



The Parish of Harpenden, St John

MEETING PAPERS

FOR THE

MEETING OF THE PARISHIONERS

AND THE

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

To be held in the Church Hall

On Sunday 20th March 2022

11.00 a.m.

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 - Churchwardens' Report

 - Annual Accounts for 2021**

 - Report from the Deanery Synod

 - Safeguarding Report

 - Group Reports [including Fabric report]

The Vicar's report will be given at the meeting.

** Note: Due to the timing of publication, it may be necessary to only note the presented annual accounts, with formal approval to follow at a later date. The website displayed a set of [draft accounts](#) from 13 – 15 March. The notable differences in the draft accounts were (1) The Independent Examiner's Report was not included; and (2) in Notes 6 & 13, there has been a reclassification of £23 in the costs of Church Activities. Within Mission & Education > Education, £23 has moved from 'Unrestricted Funds General to the Education Restricted Fund. This in turn impacts the Statement of Financial Activities

AGENDAS

MEETING OF PARISHIONERS

To be held in the Church Hall at 11.00 a.m.

- 1 Apologies for Absence
- 2 Minutes of the Meeting of Parishioners held on 18th April 2021
- 3 Matters Arising
- 4 Election of Church Wardens

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

To be held in the Church Hall on Sunday 20th March 2022

following the Meeting of Parishioners

- 1 Apologies for Absence
- 2 Minutes of the APCM held on 18th April 2021
- 3 Matters Arising
- 4 Safeguarding Report
- 5 Treasurer's Financial Review
- 6 Annual Report
- 7 Electoral Roll Report
- 8 Election of Representatives to the Parochial Church Council
- 9 Deanery Synod Report
- 10 Fabric and Project Phoenix Report
- 11 Vicar's Report
- 12 Any Other Business



ST JOHN'S CHURCH, HARPENDEN

Minutes of the Meeting of Parishioners

Held on Sunday 18th April 2021

Via Zoom at 11.00 a.m.

Present: 41 online : James Hillman (Lay Chair), Jane Donati, David Brown, Andrew Harbord, Bill Moore, Bryan Coventry, Carol Cooke, John Jones, Christine Kenyon, David & Heather Nye, Dawn Mason, Derek & Liz Curran, Di Borthwick, Dorothea Elliott, Helen Davies, John and Jacky Dodd, Jo Klein, Joy Steele, Jill Suttie, Alan & Lesley Tree, Lauryn Awbrey, Liz MacDonald, Liz Sergeant, Margaret Charlston, Martin Myers, Matt Barter, Michael Readman, Moira Carrington, Naomi & Stuart Burnett, Neil Middleton, Nick Luckett, Pat Hudis, Paul Bedding, Roger Carter, Rosemary Horne, Tim Coleman

1. Apologies for Absence

Emma Bresslaw, Brenda Cottle, Alex Dales, Anne Edwards, Alison Gardiner, Michael and Doris Hughes, Julia White

2. Minutes of the Last Meeting

Adoption of the minutes of the Meeting of Parishioners held on Sunday 11th October 2020 was proposed by Margaret Charlston, seconded by Dawn Mason 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 Liz Sergeant and seconded by Heather Nye, and

Jane Donati, proposed by John Dodd and seconded by David Nye. In the absence of any other nominations, James and Jane were elected unanimously to serve as church wardens for the year 2021/2022.

The meeting closed at 11.06 a.m.



ST JOHN'S CHURCH, HARPENDEN

Minutes of the Annual Parochial Church Meeting

held on Sunday 18th April 2021

Via Zoom

For the second year running and only six months since the last APCM, this year's meeting took place on Zoom. Lauryn Awbrey opened the meeting with a prayer.

Present: There were 41 members present online, the same as for the Meeting of Parishioners.

1. Apologies for absence: Same as for the Meeting of Parishioners.

2. Minutes of the last APCM

Adoption of the minutes of the meeting held on Sunday 11th October 2020 was proposed by David Brown, seconded by Nick Lockett and carried with 40 for, none against and one abstention. As this meeting was taking place remotely, the minutes will be signed by James Hillman at the earliest opportunity, as a full and accurate record.

3. Matters Arising

There were none.

4. Treasurer's Financial Review

Tim Coleman

The accounts for 2020 had been uploaded onto the website prior to the meeting. They were reviewed by our recently appointed Independent Examiner, Alex Dales, who kindly agreed to take on the role for 2020. Tim expressed his thanks to Alex on behalf of the PCC for both volunteering and for the thorough and timely job she has done.

Tim's presentation covered the major items of income & expenditure, the position at the end of 2020 and an update on the current position and outlook for 2021.

1. Income & expenditure

	2020		2019		Increase/ Decrease
	£'000	%	£'000	%	
Income					
Planned giving	128	44%	119	58%	+8%
Open plate	4	1%	8	4%	-50%
Advent Challenge	-		30	15%	
Hall lettings	6	2%	14	7%	-57%
Legacies	-		4	2%	
Parish Magazine	4	1%	5	2%	-20%
Weddings & Funerals	4	1%	4	2%	+0%
Parish Centre	136	47%	10	5%	+1260%
Other	6	2%	10	5%	-40%
Total income	288	100%	204	100%	+41%
Expenditure					
Parish share	108	62%	105	53%	+3%
Staff costs	21	12%	25	13%	-16%
Mission & charitable giving	13	8%	15	8%	-13%
Fabric & running costs	26	15%	28	14%	-7%
Parish Centre	-		13	7%	
Other	5	3%	14	7%	-64%
Total expenditure	173	100%	200	100%	-14%
Surplus	115		4		
Excluding Parish Centre	(21)		7		

Income

- Planned Giving is by far the most important source of income. Up by 8%, but a smaller proportion of the total as the Parish Centre fundraising started in earnest. As a proportion of our regular income (i.e., excluding the Parish Centre and the one-off Advent Challenge in 2019), it has grown to 84% in 2020 from 73% in 2019.
- Hall Lettings were down significantly to £6k, due to the various lockdowns.
- Parish Centre fundraising was launched in February 2020 and generated £136k in the year. The ongoing financial position of the church is tracked separately from Project Phoenix, although both sets of activities are combined in the accounts
- Overall income grew by 41% to £288k, skewed heavily by Project Phoenix. Excluding this and the Advent Challenge, income was down £12k or 7%, due mainly to the impact of the lockdowns, particularly on hall lettings.

