 2020.

The funds are held mostly in cash, and in the value of the property at Linwood Road.

The main item in the Debtors balance at the year-end is Gift Aid receivable, which was received from HMRC in January. The main item in Creditors is the Church's own charitable giving, which was distributed in March.

4. Update on current situation

- The budget set at the start of 2020 was for a deficit of £38k, excluding the Parish Centre
- Clearly COVID-19 has had a significant impact, however,
 - Planned Giving has continued

- A switch to on-line giving via Just Giving has proved successful, particularly for fundraising campaigns for the Parish Centre (Quizzes, Masks)
- Hall Letting has been badly affected, although starting to show signs of recovery now
- Overall income is expected to be around £20-25k lower than budgeted
- Costs are being very tightly managed, and are expected to be around £30-35k lower than budgeted
- Overall, there is an expected deficit of £25-£30k this year, which is eroding our General Reserve Fund. Hence the focus on the Stewardship Campaign to increase the level of regular planned giving, and move us into a position of sustainability, where we not relying on legacies or one-off items to balance the books
- We are in a better position than many other churches in the Diocese.

Tim recorded his thanks to Steve Creasy, who, for 9 years managed and maintained the Church's finances so efficiently. The handover process during lockdown was challenging, but a testament to Steve's good management that it went so smoothly.

Lauryn Awbrey asked how much money had been given online in response to the online services provided by St John's.

Tim's answer was that aside from August, we have received between £150 – 300 per month.

Margaret Charlston gave a vote of thanks to Tim.

James Hillman advised that we are now in need of an Independent Examiner for our current year end. Tim explained that the individual has to be a member of one of a number of accounting bodies and that the work in the first year probably amounts to 10 hours but is less in the second year. The meeting was asked to think whether they might have a friend or relative who could be interested. Any suggestions should be forwarded to James Hillman, Jane Donati or Tim Coleman.

Adoption of the accounts, which had already been approved by the PCC, was proposed by David Brown, seconded by Moira Carrington and carried unanimously.

5. Electoral Roll

Neil Middleton

For 2020, Church of England Rules required St John's 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. There were 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 the end of 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).

6. The Churchwardens' Report

James Hillman

This was available to read on the website prior to the meeting. It was noted that normally the churchwardens' report would cover the 12 months from April to April. However, for this meeting it covers 18 months, due to the deferral of the APCM for six months. This latter time has been particularly challenging, following the need to close our doors in March, both to ourselves and to the local community.

As a result, St John's became a virtual congregation for a time, using YouTube as a vehicle for the 9:30 service. Thanks were given to a number of people who enabled this to happen:

- the readers, intercessors, Junior Church leaders and the ministry team for all their preparatory work for online services, and for learning how to send large video files over the ether to be linked together.
- Kris Dodd, Henry Poppleton and Iain Pritchard, who have seamlessly edited the contributions
- Neil Middleton, who has organised and acted as master of ceremonies over coffee and other meetings during this time (including this APCM)
- The St John's community who have rallied round and helped where needed

James gave an indebted thank you to his fellow churchwarden, Jane Donati who has been, and continues to be, absolutely tireless in her efforts, working with the ministry team to keep St John's running and to ensure that we can now keep the church open safely during the week and for our Sunday afternoon worship.

He acknowledged that more so than ever, we have needed to rely on the efforts of the deputy wardens – Bill, Heather and Martin – and on the army of cleaners and other

volunteers who have cleared up after each service and at the end of every day to keep the church open, welcoming, and safe.

Until last month, and while Berkeley has been recovering, we have been enormously fortunate to have James Brown with us. Thanks were given to David, Lauryn, Anne, and Emma – for all of their efforts in supporting Berkeley and James, and in supporting us on our Christian journey.

James thanked the PCC secretary, Jacky Dodd and the PCC for their time and commitment. He thanked Tom Venner, who has stepped down from the PCC after six years and Steve Creasy, who retired as Treasurer. He expressed gratitude to Tim Coleman for taking on the role of treasurer and also for the time he spent before that as Independent Examiner. Thanks were given to Tony Armstrong for his work as Stewardship Recorder, and to the work of the Finance Committee, and in particular to David Nye, in the preparation of the stewardship campaign.

There are many others who work behind the scenes at St John's. Further thanks were given to:

- Paul Bedding who coordinates the Charity Commission return each year. This is an important legal requirement for St John's
- Sophie Crowley who has taken on the editorship of the parish magazine from Anthony Armstrong. This is now in a digital format
- Matt Barter who manages the maintenance of the fabric of the church building and the hall and the ongoing frustrations caused by a leaky hall roof.
- Jane Donati and Naomi Burnett who manage the vital role of safeguarding
- Neil Middleton who maintains the website and has coordinated the annual Electoral Roll review.
- To everyone who has contributed through phone calls, mail-drops, food-drops and other support for vulnerable members of our community during lockdown, and to Margaret Creighton for her coordination of these efforts.

James encouraged everyone to read the reports on the website, from the various groups that are active at St John's. Our ministry, our worship and our community are enhanced by each and every one of the groups represented.

Mary-Jean Pritchard congratulated and thanked the wardens for the excellent job they have done.

7. Safeguarding Report

Jane Donati

The report had been prepared by Jane Donati and had been available to read with the meeting papers on the website.

Jane highlighted that especially in light of recent national news, regarding the historic failings of the Church of England, the focus is on maintaining good practice. The importance of safeguarding is recognised and included on the agenda of every PCC meeting. Training

lasts 3 years and needs to be kept updated. The blue file, with further information, is now located by the bookcase in church, not the porch.

There were no questions. James Hillman recorded his thanks to both Jane and Naomi.

8. Election of representatives to the Parochial Church Council

- Tom Venner resigned from the PCC, having completed 6 years
- Tim Coleman was co-opted onto the PCC and is now being formally elected:
Proposed by: Jacky Dodd Seconded by: Liz Sergeant
- The following 4 PCC members have completed 3 years and are being re-elected for a second term:
Naomi Burnett Proposed by: Anne Edwards Seconded by: Liz MacDonald
Dawn Mason Proposed by: Linda Traynor Seconded by: Jane Donati
Bill Moore Proposed by: Jane Donati Seconded by: Anthony Armstrong
Liz Sergeant Proposed by: Jacky Dodd Seconded by: Heather Nye

There were no other nominations, rendering a ballot unnecessary, and the 5 nominations for the PCC were presented to the meeting *en bloc*. 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

- There are 4 vacancies for representatives of the laity to **Deanery Synod** to be filled for the triennium that commenced on 1st July 2020 and one nomination had been received from:
David Nye Proposed by: Tim Coleman Seconded by: Jacky Dodd

Thanks were given to David Nye, Michael Readman and Anne Edwards (the latter two being ex officio members by virtue of being elected to Diocesan Synod)

9. Update on Project Phoenix

Matt Barter

The Case for Support, which outlined why the project is necessary, what we intend to build and how everyone can help and be involved, was launched in summer 2019. Following this, ambassadors were recruited and trained. This culminated with the launch event in February 2020, attended by the Bishop of St Albans and the Mayor. The pledges currently stand at £500k and there has been enormous support shown, given that it is still early days in terms of the fundraising. Lockdown has temporarily stalled some of the fundraising event ideas, but to date, no pledges have been withdrawn or reduced. Matt and the Project Phoenix team recognise that circumstances do and will change and urged anyone who might be struggling with pledge payments to speak to one of them. Payments can be stopped and restarted again at a later date.

Covid-19 has slowed down the fundraising, however the sale of facemasks, 2 quizzes and the sale of homemade jams have continued, and made around £2k.

The leaking roof and overall poor state of the hall is a reminder that the project is still relevant and viable. At this stage, the team are mindful of the stewardship campaign and so fundraising is paused until early 2021. Matt thanked the Project Phoenix team and all those involved in supporting it.

10. Ministry Team Review

David Nye

David focused on how St John's has adapted and continued to offer worship to Almighty God, in spite of the challenges faced through Covid-19. It started with the weekly 9.30 am service of the Word online with a separate offering for Junior Church. Then, when permitted, the celebration of the Parish Eucharist was resumed at 5.00 pm on Sunday evening. Morning Prayer is said online every weekday and Evening Prayer is now said in Church every weekday too.

From Remembrance Sunday on 8th November the Parish Eucharist is being moved back to the traditional time of 9.30 am which it is believed will suit more people. A small and dedicated group is investigating how this can be a videoed service so that people at home can watch it, if not at exactly the same time, then certainly that same morning. The separate morning online service would then be discontinued. Singing in church is still not permitted, although we can listen to the organ.

The team are working on services for the rest of the year:

- The annual service of Remembrance of All Souls is on the 1st November at 11.00 am in church
- The Fallen will be remembered during the 9.30 am service in church on Remembrance Sunday
- An Advent study group, using a book from BRF is being planned – advise David Brown by email if you would like a copy
- There will be a Carol Service even if singing is not permitted by ourselves
- A Crib Service for the youngsters is planned on Christmas Eve
- There will be a Christmas tree in church and the Parish Eucharist on Christmas Day morning

Above all, the team will continue to meet to worship and pray together, they will continue to maintain the best traditions of St. John's so far as they can, and they will be ready to adapt to any changes that may be forced upon them. David asked for our prayers for the ministry team as they seek to serve God and one another.

11. Any Other Business

David Brown gave a vote of thanks to everyone, for a fantastic job in very difficult times.

The meeting officially ended with the Grace at 11.59 am

Signed:

Dated:

Next year's APCM will take place on Sunday 18th April 2021



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

FOR THE YEAR ENDED

31 DECEMBER 2020

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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 2020

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. Sadly, our vicar, The Revd Dr Berkeley Zych, was on sick leave for six months before resigning, and so on 13 December 2020 we entered a period of vacancy.

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, 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 normally 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 normally 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.

Before the pandemic, the church opened daily from 9am to 5pm during the week for private prayer and personal reflection.

The onset of the Covid-19 pandemic in early 2020 caused significant disruption to our normal activities and caused the PCC to rethink the way those activities were undertaken. It has been our priority and responsibility throughout the pandemic to keep our congregation safe and to follow government and Church of England guidelines.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HARPENDEN ST JOHN

TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020 (continued)

Achievements and performance (continued)

Since the first lockdown in March 2020, members of the congregation were involved in the preparation and delivery of well-received pre-recorded Sunday services to keep us all connected. When we were able to re-open the church in August, we held a Sunday Eucharist at 5pm. In November we reverted back to a 9.30am service and began live streaming these services on YouTube. Currently, the church is only open on Sundays for private prayer. Morning Prayer is held via Zoom from Monday to Friday.

We welcome children of all ages into our services but their own spiritual well-being is specifically targeted in our Junior Church, which normally 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). During the pandemic the Junior Church team has shared pre-recorded activities and services on YouTube.

The PCC seeks to ensure that all are welcomed at our regular services, wherever possible. At present we have 177 on the Church Electoral Roll, 115 of whom are resident in the Parish and 62 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 6 were added. Since the pandemic caused the closure of the church for regular services, the PCC has measured engagement by the number of views our services on YouTube have received, which has averaged around 200 per week. During 2020, our YouTube videos were viewed over 15,000 times; on Easter Day our view count was 529, and for the Nativity Play, 451. Total watch time was over 1,900 hours, with people watching from places as varied as the USA and Australia, as well as locations across the UK.

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. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, there were no weddings or baptisms during the year but there were 15 funerals.

Faith and Light, which provides an opportunity for adults with learning difficulties to worship in an appropriate and accessible environment, has only met once since the start of the pandemic, ably led, as it has been for many years, by Mrs Lauryn Awbrey.

Sadly, our vicar, The Revd Dr Berkeley Zych, was on sick leave for six months before his resignation in December. The Parish then entered into a period of vacancy, and the PCC has started work on the process of seeking a new incumbent. Our Curate, The Revd James Brown, was appointed as Associate Vicar of All Saints' Church, Harpenden, and therefore left the Parish in September 2020. The PCC and all in the community wish to place on record their thanks to both Berkeley and James for all that they have done for St John's and wish them both well for the future.