Expenditure

- The Parish Share is the most significant cost, representing over 60% of our costs, and was up slightly from 2019
- Staff costs were lower as we utilised the Government furlough scheme (£4k in 2020).
- Mission and Charitable Giving costs were down slightly as we didn't have any additional charitable activities during the year.
- No Parish Centre costs were incurred in 2020, and we managed to control costs tightly in most other areas. Overall costs were £27k lower (14%) at £173k.

Overall, we booked a surplus of £115k, including Project Phoenix. Excluding this, we had a deficit of £21k, which is around the same level as 2019 after adjusting for Project Phoenix and the Advent Challenge.

2. Change year-on-year

The change year on year was caused by:

	<u>£'000</u>
Surplus in 2019	4
Advent Challenge in 2019	(30)
Parish Centre costs lower in 2020	13
Parish Centre fundraising in 2020	126
Other changes	2
Surplus in 2020	115

3. Funds position

The £115k surplus meant that at the end of 2020 our overall funds balances had increased to £354k, compared to £239k at the end of 2019.

	<u>£'000</u>
Opening funds at start of 2020	239
Decrease in debtors	(7)
Decrease in creditors	4
Increase in cash	118
Closing funds at end of 2020	354
General	42
Designated	161
Restricted	151
Total funds	354
<i>Represented by:</i>	
Property at Linwood Road	64
Cash	298
Debtors	8
Creditors	(16)
Net assets	354

The funds are split into several categories, with the General Fund being used for the general ongoing benefit of the Church. The overall policy of the PCC is to maintain 2 months of running costs in the General Fund – this is around £30k.

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 all 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 to the 4 charities we supported in March & April, all were extremely grateful.

Update on current situation

- A broadly break-even budget has been set for 2021 reflecting a good response to the Planned Giving campaign last year.
- Additionally, there are some one-off factors this year which will help:
 - The Linwood Rd property is now being let until a time when we have another curate
 - The furlough scheme continued to be used into the early part of 2021
 - The vacancy means that our Parish Share is slightly reduced
- It is anticipated that a breakeven or a small surplus in 2021 will be reported
- However, these factors are one-offs, and the underlying picture, whilst improved, hasn't been completely solved. St John's is still not in a position of being financially self-sufficient over the medium term, which must be borne in mind.
- This is a similar position to a lot of other churches, and a better position than some. A lot of other churches are much more dependent on hall lettings, and so have been badly affected.

There was a question from Margaret Charlston on whether the current expenditure on the church hall has been budgeted for. The response was that it has, but whether it is enough remains to be seen. The parish office recently had to relocate to the committee room as the office itself is in such a poor state of repair.

Adoption of the accounts, which had already been approved by the PCC, was proposed by Christine Kenyon, seconded by Neil Middleton and carried unanimously.

5. Electoral Roll

Neil Middleton

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 who state that they have worshipped for 6 months or more – a ratio of 1.8 to 1.

Adoption of the updated electoral roll was proposed by John Jones and seconded by Christine Kenyon, all were in favour and it was carried unanimously.

6. The Churchwardens' Report

James Hillman

The report was available to read on the website prior to the meeting. Although the last APCM was only 6 months ago, a lot has happened, and this is our third consecutive APCM without an incumbent. Our current vacancy officially began at the end of February, although has been much longer in reality. To its credit, the St John's community has worked together during this period in its usual resourceful, imaginative and resilient way and James expressed his thanks to:

- Jane Donati, who works tirelessly behind the scenes, not least in ensuring the church is cleaned and is safe for opening
- Heather Nye, Bill Moore and Martin Myers the deputy wardens
- The Ministry Team and the PCC
- The Archdeacon, Bishops and other guest preachers who have helped us during the vacancy
- Neil Middleton, without whom much of the church lockdown experience would not have been possible, in particular the live streaming
- Liz Sergeant and team for the Parish Profile and advert in response to the vacancy
- Jill Suttie
- Junior Church
- Eco-Church – with congratulations on obtaining the Bronze Award
- Alex Dales for stepping up to being the Independent Examiner
- Tony Armstrong, our Stewardship Recorder for the last 9 years, who is now retiring, and Andrew Poppleton who has agreed to take on this role
- Paul Bedding for the Charity Commission submission, Jane Donati and Naomi Burnett for Safeguarding, Neil Middleton and team involved in the re-vamping and updating of the website and those involved in the parish magazine

The number of applications received for our vacancy is in double figures which is a hugely positive reflection on the Parish Profile. James will meet with Bishop Michael and the Rural Dean this week to work through the short list. Interviews will take place on 6th May. Bishop Michael and Archdeacon Jane have done their best to accelerate the process and we can look with hopefulness to a positive outcome.

There has not been an opportunity to formerly record thanks to Berkeley Zych for his ministry at St John's. A total of £535 has been raised and James will be arranging a gift on behalf of St John's.

David Nye thanked James for the huge amount of work he has done and expressed gratitude for the fact that he has agreed to stand as churchwarden for one more year.