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.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HARPENDEN ST JOHN

TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020 (continued)

Structure, governance and management of the PCC (continued)

The PCC meet six times a year and attendance at meetings was 76% of the maximum possible number of 22.

Prior to each PCC meeting, a Standing Committee (comprising the incumbent, churchwardens, deputy churchwardens, 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, Finance, 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.

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. Since the start of the pandemic, the magazine has been published online. We also communicate news and events to over 200 members of the congregation via a weekly 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.

Having received planning permission for a new Parish Centre, fund-raising efforts were formally launched in February 2020. With the onset of the pandemic however, many of the initiatives planned for the year were put on hold. Despite this, several virtual events were held, and fundraising has continued successfully in a variety of ways. Over £136,000 in regular and individual one-off donations were received in the year, and we have received commitments totalling over £500,000, which represents a very solid start to the campaign. It seems inevitable however that the timetable for the project will be extended as a result.

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. were unfortunately put on hold as a result of the pandemic. Music is a central element of St John's and we are lucky to benefit from a broad range of talented and enthusiastic musicians in the community. The PCC looks forward to being able to reinstate music fully within both the regular services of worship, and in the concerts taking place in the church.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HARPENDEN ST JOHN

TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020 (continued)

The Parish Hall

During the initial phase of the pandemic, the Church Hall was closed. It was re-opened for community hirers from September until November, with safety measures in place, and the PCC was pleased to welcome back several of the groups who use the hall regularly, including Slimming World, the Dance Studio and the Diamond Club. In line with national restrictions, the hall was closed again in November, and remains closed at the time of this report.

Pastoral Care

Some members of our parish are unable to attend church due to sickness or age. Those who request it received Home Communion from the Ministry Team prior to the pandemic.

During the pandemic the St John's pastoral group supported the house-bound, bereaved and sick with regular phone calls. Most of the other ongoing initiatives including *T@3*, *Soup4TheSoul* and the regular St John's Visitors and Mothers' Union activities have been put on hold during the pandemic. The PCC looks forward to re-starting these initiatives once the lockdown restrictions allow.

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 2020 to the following charities – Azalea, Young Carers in Hertfordshire, the Royal Hospital for Neuro-Disability and Rennie Grove Hospice Care.

The Fellowship and Study Group, led by Mrs Anne Edwards, has unfortunately been unable to meet since the start of the pandemic. The Advent book group took place on Zoom, with plans for another book group during Lent.

Ecumenical Relations

The church is a member of Churches Together in Harpenden, and the Revd Berkeley Zych and the Revd James Brown regularly attended the monthly Harpenden Ministers' Meeting and the fortnightly Ministers' Breakfast prior to their departures. 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 2020 was £287,833 (2019 £204,169), an increase of £83,664 from the prior year. The largest contributor to this increase was donations to the Parish Centre, which raised £136,430 during the year (2019: £10,000). Excluding the Parish Centre, voluntary income declined by £28,923 to £135,012 (2019: £163,935) which was due mainly to the one-off effect of the 'Advent Challenge' of £30,204 and a £4,000 legacy in 2019. Excluding those one-offs, underlying income rose by £5,281 or 4%.

Total expenditure during 2020 was £172,853 (2019 £199,823), a decrease of £26,970 from the prior year. The largest item of expenditure was the parish share of £107,731 (2019 £104,834). The largest cost decrease compared to 2019 was in the development costs for the Parish Centre, which were £12,765 in 2019 but only £646 in 2020. Our planned missionary giving of 10% of our stewardship income and open plate collections to outside charities in 2020 was £13,116 (2019 £12,705).

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HARPENDEN ST JOHN

TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020 (continued)

The net of the total income and total expenditure for 2020 was a net surplus of £114,980 (2019: £4,346). However, £136,430 of this was for the new Parish Centre (2019: £10,000), with the ongoing deficit being £21,450 (2019: £5,654). As a result of the net surplus, total net assets as at 31 December 2020 of £354,350 are £114,980 higher than total net assets as at 1 January 2020 of £239,370. Total net assets are represented by general, designated, and restricted funds.

General funds decreased by £20,776 from £63,348 as at 1 January 2020 to £42,572 as at 31 December 2020. This represents around three months ongoing expenditure.

Designated funds decreased by £674 from £161,351 as at 1 January 2020 to £160,677 as at 31 December 2020. This decrease consists of a reduction in the Parish Centre fund of £646, an increase in the legacy fund of £75, and a decrease in the flower guild fund of £103.

Restricted funds increased by £136,430 from £14,671 as at 1 January 2020 to £151,101 as at 31 December 2020, wholly relating to donations received for the Parish Centre.

Outlook for the future

The financial position of the PCC as at 31 December 2020 is sound, although for many years now we have relied on legacy income and other one-offs to help overcome the ongoing structural deficit.

The trustees consider that the PCC is a going concern as at the date of approving the 2020 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. The PCC has adopted a budget for 2021 which anticipates eliminating the ongoing deficit and therefore anticipates that its reserves position will remain healthy into the future.

Fundraising was launched for the new Parish Centre in February 2020 and although a good start has been made, the timing of commencement of the project has inevitably been extended by the pandemic.

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.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HARPENDEN ST JOHN

TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020 (continued)

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 2020 until the date this report was approved are:

Vicar

Berkeley Zych (until February 2021)

Curate in training

James Brown (until September 2020)

Readers

Lauryn Awbrey

Anne Edwards (also Diocesan and Deanery Synods)

David Nye (also Deanery Synod)

Churchwardens

James Hillman

Jane Donati

Secretary

Jacky Dodd (also Council member)

Treasurer

Steve Creasy (until April 2020)

Tim Coleman (from April 2020, Council member from September 2020)

Council Members

Naomi Burnett

Bryan Coventry

Andrew Harbord

Nick Lockett

Liz Macdonald

Dawn Mason

Bill Moore

Martin Myers

Liz Newell

Heather Nye

Liz Sergeant

Tom Venner (until October 2020)

Diocesan and Deanery Synod Member

Michael Readman

The Trustees Report was approved by the PCC on 23rd March 2021 and signed on their behalf by:



James Hillman
Churchwarden



Jane Donati
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 2020, 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.



Alexandra Dales

83 Coleswood Road
Harpenden
AL5 1EG

Date: 23 March 2021

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HARPENDEN ST JOHN

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020

		Unrestricted Funds		Restricted	TOTAL	2019
	Note	General	Designated	Funds	2020	(Note
		£	£	£	£	15)
						£
INCOMING RESOURCES						
Incoming resources from generated funds:						
Voluntary income	2	135,012	-	136,430	271,442	173,935
Activities for generating funds	3	7,004	-	-	7,004	18,771
Investment income	4	391	75	-	466	938
		<u>142,407</u>	<u>75</u>	<u>136,430</u>	278,912	<u>193,644</u>
Incoming resources from church activities	5	8,746	175	-	8,921	10,525
Total incoming resources		<u>151,153</u>	<u>250</u>	<u>136,430</u>	287,833	<u>204,169</u>
RESOURCES EXPENDED						
Cost of church activities						
Missionary Giving	6	13,116	-	-	13,116	14,607
Parish Share	6	107,731	-	-	107,731	104,834
Fabric and Running Costs	6	25,908	-	-	25,908	28,315
Mission & Education	6	1,833	-	-	1,833	7,550
Staff Costs	6	20,541	-	-	20,541	25,246
Other costs	6	2,800	924	-	3,724	19,271
Total resources expended		<u>171,929</u>	<u>924</u>	<u>-</u>	172,853	<u>199,823</u>
Net income/(expenditure) for year		(20,776)	(674)	136,430	114,980	4,346
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS						
Total funds at 1 Jan 2020		63,348	161,351	14,671	239,370	235,024
Total funds at 31 Dec 2020		<u>42,572</u>	<u>160,677</u>	<u>151,101</u>	354,350	<u>239,370</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 2020

	Note	2020 £	2019 £
FIXED ASSETS			
Tangible assets	8	63,888	63,888
CURRENT ASSETS			
Debtors	9	8,148	15,398
Bank and cash balances		298,268	179,751
		306,416	195,149
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Creditors payable within one year	10	(15,954)	(19,667)
NET CURRENT ASSETS			
		290,462	175,482
TOTAL NET ASSETS			
		354,350	239,370
THE FUNDS OF THE CHARITY			
Unrestricted income funds:			
General	11	42,572	63,348
Designated	12	160,677	161,351
Total		203,249	224,699
Restricted income funds:	13	151,101	14,671
		354,350	239,370

Prepared by:



Tim Coleman
Treasurer

Approved by the Parochial Church Council on 23rd March 2021 and signed on its behalf by:



James Hillman
Churchwarden



Jane Donati
Churchwarden

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HARPENDEN ST JOHN

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020

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 2020 (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.

The Church Hall has been fully depreciated, however as it is still in use and is providing economic benefit through rental income it has been retained on the balance sheet but with a valuation of £nil.

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 2020 (continued)

	Unrestricted Funds		Restricted Funds	TOTAL	TOTAL
	General	Designated	Funds	2020	2019
	£	£	£	£	£
2 VOLUNTARY INCOME					
Planned Giving:					
Gift Aid donations	96,046	-	-	96,046	84,697
Tax recoverable	23,139	-	-	23,139	21,534
Non gift aid donations	8,337	-	-	8,337	12,804
Collections (open plate)	3,644	-	-	3,644	6,414
Tax recoverable on collections	-	-	-	-	1,601
One-off stewardship campaign	-	-	-	-	25,004
Tax recoverable on one-off campaign	-	-	-	-	5,200
Donations, appeals etc.	3,846	-	-	3,846	2,681
Legacies	-	-	-	-	4,000
Parish Centre fundraising	-	-	111,697	111,697	8,000
Tax recoverable on Parish Centre funds	-	-	24,733	24,733	2,000
	<u>135,012</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>136,430</u>	<u>271,442</u>	<u>173,935</u>
3 ACTIVITIES FOR GENERATING FUNDS					
Church Hall lettings (non-church activities)	6,002	-	-	6,002	13,541
Church Hire	-	-	-	-	1,964
Fundraising Events	-	-	-	-	877
Other Income and funds generated	1,002	-	-	1,002	2,389
	<u>7,004</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>7,004</u>	<u>18,771</u>
4 INVESTMENT INCOME					
Bank interest	391	75	-	466	938
	<u>391</u>	<u>75</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>466</u>	<u>938</u>
5 INCOME FROM CHURCH ACTIVITIES					
Flower Guild income	-	175	-	175	503
Income from Social events	36	-	-	36	546
Parish Magazine advertising	4,398	-	-	4,398	5,234
Fees for Weddings & Funerals	4,312	-	-	4,312	4,242
	<u>8,746</u>	<u>175</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>8,921</u>	<u>10,525</u>

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HARPENDEN ST JOHN

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020 (continued)

	Unrestricted Funds		Restricted Funds	TOTAL 2020	TOTAL 2019
	General	Designated	Funds	2020	2019
	£	£	£	£	£
6 COSTS OF CHURCH ACTIVITIES					
Missionary and Charitable giving (also see note 7)					
Missionary societies	-	-	-	-	4,258
Relief and development agencies	13,116	-	-	13,116	5,146
Home missions	-	-	-	-	5,203
	<u>13,116</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>13,116</u>	<u>14,607</u>
Parish share	<u>107,731</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>107,731</u>	<u>104,834</u>
Fabric and running costs:					
Church running costs	6,053	-	-	6,053	5,025
Church maintenance	3,350	-	-	3,350	4,003
Organ/piano tuning & maint.	632	-	-	632	1,018
Grounds upkeep	1,040	-	-	1,040	3,960
Hall running costs	3,193	-	-	3,193	1,962
Hall maintenance	3,293	-	-	3,293	4,968
Linwood Road property upkeep	2,437	-	-	2,437	608
Upkeep of services	1,756	-	-	1,756	2,008
Parish Office Admin Costs	4,154	-	-	4,154	4,763
	<u>25,908</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>25,908</u>	<u>28,315</u>
Mission & Education					
Parish magazine	1,288	-	-	1,288	5,254
Pastoral and MAP	36	-	-	36	432
Education	509	-	-	509	1,864
	<u>1,833</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,833</u>	<u>7,550</u>
Staff Costs					
Working expenses of incumbent	704	-	-	704	450
Assistant staff expenses	69	-	-	69	190
Wages and salaries	19,768	-	-	19,768	23,614
Social security costs	-	-	-	-	992
	<u>20,541</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>20,541</u>	<u>25,246</u>
Other costs					
Flower Guild expenditure	-	278	-	278	490
Promotional and communications	54	-	-	54	340
Sundry expenses	647	-	-	647	3,314
Wedding & funeral fees to Diocese	1,687	-	-	1,687	1,798
Costs of fund-raising	168	-	-	168	-
Bank charges	244	-	-	244	564
Development of new parish centre	-	646	-	646	12,765
	<u>2,800</u>	<u>924</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>3,724</u>	<u>19,271</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 2020 (continued)