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.

The importance of safeguarding is ever present and needs to be considered in all that goes on at St John's. This is recognised, and as such it is included on the agenda of every PCC meeting. Risk assessments are in place and are regularly reviewed. Training is being renewed so that it is up to date once the church re-opens.

There were no questions.

8. Election of representatives to the Parochial Church Council

- The following 3 PCC members have completed 3 years and are being re-elected for a second term:

Bryan Coventry	Proposed by: Dawn Mason Seconded by: Martin Myers
Nick Lockett	Proposed by: Heather Nye Seconded by: Jane Donati
Martin Myers	Proposed by: Margaret Charlston Seconded by Liz Sergeant

There were no other nominations, rendering a ballot unnecessary, and the 3 nominations for the PCC were presented to the meeting *en bloc*. The meeting unanimously elected the fore-named nominees to serve for a further 3 years. The PCC has a maximum tenure of 6 years to ensure the membership reflects the membership of the congregation and is kept refreshed.

Tom Venner was co-opted onto the PCC as Parish Representative at the Section 11 meeting on 2nd March. As there is still work to be done as the Parish Representative, the new PCC members were asked to vote to co-opt Tom onto the PCC again.

Proposer: Nick Lockett

Secunder: Dawn Mason

Carried unanimously.

9. Review of number of Readers on the PCC

James Hillman

A new ruling means that the annual meeting decides whether one or more of the readers licensed to the parish, whose names are on the roll of the parish, should be members of the PCC. In the case of St John's, there are 3 readers: David Nye and Anne Edwards are on the PCC by virtue of their membership of the Deanery Synod, so it is only Lauryn Awbrey's position that needed to be voted upon.

Proposer: Paul Bedding

Seconder: Margaret Charlston

It was voted unanimously that Lauryn should be on the PCC.

Lauryn added that in her experience, reader attendance on the PCC has historically depended on what the vicar wanted.

10. Deanery Synod

David Nye

David gave an overview on the Deanery Synod with a view to encouraging people to consider joining it. They meet 3 times per year, and most importantly the Deanery Synod are electors of the Diocesan Synod who, every 5 years elect members to the General Synod. So, by being part of the Deanery Synod, St John's are involved in some of the larger decisions being made within the Church of England. The more representation that St John's can have at this level the better and as a church we have 3 allocated places that are currently not taken.

Michael Readman endorsed David's comments, and both would welcome further enquiries from the anyone at the meeting interested in joining. This should be seen as a call to action to which we should respond.

11. Fabric and Project Phoenix

Matt Barter

The Fabric report had been prepared by Matt and had been available to read with the meeting papers on the website and so he invited any questions or comments.

Lauryn Awbrey asked, in the context of Inclusive Church, on the progress of wheelchair accessibility. The proposal to have an accessible ramp at the back of the Lady Chapel and to the altar rail have been put to the PCC and as yet, have not been decided upon. Access needs if possible, are to be co-ordinated with what is being proposed for the parish centre and the church. It is a time balancing act. James Hillman said it will be kept on the agenda but with such significant re-working it would not occur during a vacancy.

Liz Curran raised the subject of the plastering in the porch which is fast deteriorating. Matt explained this is a design issue and is being monitored but is not high on the current list of priorities. Jane Donati suggested that perhaps the plaster could be scraped off, rather than having the continual snow effect. Matt said this could be looked at.

James Hillman thanked Matt for the massive amount of work he and the Fabric committee have done.

Liz Sergeant had prepared the Project Phoenix report that had been available to read on the website with the meeting papers. Matt gave a short summary:

- The pledges stand at £500k from around 40 people and in spite of the challenges of Covid 19, it is good news that none of these have been cancelled. Matt thanked the Project Phoenix ambassadors for the great start and said a mini relaunch is being planned for Sept 2021
- A 5-6yr fundraising plan is currently being worked on to include both small and large events which engage with the local community
- Significant amounts of money and time have been spent dealing with leaks and other problems with the church hall. It is becoming a major economic burden and makes the need for a new parish centre even greater. Hopefully, building work on the project could start in the next 2-3 years. At some stage in the near future the hall will have to close, this point is being reached more quickly than originally envisioned.
- As the project progresses, Matt and the team will be involving Eco-Church over various aspects of the design

John Jones asked how the design is progressing. Matt explained that the detail on the second phase cannot start until we know when building will commence.

The meeting officially ended with a prayer from David Nye and recital of the Grace at 12.08 pm.

CHURCHWARDENS' REPORT

As churchwardens we are required to provide a report to the APCM summarising the main activities which have occurred at St John's. 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 on track 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. Sadly Tim resigned from this role in February, and we thank him for his time and dedication in this role.

At the APCM last year, we were in the process of looking for a new vicar, with the help of Bishop Michael and Archdeacon Jane. The PCC appointed had Tom Venner and James Hillman as the Parish Representatives on the recruitment panel and we were grateful for the support of our Rural Dean, Richard Banham, Archdeacon Jane, and Bishop Michael for their support and guidance throughout the recruitment process.

The vacancy continued throughout the summer, but our dedicated ministry team worked immensely hard to maintain our ministry and services during this time. Archdeacon Jane had enabled us to receive support from Jill Suttie, from St Mark's Church, Colney Heath. Jill provided practical support and care and we are grateful to her for her wise guidance.

We welcomed Bishops and Archdeacons, as well as many priests to preside and to preach at our services, thanks to David Nye and his impressive list of contacts. Thus, we were able to continuously deliver a Eucharist Service every week, which was also live-streamed, and many other services. Thanks to Neil Middleton, the live-streaming team has now expanded and continues this sterling work to support people who prefer not to come to church because of the pandemic, or who cannot come because they are vulnerable in some way, or are in a far-flung place. Neil also devised the weekly newsletter system which kept everyone informed of what was happening here at St. John's, and still does. A team of volunteers continues to deliver Church@Home materials to those who require or need it.