7 MISSIONARY AND CHARITABLE GIVING

	2020	2019
	£	£
The missionary and charitable giving is made up of the following donations		
Missionary societies		
Embrace the Middle East	-	3,811
Mothers' Union	-	447
Relief and development agencies		
Bishops Harvest Appeal	-	406
St Albans & District Food Bank	-	3,544
Christian Aid	-	302
Mildmay	-	447
Azalea	3,279	447
Young Carers in Hertfordshire	3,279	-
Royal Hospital for Neuro-Disability	3,279	-
Rennie Grove Hospice Care	3,279	-
Home missions		
Crisis	-	827
Mencap	-	3,176
Harpenden Citizens Advice Bureau	-	1,200
	<u>13,116</u>	<u>14,607</u>

8 TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Linwood Road property	Church Hall	TOTAL	
	£	£	£	
Actual/ deemed cost:			2020	2019
Brought forward at 1 January	63,888	48,299	112,187	112,187
Carried forward 31 December	<u>63,888</u>	<u>48,299</u>	<u>112,187</u>	<u>112,187</u>
Depreciation:				
Brought forward at 1 January	-	(48,299)	(48,299)	(48,299)
Charge for year	-	-	-	-
Carried forward 31 December	<u>-</u>	<u>(48,299)</u>	<u>(48,299)</u>	<u>(48,299)</u>
Carrying value at 31 December	<u>63,888</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>63,888</u>	<u>63,888</u>

The Curate's House at 2 Linwood Road was independently valued on 2 March 2010 at £380,000

9 DEBTORS

	2020	2019
	£	£
Gift Aid Tax recoverable	7,499	11,754
Prepayments and accrued income	649	3,644
	<u>8,148</u>	<u>15,398</u>

10 CREDITORS

	2020	2019
	£	£
Outside giving	13,116	12,699
Accruals and deferred income	648	5,840
Other creditors	2,190	1,128
	<u>15,954</u>	<u>19,667</u>

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HARPENDEN ST JOHN

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020 (continued)

11 GENERAL FUNDS	£	£
Brought forward at 1 January	63,348	61,536
Other movements in general funds	(20,776)	1,812
Carried forward at 31 December	<u>42,572</u>	<u>63,348</u>

12 DESIGNATED FUNDS	2020	2019
The PCC operates seven Designated Funds:	£	£
Parish Centre	6,988	7,634
Organ - Reserve to fund future organ repairs	21,045	21,045
Legacies - Legacies received and spent	43,981	43,906
Flower Guild	323	426
St John's Players	700	700
Fabric reserve	23,752	23,752
Linwood Road property	63,888	63,888
	<u>160,677</u>	<u>161,351</u>

The movements on the Designated Funds during 2020 were as follows:

	Parish Centre	Organ	Legacies	Flower Guild
	£	£	£	£
Brought forward at 1 Jan 2020	7,634	21,045	43,906	426
Income	-	-	75	175
Expenditure	(646)	-	-	(278)
Carried forward at 31 Dec 2020	<u>6,988</u>	<u>21,045</u>	<u>43,981</u>	<u>323</u>

	St Johns Players	Fabric	Linwood Road property	TOTAL 2020
	£	£	£	£
Brought forward at 1 Jan 2020	700	23,752	63,888	161,351
Income	-	-	-	250
Expenditure	-	-	-	(924)
Carried forward at 31 Dec 2020	<u>700</u>	<u>23,752</u>	<u>63,888</u>	<u>160,677</u>

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HARPENDEN ST JOHN

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020 (continued)

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

	Parish Centre	Organ	Legacies	Flower Guild
	£	£	£	£
Brought forward at 1 Jan 2019	19,990	20,168	39,906	413
Income	409	877	4,000	503
Expenditure	(12,765)	-	-	(490)
Carried forward at 31 Dec 2019	<u>7,634</u>	<u>21,045</u>	<u>43,906</u>	<u>426</u>

	St Johns Players	Fabric	Linwood Rd property	TOTAL 2019
	£	£	£	£
Brought forward at 1 Jan 2019	700	23,752	63,888	168,817
Income	-	-	-	5,789
Expenditure	-	-	-	(13,255)
Carried forward at 31 Dec 2019	<u>700</u>	<u>23,752</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 2020 (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:

	2020	2019
	£	£
Parish Centre	146,430	10,000
Choir Fund	3,671	3,671
Education Fund	1,000	1,000
	<u>151,101</u>	<u>14,671</u>

The movements on the Restricted Funds during 2020 were as follows:

	Parish centre	Education Fund	Choir Fund	Charity	TOTAL 2020
	£	£	£	£	£
Brought forward at 1 January 2020	10,000	1,000	3,671	-	14,671
Voluntary Income	136,430	-	-	-	136,430
Expenditure	-	-	-	-	-
Carried forward at 31 December 2020	<u>146,430</u>	<u>1,000</u>	<u>3,671</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>151,101</u>

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

	Parish centre	Education Fund	Choir Fund	Charity	TOTAL 2019
	£	£	£	£	£
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>

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 £704 (2019 £640).

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HARPENDEN ST JOHN

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020 (continued)

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

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



St John the Baptist Harpenden: Electoral Roll

Report for the Annual Parochial Church Meeting of 18th April 2021

For 2021, 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 6 months as last year's APCM was deferred by 6 months due to Covid-19.

Our new Roll has 177 entries. This is unchanged from the September 2020 Roll. The net movement is as follows:

Last Year's Roll	177	
Passed away		-1
Carried forward		170
Added to the Roll for the first time		1
New Roll		177

The revised Roll will be displayed in the Church from Sunday 4th April.

Of the 177 entries:

- 119 are female and 58 are male – a ratio of 2.1 to 1.
- 114 are residents in the (ecclesiastical) Parish and 63 outside the Parish state that they have worshipped for 6 months or more – a ratio of 1.8 to 1.

Neil Middleton
Electoral Roll Officer
2nd April 2021

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 2020-2021

(A report was made to the last APCM in October 2020, thus this report reflects from then until end of March 2021)

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 six months. We would like to begin by thanking our deputy wardens: Bill Moore, Heather Nye, and Martin Myers for their support during 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 Tim Coleman, our treasurer, has 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.

At the APCM in October we noted the continuing sickness of our vicar, Berkeley, and were hopeful that he would soon return to ministry. However in December he informed us of his decision to resign his post. This sad news was conveyed to the congregation through an announcement by Bishop Michael after a Sunday morning service.

With the help of Bishop Michael and Archdeacon Jane, we have begun our search for a new vicar, starting with an informal vacancy meeting that was attended by a wide cross-section of the congregation. A small group has revised the Parish Profile, expertly coordinated, written and designed by Liz Sergeant, who also put together an advertisement for the role. At a Section 11 Meeting of the PCC these documents were agreed, and James Hillman and Tom Venner were chosen to be the Parish Representatives on the recruitment panel, with an interview day for short-listed candidates planned for early May.

Being in vacancy creates many challenges, but we are blessed with a dedicated ministry team, who have worked immensely hard to maintain our ministry and services as best we can in the current circumstances. Archdeacon Jane also enabled us to receive support from Jill Suttie, from St Mark's Church, Colney Heath. Jill has provided practical support and care throughout the last months, and we are grateful to her for the time that she continues to give to us.

Being in vacancy also sometimes has unexpected advantages, and we have welcomed no fewer than three Bishops and two Archdeacons to preside and to preach at our services since early December – most of them more than once! We would like to thank David Nye for maintaining the rota of visiting clergy during Berkeley's absence and our subsequent vacancy and for using, for our benefit, his most impressive address book!

The coronavirus pandemic has continued to affect our activities. Although we were able to meet in church prior to the November lockdown with a reduced congregation, we reluctantly concluded that we should revert to a live-streamed service for our 9:30 Sunday Eucharist. We are extremely grateful to Neil Middleton, Michael Readman, and the expert advice of Peter Weisel, through whom we were able to set up our live-streaming, which has reached a wider congregation through the internet. The live-streaming team has now expanded and continues this sterling work. Throughout the past months, Morning Prayer has taken place on Zoom. Funerals have also taken place in church.

As well as leading the live-streaming work, Neil has also taken a lead role in compiling a weekly newsletter for circulation to over 200 email addresses and for ensuring that communication online and on social media has been up to date and comprehensive. He has also been an invaluable technical lead to ensure that virtual church meetings have run smoothly. And a team of volunteers has distributed Church at Home leaflets to those members of our community who are not able to join the online services. We thank you all for your time and support.

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 the period up to the end of December, our church was open for private prayer every day of the week, only made possible by a small team of unlockers and lockers-up; a bigger team of daily cleaners ensured risks were minimized for any visitors to the building. Unfortunately, the tighter lockdown after Christmas led us to take the decision to only open for private prayer on Sundays, after the live-streaming, thus reducing the amount of people entering the church and keeping it in good order.

The key focus of the PCC on Safeguarding continues despite the lockdown, and all members have undertaken the required level of training as provided by the Diocese. We continue to ensure that we are compliant with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and Charities Commission guidance.

Over the course of the last six months, our work in planning and fundraising for the new Parish Centre (Project Phoenix), has been scaled back temporarily because of the coronavirus. 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. The Parish Hall is showing its age and causing some anxiety over its condition. The Fabric Committee, led with huge commitment by Matt Barter, works behind the scenes in caring for the church and the existing hall through ongoing maintenance, whether that relates to heating, leaks, stiff doors and many other tasks. We are fortunate to have a team of dedicated individuals who take pride in our splendid building and less splendid hall.

We should also thank Steve Howard, the gardener, who maintains our beautiful grounds; at this time many spring flowers are out and help us to be optimistic for the future too. 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, producing documents, and ensuring that there is a sufficient supply of coronavirus-combatting cleaning materials, all while tolerating a perpetual leaky roof in her office.

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. A stewardship campaign took place at Harvest time and we have signed up to the Parish Giving Scheme, as explained in the Giving in Grace email and documents. This resulted in a significant increase to giving from existing members of the scheme.

At this stage we must record our grateful thanks to our stewardship recorder, Tony Armstrong, who has announced his intention to stand down from this important position after six years in role. We are seeking a willing volunteer to shadow Tony for a short period and then to take over from him.

As a result of the stewardship campaign, our planned giving income has increased over the year, but other items of income have declined as a result of our physical absence from church and the inability to let the church hall. Our expenditure has also reduced and we have used the government's furlough scheme where appropriate. 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.

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 Young Carers in Hertfordshire, the Royal Hospital for Neuro-disability, Azalea, and Rennie Grove Hospice Care. For Harvest, we had a huge amount of contributions that went to the St Albans and District Food Bank, but owing to the lockdown contributions have been suspended and donors have been asked to donate at the supermarkets instead of through us.

Care for all of God's creation is part of the remit of the Eco-Church Team who have attained a Bronze Award from A Rocha for their policies and practices aiming to make us a greener church. We are particularly grateful to Margaret Charlston for leading these efforts and for encouraging us all to take responsibility for our environmental actions.