With the help of many people in diverse roles on the interview day, including a number of children from The Grove Junior School, buddies to escort the candidates from one venue to another, servers of refreshments, a Study Group, and the St John's Ministry Team enhanced by local clergy, we planned and carried out a thorough assessment of candidates. As a result of this busy day we appointed our new incumbent, Tim Vickers. We were able to look forward to the future with great optimism.

At last, in September, Tim was licensed at a special and joyous service on a sunny Sunday afternoon and we were able to welcome him, Sophy, Jem and Laurie to the parish and to

St John the Baptist Harpenden: Electoral Roll

Report for the Annual Parochial Church Meeting of 20th March 2022

For 2022, 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.

Our new Roll has 172 entries. This is a net reduction of 5 since last year; movement is as follows:

Last Year's Roll	177	
Passed away	-4	
Resigned	-7	
Carried forward		166
Added to the Roll for the first time		6
New Roll		172

The revised Roll has been displayed in Church from Friday 4th March.

Of the 172 entries:

- 108 are residents in the (ecclesiastical) Parish and 64 outside the Parish or state that they have worshipped for 6 months or more – a ratio of 1.7 to 1.
- 116 are female and 56 are male – a ratio of 2.1 to 1.

Neil Middleton

Electoral Roll Officer

Updated 18th March 2022 to correct a processing error (now 6 additions, not 7)

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/

Harpenden. All of the formal acts and ceremonies took place, and there was a special tea afterwards outside the church to celebrate his arrival. Tim has wasted no time in getting to know how St John's works, who does what, and how we move forward with confidence in our local ministry. We have enjoyed a great variety of services and events over the past six months, despite a number of restrictions as a result of the pandemic.

Tim consulted with the Diocese about temporarily re-arranging the furniture in the church to enable a return of the choir whose singing had been suspended because of covid. We thank all of the talented soloists that supported worship until the return of the choir; their efforts enlivened and enhanced our worship. In-church services are now embellished by a full complement of music, thanks to the choir and Roger Carter, the Director of Music.

Michael Readman has been diligently undertaking the huge task of upgrading our sound system, which has been somewhat erratic over the past months. His wealth of knowledge about audio technology is enabling us to enhance the sound quality and to repair the loop system. He has also been instrumental in installing wi-fi within the church which in turn will benefit the live stream. He has also trained a small band of volunteer sound operators for our 9:30 Sunday Eucharist. Thank you to Michael for this important work so that people can clearly hear the word of God.

We are indebted to the many and various teams of volunteers who have continued their support in the work of caring for and maintaining the continuing work of St John's. Slowly, some of the events and groups have returned, such as Little Acorns, Tea at Three, and Coffee Time after Sunday morning service. We are looking forward to the total end of the pandemic when everyone will feel more confident to attend in-church services and events.

The key focus of the PCC on Safeguarding continues despite the lockdown, and all members had undertaken the required level of training. The Diocese has now given new safeguarding guidelines and we will be working to adhere to these. 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 two years, our work in planning and fundraising for the new Parish Centre (Project Phoenix), had 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, such as the Mothers' Union cake stall which took place on the council election day. Pledges made prior to the pandemic have continued to be honoured, for which we are extremely grateful. 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 on this soon. The Parish Hall is causing great anxiety over its condition, and in particular the water ingress that has continued over the year despite best efforts to prevent it. 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, and many other tasks. We are fortunate to have a team of dedicated individuals who take pride in our splendid church and much less splendid hall.

We would also like to thank Steve Howard, who maintains our beautiful grounds in a quiet and unassuming way, and who contributed to the Open Day with samples and information about bees – we now have bee hotels on site. 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. Barbara, our hall cleaner, enables us to let this space to community users through her efforts.

We are in a position where the financial pressure remains significant and the current economic, political and social uncertainty are causing additional difficulty. It continues to be a priority that we should be paying our Parish Share in full. A stewardship campaign took place in August and we continue to promote the Parish Giving Scheme. This resulted in an increase to giving from existing members of the scheme. However, for some time now, the pandemic has affected our income as a result of our physical absence from church and our more limited ability to let the church hall. Although our expenditure has also reduced over this time, 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.

At this stage we must record our grateful thanks to our 'retired' stewardship recorder, Tony Armstrong, who served so efficiently over several years. At present Andrew Poppleton is fulfilling this role.

We are pleased that we have been able to maintain our outside giving at 10% of our income but the charities to whom this sum will be given have yet to be determined, with the help of the congregation.

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. Litter-picks have been held, and the toilet-twinning scheme was successful. In our church porch we have boxes for all kinds of recycling, the newest ones being pill blister packs, and refill sachets, both of which have been successful. The huge number of candles that accumulated over time were taken to a recycler by Anne Edwards, and are being made into new candles!

We have revived the delivery of our parish magazine free of charge to all in the parish, reaching about 4,000 households, thanks to Steve Whiting, the distributors and all the

deliverers. Thank you to Sophie Crowley for editing the magazine for the last few years, and to Sarah Allen, who “guest edited” the Spring edition.

A Saturday activity session by the Junior Church resulted in a Nativity Play the very next day and this was one of the many highlights of St John’s Christmas. A full programme of Christmas events took place inside and out, culminating in the lovely choral Epiphany Service where Amici Voices enhanced the liturgy, and wine ensured a convivial end to this significant evening.

The very popular *Tea at Three*, under the leadership of Margaret Creighton had been suspended because of the pandemic but was reinstated in the autumn. Many thanks to Margaret for all that she has contributed to the life of St John’s over many years, and in a variety of different roles.

Faith and Light have begun to meet again, thanks to Lauryn and her team.

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 activities; normal volunteering had not been possible and was inadvisable for many people. A small caucus of individuals 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. We look forward to the fundraising efforts for our new parish centre being relaunched soon, giving us the opportunity to leave a fitting legacy for future generations. Most importantly, we are grateful to Tim and his family, for coming to our church and leading us into the future.

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 2021

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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 2021

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.

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.

The church is normally open daily from 9am to 5pm .

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. Whilst it has, during 2021, been possible to resume some of our services, we have erred on the side of caution.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HARPENDEN ST JOHN

TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021 (continued)

Achievements and performance (continued)

Until the induction of our new Vicar and with the help of visiting clergy, we were able to hold a Parish Eucharist every Sunday morning at 9.30am. Approximately once a month, a short afternoon service for families was held and Faith and Light services restarted. It was not possible to restart Junior Church meetings (normally during the Sunday service at 9.30am) .

The PCC seeks to ensure that all are welcomed at our regular services, wherever possible. At present we have 173 on the Church Electoral Roll, 108 of whom are resident in the Parish and 65 of whom have stated their eligibility is due to six months or more habitual worship. Since the previously reported number of 177, 4 members have died, 7 have resigned and 7 were added.

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. During the year, there was 1 wedding, 4 baptisms, 15 funerals, 2 crematorium services and 9 burials of ashes.

Faith and Light, which provides an opportunity for adults with learning difficulties to worship in an appropriate and accessible environment, continued to meet.

The Parish was in vacancy until 12 September 2021 when Rev T H Vickers was Instituted, Inducted and Installed as Vicar.

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 seven times a year and attendance at meetings was 84% of the maximum possible number of 20.

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.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HARPENDEN ST JOHN

TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021 (continued)

Structure, governance and management of the PCC (continued)

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 and deliveries to every house in the parish have now recommenced. 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 continued to be a 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.

Fundraising efforts for our new parish Centre were paused during the pandemic but these will be restarted in 2022.

Church Concerts

The PCC is keen for the church to be kept open to the community for personal prayer and are also delighted to see it used 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 Parish Hall

During the year and with regard to national and Church of England advice, the hall was reopened for church use and also for outside hire. We have welcomed back a number of regular hirers.

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.

During the pandemic the St John's pastoral group supported the house-bound, bereaved and sick with regular phone calls. As restrictions eased, most of the other initiatives have now been restarted.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HARPENDEN ST JOHN

TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021 (continued)

Structure, governance and management of the PCC (continued)

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 2021 to the various charities shortly to be agreed by the PCC. The Advent book group took place on Zoom, with plans for another discussion group during Lent.

Ecumenical Relations

St John's is a member of Churches Together in Harpenden.

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 2021 was £257,223 (2020: £287,833), a reduction of £30,610 or 11% compared to the prior year. This reduction was mainly caused by donations to the Parish Centre falling by £59,736 to £76,694 (2020: £136,430) due to a lower level of one-off donations during 2021 compared to 2020. Excluding the Parish Centre, income rose by £29,126 or 19% to £180,529 (2020: £151,403) assisted by the letting of the property at Linwood Road, which generated £17,345 (2020: nil) and a one-off receipt of tax relief on a legacy from prior years, which amounted to £4,787 (2020: nil). Excluding both of these one-offs, underlying income rose by £6,994 or 5%.

Total expenditure during 2021 grew by £5,595 or 3% to £178,448 (2020: £172,853). The largest item of expenditure was the parish share of £98,189 (2020: £107,731), with the reduction of £9,542 being due to the vacancy during part of 2021. Most other costs grew in the period as activity levels increased following a very subdued 2020. In addition, several one-off costs were incurred related to improving the audio equipment in Church, maintenance of the Hall and preparation for the letting of Linwood Road.

Our planned missionary giving of 10% of our voluntary income to outside charities in 2021 rose by 4% to £13,586 (2020: £13,116) in addition to specific campaigns in support of Toilet Twinning and the Christmas Appeal for Christian Aid.

The net of the total income and total expenditure for 2021 was a net surplus of £78,775 (2020: £114,980). However, £76,694 of this was for the new Parish Centre (2020: £136,430), with the remaining activities generating a small surplus of £2,081 (2020: deficit of £21,450). As a result of the net surplus, total net assets as at 31 December 2021 of £433,125 are £78,775 higher than total net assets as at 1 January 2021 of £354,350. Total net assets are represented by general, designated, and restricted funds.

General funds decreased by £1,967 from £42,572 as at 1 January 2021 to £40,605 as at 31 December 2021. This represents around three months of ongoing expenditure.

Designated funds increased by £4,071 from £160,667 as at 1 January 2021 to £164,748 as at 31 December 2021. This increase was mainly due to an increase in the legacy fund of £4,796 from a tax receipt from a previous legacy, and a decrease of £700 caused by the closure of the St John's Players designated fund and transfer back to the General fund, which was approved by the PCC in 2021.

Restricted funds increased by £76,671 from £151,101 as at 1 January 2021 to £227,772 as at 31 December 2021, due principally to donations received for the Parish Centre.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HARPENDEN ST JOHN TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021 (continued)

Outlook for the future

The financial position of the PCC as at 31 December 2021 remains sound, with improvements made to the underlying structural deficit noted previously. We have been helped considerably by the rental income from Linwood Road, which will fall away should a new Curate be appointed, and further effort is therefore needed in order to establish a financially sustainable position.