We were not able to maintain the delivery of our parish magazine free of charge to all in the parish, reaching about 4,000 households, owing to the pandemic. Sophie Crowley has taken on the editor's role, and owing to the continuing situation, the magazine has been produced and sent online. We hope to resume the paper copy as soon as it is feasible to do so.

We are also grateful to the group of parents who have been running Junior Church for the time that they have taken to plan activities for the younger members of our congregation over the lockdown period. The Nativity Play is always a highlight of St John's Christmas, and this year was coordinated by the Junior Church team, and Iain Pritchard, who produced a lovely thought-provoking and joyous video. 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: the pandemic and its restrictions on singing

meant we had organ music only for a while, but since February we have been fortunate to have soloists who lift the tone of the service through the hymns they sing; thanks to Warren Greaves, Anna Pritchard and Andrew Harbord, and Roger Carter for this wonderful resource. We look forward to a time when our usual rich musical enhancement will be fully restored.

The very popular *Tea at Three* and *Soup for the Soul*, under the leadership of Margaret Creighton have been suspended because of the pandemic, yet Margaret has turned her ever-effective efforts to the co-ordination of support to the vulnerable in our community through pastoral activities.

Faith and Light were only able to meet once since last October, and Lauryn and her team held a church service too on a Sunday afternoon. They too are looking forward to the future resumption of their activities.

Please be assured that we are most appreciative of all the support we have received over this past period from everyone who has been involved in these activities; normal volunteering has not been possible and inadvisable for many people. A small caucus of individuals have worked tirelessly on everyone's behalf to keep services going and keep the church safe. Whether or not we have mentioned you by name in this report, we know who you are and we thank you!

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. Most importantly, we also look forward, with resilience and hopefulness, to a successful outcome of our recruitment process.

Jane Donati

James Hillman

REPORT ON SAFEGUARDING
ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST CHURCH, HARPENDEN

prepared for the APCM 18th April 2021 – the previous report was provided in October 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. All parents of children who have appeared on You Tube services have given signed permissions for this.

A Policy on Social Media was revised and agreed by the PCC in November and covers St John's presence online, and through other media, such as email and telephones.

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, usually kept in the entrance hall, but because of coronavirus, now temporarily in the Library section.

Disclosure and Barring Checks

St John's subscribes to the 'Thirty-one eight agency' for DBS checks, which is recommended by the diocese. *"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. No checks have been done since the last APCM in October 2020. Renewal of existing checks will be carried out as soon as it is feasible to do so – when the lockdowns end.

Safeguarding in practice

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

There is 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 2020 there were no such incidents to report.

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 still 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. Recently, four members of the PCC undertook, or renewed, their training.

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 Library 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.

WHEATHAMPSTEAD DEANERY SYNOD 2020

Our Rural Dean, the Revd Richard Banham, stood down during the year, after 5 years' service, for which we give thanks. His successor, the Revd Thomas Sander, had no sooner taken up his post when he was appointed Rector of St Giles-in-the-Fields, London in October, so left the diocese at the end of the year. Consequently, Wheathampstead Deanery Synod met just once in the year on 18th November by Zoom. This took the form of a round-the-deanery sharing of experiences during the lockdowns. After a period of consultation, the Bishop announced that Richard Banham is to be our temporary Rural Dean for up to 18 months. We welcome Richard back!

Jim May
Acting Lay Chairman
14 February 2021



Group Reports 2021

Choir / Music **

Church Cleaning **

Dorcas **

Eco Church

Fabric

Faith and Light

Flower Guild

Junior Church

Little Acorns

Project Phoenix

Reaching New People **

St Luke's Cell

T@3 & Soup4TheSoul

** The pandemic delayed our APCM by six months in 2020 and with and two subsequent lockdowns, it is not surprising that a number of the groups have not met, and therefore have nothing to report. This is the case for:

Choir / Music	-	Roger Carter
Church Cleaners	-	Di Borthwick
Dorcas	-	Helen Davies
Reaching New People	-	Dawn Mason

*** Added 6 April 2021



EcoChurch report for St John's APCM, 2021

April 2021

We are delighted to report that St John's was awarded the Bronze level Eco church award in February 2021. There are currently nine Bronze level award churches in the St Albans Diocese, and one Silver. We have been asked to mentor another church just starting off on the scheme. This award scheme encourages churches of all denominations to care for God's earth, through the five areas of Worship and Teaching, Buildings, Land, Community and Global engagements, and Lifestyle.

We have continued to give ideas for a more sustainable lifestyle in the Parish Magazine, and the e-newsletter. We devised an Eco church Challenge for Lent, encouraging the congregation to complete two or three actions a week, to become more energy efficient, to reduce waste, promote biodiversity and to appreciate the wonderful world God has given us. One of the outcomes of the Lent Challenge was to find out about 'toilet twinning' part of the Tear Fund organisation. As a result, the PCC has agreed that we can seek donations from the congregation towards 'twinning' some or all of the six toilets at St John's, which will provide families in parts of the world living in poverty with potentially life-saving toilet infrastructure and sanitation. <https://www.toilettwinning.org>

We are now starting to work towards the Eco church Silver award. Our Church Buildings are an important part of our impact on the environment, and so we are discussing various ways to make our new Parish Centre sustainable with the Project Phoenix team. We have a great opportunity to reduce our future carbon footprint with this wonderful project.

If you are interested in finding out more about Eco church, or would like to tell us how you got on with the Lent Challenge, we would love to hear from you.

Eco.church@stjohnsharpenden.org.uk

Margaret Charlston, Anne Edwards, Andrew Harbord, Debbie Knight and Martin Myers.





Faith and Light were able to meet twice during the mini -unlock of November and December, for worship only. Although we did provide mini Christmas cakes and other treats in December, the gatherings were muted and less than joyful. We have missed meeting together this year.

All Faith and Light members have received monthly mailings, with prayers and reflections, some suggestions for craft activities, and colouring sheets. These have been well received. Sadly, one of our founding members, Alan Millard, died in February. We will miss Alan's practical guidance and humour very much. We hope that F&L might meet again in July, but this will be subject to safety guidelines.

Lauryn Awbrey, Chaplain

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. We have continued with the usual work of the committee, looking after the general maintenance of the building and ensuring statutory compliance.