The trustees consider that the PCC is a going concern as at the date of approving the 2021 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 2022 which anticipates further improvements in the underlying deficit although includes budgets for capital costs expected in relation to the Church porch and investment in new audio-video equipment. The PCC expects that such one-off projects, if approved by the PCC, will be partly funded by specific fund-raising campaigns and therefore anticipates that its reserves position will remain healthy into the future.

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 2021 until the date this report was approved are:

Vicar

Tim Vickers (from 12 September 2021)
Berkeley Zych (until February 2021)

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

Tim Coleman (resigned 11 February 2022)

Council Members

Naomi Burnett
Bryan Coventry
Andrew Harbord
Nick Lockett
Liz Macdonald
Dawn Mason
Bill Moore
Martin Myers
Liz Newell
Heather Nye
Liz Sergeant

Diocesan and Deanery Synod Member

Michael Readman

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 2021, 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: 15 March 2022

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HARPENDEN ST JOHN

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

		Unrestricted Funds		Restricted	TOTAL	2020
	Note	General	Designated	Funds	2021	(Note
		£	£	£	£	15)
						£
INCOMING RESOURCES						
Incoming resources from generated funds:						
Voluntary income	2	138,674	4,787	76,694	220,155	271,442
Activities for generating funds	3	26,526	-	-	26,526	7,004
Investment income	4	61	9	-	70	466
		<u>165,261</u>	<u>4,796</u>	<u>76,694</u>	246,751	278,912
Incoming resources from church activities	5	<u>10,135</u>	<u>337</u>	<u>-</u>	10,472	8,921
Total incoming resources		<u>175,396</u>	<u>5,133</u>	<u>76,694</u>	257,223	287,833
RESOURCES EXPENDED						
Cost of church activities						
Missionary Giving	6	14,828	-	-	14,828	13,116
Parish Share	6	98,189	-	-	98,189	107,731
Fabric and Running Costs	6	32,627	-	-	32,627	25,908
Mission & Education	6	4,361	-	23	4,384	1,833
Staff Costs	6	21,425	-	-	21,425	20,541
Other costs	6	6,633	362	-	6,995	3,724
Total resources expended		<u>178,063</u>	<u>362</u>	<u>23</u>	178,448	172,853
Transfers between funds	12	700	(700)	-	-	-
Net income/(expenditure) for year		<u>(1,967)</u>	<u>4,071</u>	<u>76,671</u>	78,775	114,980
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS						
Total funds at 1 Jan 2021		42,572	160,677	151,101	354,350	239,370
Total funds at 31 Dec 2021		<u>40,605</u>	<u>164,748</u>	<u>227,772</u>	433,125	354,350

The notes on pages 10 to 18 form part of these financial statements.

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HARPENDEN ST JOHN

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2021

	Note	2021 £	2020 £
FIXED ASSETS			
Tangible assets	8	63,888	63,888
CURRENT ASSETS			
Debtors	9	9,302	8,148
Bank and cash balances		376,677	298,268
		385,979	306,416
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Creditors payable within one year	10	(16,742)	(15,954)
NET CURRENT ASSETS			
		369,237	290,462
TOTAL NET ASSETS			
		433,125	354,350
THE FUNDS OF THE CHARITY			
Unrestricted income funds:			
General	11	40,605	42,572
Designated	12	164,748	160,677
Total		205,353	203,249
Restricted income funds:			
	13	227,772	151,101
		433,125	354,350

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HARPENDEN ST JOHN

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

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 2021 (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 2021 (continued)

	Unrestricted Funds		Restricted Funds	TOTAL	TOTAL
	General	Designated	Funds	2021	2020
	£	£	£	£	£
2 VOLUNTARY INCOME					
Planned Giving:					
Gift Aid donations	101,841	-	-	101,841	96,046
Tax recoverable	24,750	-	-	24,750	23,139
Non gift aid donations	6,544	-	-	6,544	8,337
Collections (open plate)	2,729	-	-	2,729	3,644
Donations, appeals etc.	2,810	-	-	2,810	3,846
Legacies	-	4,787	-	4,787	-
Parish Centre fundraising	-	-	61,893	61,893	111,697
Tax recoverable on Parish Centre funds	-	-	14,801	14,801	24,733
	<u>138,674</u>	<u>4,787</u>	<u>76,694</u>	<u>220,155</u>	<u>271,442</u>
3 ACTIVITIES FOR GENERATING FUNDS					
Church Hall lettings (non-church activities)	7,441	-	-	7,441	6,002
Fundraising Events	1,444	-	-	1,444	-
Linwood Road property rental income	17,345	-	-	17,345	-
Other Income and funds generated	296	-	-	296	1,002
	<u>26,526</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>26,526</u>	<u>7,004</u>
4 INVESTMENT INCOME					
Bank interest	61	9	-	70	466
	<u>61</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>70</u>	<u>466</u>
INCOME FROM CHURCH					
5 ACTIVITIES					
Flower Guild income	-	337	-	337	175
Income from Social events	65	-	-	65	36
Parish Magazine advertising	2,990	-	-	2,990	4,398
Fees for Weddings & Funerals	7,080	-	-	7,080	4,312
	<u>10,135</u>	<u>337</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>10,472</u>	<u>8,921</u>

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HARPENDEN ST JOHN

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021 (continued)

	Unrestricted Funds General £	Designated £	Restricted Funds £	TOTAL 2021 £	TOTAL 2020 £
6 COSTS OF CHURCH ACTIVITIES					
Missionary and Charitable giving (also see note 7)					
Relief and development agencies	14,828	-	-	14,828	13,116
	<u>14,828</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>14,828</u>	<u>13,116</u>
Parish share	98,189	-	-	98,189	107,731
	<u>98,189</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>98,189</u>	<u>107,731</u>
Fabric and running costs:					
Church running costs	5,418	-	-	5,418	6,053
Church maintenance	6,790	-	-	6,790	3,350
Organ/piano tuning & maint.	555	-	-	555	632
Grounds upkeep	-	-	-	-	1,040
Hall running costs	3,695	-	-	3,695	3,193
Hall maintenance	3,872	-	-	3,872	3,293
Vicarage running costs	1,242	-	-	1,242	-
Linwood Road property upkeep	5,401	-	-	5,401	2,437
Upkeep of services	1,252	-	-	1,252	1,756
Parish Office Admin Costs	4,402	-	-	4,402	4,154
	<u>32,627</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>32,627</u>	<u>25,908</u>
Mission & Education					
Parish magazine	3,552	-	-	3,552	1,288
Pastoral and MAP	309	-	-	309	36
Education	500	-	23	523	509
	<u>4,361</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>23</u>	<u>4,384</u>	<u>1,833</u>
Staff Costs					
Working expenses of incumbent	225	-	-	225	704
Assistant staff expenses	77	-	-	77	69
Wages and salaries	21,123	-	-	21,123	19,768
	<u>21,425</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>21,425</u>	<u>20,541</u>
Other costs					
Flower Guild expenditure	-	362	-	362	278
Promotional and communications	49	-	-	49	54
Sundry expenses	2,534	-	-	2,534	647
Wedding & funeral fees to Diocese	2,544	-	-	2,544	1,687
Costs of fund-raising	288	-	-	288	168
Bank charges	158	-	-	158	244
Development of new parish centre	-	-	-	-	646
Vacancy costs	1,060	-	-	1,060	-
	<u>6,633</u>	<u>362</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>6,995</u>	<u>3,724</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 2021 (continued)

7 MISSIONARY AND CHARITABLE GIVING

	2021	2020
	£	£
The missionary and charitable giving is made up of the following donations		
Relief and development agencies		
Toilet Twinning	614	-
Christian Aid	628	-
Accrual for 2021 Charitable Giving	13,586	-
Azalea	-	3,279
Young Carers in Hertfordshire	-	3,279
Royal Hospital for Neuro-Disability	-	3,279
Rennie Grove Hospice Care	-	3,279
	<u>14,828</u>	<u>13,116</u>

8 TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Linwood Road property	Church Hall	TOTAL	
	£	£	£	2020
Actual/ deemed cost:				
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

	2021	2020
	£	£
Gift Aid Tax recoverable	7,874	7,499
Prepayments and accrued income	1,428	649
	<u>9,302</u>	<u>8,148</u>

10 CREDITORS

	2021	2020
	£	£
Outside giving	14,213	13,116
Accruals and deferred income	1,789	2,190
Other creditors	740	648
	<u>16,742</u>	<u>15,954</u>

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HARPENDEN ST JOHN

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021 (continued)

	2021	2020
	£	£
11 GENERAL FUNDS		
Brought forward at 1 January	42,572	63,348
Transfer from Designated funds	700	-
Other movements in general funds	<u>(2,667)</u>	<u>(20,776)</u>
Carried forward at 31 December	<u><u>40,605</u></u>	<u><u>42,572</u></u>
12 DESIGNATED FUNDS		
The PCC operates seven Designated Funds:	£	£
Parish Centre	6,988	6,988
Organ - Reserve to fund future organ repairs	21,045	21,045
Legacies - Legacies received and spent	48,777	43,981
Flower Guild	298	323
St John's Players	-	700
Fabric reserve	23,752	23,752
Linwood Road property	63,888	63,888
	<u><u>164,748</u></u>	<u><u>160,677</u></u>

The movements on the Designated Funds during 2021 were as follows:

	Parish Centre £	Organ £	Legacies £	Flower Guild £
Brought forward at 1 Jan 2021	6,988	21,045	43,981	323
Income	-	-	4,796	337
Expenditure	-	-	-	(362)
Transfer to General fund	-	-	-	-
Carried forward at 31 Dec 2021	<u><u>6,988</u></u>	<u><u>21,045</u></u>	<u><u>48,777</u></u>	<u><u>298</u></u>
	St Johns Players £	Fabric £	Linwood Road property £	TOTAL 2021 £
Brought forward at 1 Jan 2021	700	23,752	63,888	160,677
Income	-	-	-	5,133
Expenditure	-	-	-	(362)
Transfer to General fund	(700)	-	-	(700)
Carried forward at 31 Dec 2021	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>23,752</u></u>	<u><u>63,888</u></u>	<u><u>164,748</u></u>

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HARPENDEN ST JOHN

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021 (continued)

DESIGNATED FUNDS (continued)

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 Rd 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 2021 (continued)

13 RESTRICTED FUNDS

	2021	2020
	£	£
Parish Centre	223,124	146,430
Choir Fund	3,671	3,671
Education Fund	977	1,000
	<u>227,772</u>	<u>151,101</u>

The movements on the Restricted Funds during 2021 were as follows:

	Parish centre	Education Fund	Choir Fund	TOTAL 2021
	£	£	£	£
Brought forward at 1 January 2021	146,430	1,000	3,671	151,101
Voluntary Income	76,694	-	-	76,694
Expenditure	-	(23)	-	(23)
Carried forward at 31 December 2021	<u>223,124</u>	<u>977</u>	<u>3,671</u>	<u>227,772</u>

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

	Parish centre	Education Fund	Choir Fund	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>151,101</u>

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:

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 £185 (2020 £704).