We have again attempted to repair the church hall roof, with more extensive works being undertaken, and again, whilst initially successful, these repairs have failed. We have therefore taken the decision to relocate the Parish Office into the committee room. Please note that if you have a key to the Parish Office, there is a key inside the office to enable you to access the Committee Room.

The continual deterioration of the current hall again reinforces the importance and relevance of the project for our new Parish Centre, and places more urgency on commencing the project as soon as possible. The fund raising for the project is presently on hold due to the pandemic, however a revitalised



campaign to push forward is to be launched shortly, and we strongly encourage you to become part of this fantastic project.

The committee is continuing to look at disabled access compliance to the Lady Chapel and the altar within the church to ensure compliance with regulations. We are currently considering the proposals in church, alongside the access requirements from the new Parish Centre, to ensure that this is all fully co-ordinated.

We have undertaken some repairs to the main church entrance doors and undertaken redecoration of all the external doors to maintain them in a good state of repair.

WE have also had an initial meeting with the folks running the Eco Church initiative at St Johns, in order that we as a Fabric Committee, and also Project Phoenix, fully support the ambitions of the Eco-Church philosophy. We will be discussing these matters further with the congregation shortly.

We are very grateful to Steve for continuing to maintain the grounds around the church along with the team mowing and leaf clearing! Thank you to you all.

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

Flower Guild



Until the Church was closed, memorial days and festivals were observed as usual with flair and imagination and for the first time for Christmas this year we had a family to create the crib scene which was lovely.



To brighten the sanctuary for on-line services we have taken turns to provide a pedestal there and although during Lent the Church is normally bare of flowers we arranged pedestals at the side of the pulpit for three funerals.

Elizabeth Curran

From Junior Church

In the autumn 2020, whilst we were able to meet in church, we hosted services specifically for families and children.

In the run up to Christmas, we distributed Christingles around the parish and families joined us online to make them. Many of the children were also involved in making our nativity which was available online.

Lockdown 3 has proved a bit tricky for us, with many of our junior church leaders home-schooling their own families, but stories and other online services have been made available where possible. We are looking forward to meeting in church again soon.

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.

20 – 21

Unfortunately, since our last report Little Acorns has not been able to reopen. I have kept the situation under review throughout this time, but it has not been possible to meet. I live in hope that we can do something in September. This will require the help of the volunteers in their willingness to return and a huge advertising campaign! I have met several of our regular attendees while out on walks and I know there is still interest and an even greater need for children to socialise together after such a difficult year. But with the rapid deployment of the vaccine programme I pray that by September we will be able to reopen. Hopefully the magazine will be able to be delivered to every house in the parish again which will help spread the word.

SO WATCH THIS SPACE!! And please keep us in your prayers.

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.

Christine Kenyon



Project Phoenix April 2021

Our new Parish Centre is needed now more than ever. During the last six months, the existing church hall has been rapidly deteriorating, with the Parish Office becoming uninhabitable due to the leaking roof. So, we are even more determined as well as excited by the opportunity this project offers to make a real difference to our ministry and mission in the parish.

The good news is that after our fundraising lunch in February 2020, we quickly reached our first fundraising milestone of £500,000 in pledges and donations (including Gift Aid). This was a fantastic start to our campaign to raise £1.6m over 5 years, and we are very grateful to the PCC and members of the congregation who made their pledges and have continued to do so throughout this difficult time.

Although our fundraising plans have been on hold during the pandemic, some fun events have been organised, including two entertaining Zoom quizzes where several teams were put through their paces by quizmaster Paul Bedding. There have also been a couple of written quizzes, and sales of face masks and delicious jams, which have added to the overall project funds. We are grateful to everyone who has supported these initiatives during lockdown.

As we approach the end of the third lockdown, the project team are currently developing the overall five-year strategy for events and activities, with a view to kick starting the fundraising programme in Autumn 2021.

Our team of Ambassadors will soon be able to meet again with members of the congregation and encourage new pledges and support for the project. Looking further ahead, we will be widening our scope and reaching out to the local community and local charities.

In addition, as we prepare for the detailed design phase of the building, initial discussions have been held with our Eco church group, to ensure we are working together as we consider the choices available to us. We also plan to consult with the congregation on our approach to sustainability, as we assess the options for a greener building.

Exciting times are ahead, and the project team look forward to working with you all on this inspiring and ambitious project, which will enable us to support each other and our community more effectively in the coming years.

Key Project Milestones - achieved

September 2019 – Planning permission granted by St Albans District Council

February 2020 – Fundraising launch party

April 2020 – Fundraising total from donations and pledges (including Gift Aid) - £500,000

LIZ SERGEANT



ST LUKE'S CELL PRAYER GROUP REPORT FOR 2020-21

This last extraordinary year St Luke's Cell has been unable to meet monthly, but we have continued to pray individually in our own homes.

The St Luke's Cell list is of people in the parish or relatives or friends of those living in the parish who are in particular need, and for whom our prayers have been asked. Each of us prays for a small number of people on the list, moving to a further group each month. While we have not been able to meet up, we have kept in touch by email and phone, and now also look forward to the day when we can meet again.

Would you like us to pray for you? You can get in touch with the parish office, a member of the ministry team or with **Michael Hughes** (email: m.j.hughes222@btinternet.com or phone 01582 765576) from the group.

T@3 & Soup4TheSoul

It is now a year since our network of telephone callers first embarked on the support of the vulnerable and lonely during the Corona Virus lockdown situation. An appropriate time to thank them all for their continued commitment in the giving of their love, time and concern.

As a second lockdown, dark evenings, bad weather and a Christmas like no other approached, efforts were increased in an attempt to share worries and concerns and to alleviate as much loneliness as possible. It was a difficult time,

T@3 and Soup 4 the Soul have inevitably been cancelled. However, Christmas cards and a small gift were distributed personally to all T@3 attendees and these were well received and appreciated. Easter cards (and eggs) will be delivered during Holy Week as we attempt to keep in touch and share God's love.

Our thanks too go to the Rev Jill Suttie for her presence and support. We hope to continue with our very worthwhile telephone conversations for as long as they are needed.

Margaret Creighton