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL OF HARPENDEN ST JOHN

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021 (continued)

**15 STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020**

		Unrestricted Funds		Restricted	TOTAL
		General	Designated	Funds	2020
		£	£	£	£
INCOMING RESOURCES					
Incoming resources from generated funds:					
Voluntary income	2	135,012	-	136,430	271,442
Activities for generating funds	3	7,004	-	-	7,004
Investment income	4	391	75	-	466
		142,407	75	136,430	278,912
Incoming resources from church activities	5	8,746	175	-	8,921
Total incoming resources		151,153	250	136,430	287,833
RESOURCES EXPENDED					
Cost of church activities					
Missionary Giving	6	13,116	-	-	13,116
Parish Share	6	107,731	-	-	107,731
Fabric and Running Costs	6	25,908	-	-	25,908
Mission & Education	6	1,833	-	-	1,833
Staff Costs	6	20,541	-	-	20,541
Other costs	6	2,800	924	-	3,724
Total resources expended		171,929	924	-	172,853
Transfers between funds		-	-	-	-
Net income/(expenditure) for year		(20,776)	(674)	136,430	114,980
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS					
Total funds at 1 Jan 2020		63,348	161,351	14,671	239,370
Total funds at 31 Dec 2020		42,572	160,677	151,101	354,350

WHEATHAMPSTEAD DEANERY SYNOD – 2021 REPORT

Three meetings were held - two via Zoom in March and July and one in person in November. Deanery services were held on Ascension Day and in October.

March: The Beds and Herts Historic Churches Trust – a presentation given by Madeline and Archie Russell, both trustees. The most important fundraising event is the annual **Bike and Hike:** The Trust is really grateful to all the churches that open their doors to enable registration, and in some cases, refreshments. Last year, despite restrictions, a total of £112,808 was raised across the diocese. £6,995 came from Wheathampstead Deanery, of which £4,100 was raised by St Nicholas, Harpenden! Madeline stressed the importance of encouraging people from your church to take part – not only to help to raise money for the trust, but also for the opportunity to have half the money raised to spend in your own church.

Grants: The aim is to offer grants for the care and repair of the fabric of the building. The process is very straightforward. The Trust offers a quick turn round of response in times of emergency, and can even offer a loan in order to facilitate speed of action. In terms of roof alarms, applications can be turned around as quickly as overnight. Application forms are available from the website <https://bedshertshct.org.uk/>, by email grants@bedshertshct.org.uk or by phoning Archie(01767 31 2966).

July: ‘Living in Love and Faith’ - A presentation by Revd Will Gibbs

“Living in Love and Faith’ sets out to inspire people think more deeply about what it means to be human and to live in love and faith with each other. It tackles the tough questions and the divisions among Christians about what it means to be holy, in a society in which understandings and practises of gender, sexuality and marriage continue to change.” After the environmental crisis, this is the 2nd most important issue that we must face up to! There is a five- week course which every parish in the Diocese is being encouraged to run. Full details at <https://www.stalbans.anglican.org/living-love-and-faith/>

November: ‘Living Hopefully’ – A presentation by Rachel Johnston, the Diocesan Environment Officer.

COP 26 has highlighted the urgent need for everyone to reduce carbon emissions, and climate change is only a symptom of what humanity is doing to harm our planet. We are undergoing a scientific, moral and spiritual crisis, and it is part of our Christian witness to acknowledge our responsibility. We have a sacred duty to protect creation! The Church has the aim of achieving a net zero carbon footprint by the year 2030. The pathway to this is set out in the ‘Church of England Environmental Programme’. Looking at our carbon footprint is one challenge. More difficult is the examination of church lifestyle – identifying all the ways in which a church can make changes for good. As well as practical responses, we need, as Christians, to be prepared to speak out for climate justice!

More information at <https://www.stalbans.anglican.org/faith/environment/> and <https://ecochurch.arocha.org.uk/how-eco-church-works/>

Sue May
Deanery Secretary
5 February 2022

REPORT ON SAFEGUARDING
ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST CHURCH, HARPENDEN

prepared for the APCM 20th March 2022

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. An additional policy on the Recruitment of Ex-offenders, as advised by the Diocese, will be considered at the next PCC Meeting too.

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 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 kept in porch.

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.

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 2021 there were no such incidents to report.

Training

All the PCC has undertaken the first stage of the online training in safeguarding. The Diocese has revised the training and the levels required, dependent upon role in the church. PCC members now need to upgrade to the next level and are in the process of doing so. The PCC will also undertake training on Responding Well to Domestic Abuse. The Lead has completed the second level training, and the C2 face-to-face training, as recommended by the Diocese, but these need to be revisited in April 2022.

General information

St John's now subscribes (it is free) to the Safeguarding Dashboard, which outlines standards for policies, procedures, training, and practicalities, against which we measure ourselves as and when appropriate. An Action Plan is then generated and the PCC consider this at every meeting. This enables us to be as up to date as possible in this area.

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.

GROUP REPORTS

BAPTISM PREPARATION

In 2021 with the pandemic restrictions fewer baptisms were conducted than normal, with 4 conducted in total. We were grateful for Bishop Stephen Venner and Archdeacon David Middlebrook for taking two baptisms during the interregnum.

To help prepare families for baptism the baptism preparation group was set up by Lauryn and continues to meet under the new vicar. We are very hopefully for our baptism ministry in 2022!

Revd Tim

CHURCH@HOME

Church@Home came to life during the first lockdown when it was realised that with the church closed, there were some members of St John's who had no internet connection, and a way of including them in the church family had to be found.

It was decided that a paper copy of the Sunday by Sunday readings, a reflection and may be some prayers would be delivered each Friday or Saturday to those who had no means of watching the Sunday YouTubes and then online services.

At the beginning Lauryn, David and Anne carried the load, but as it became obvious this was going to be needed for the long haul, other volunteers were sought. At present there are a dozen people, four of them coming from the Volunteers Fair, so no one has to do the deliveries more than once a quarter now.

We began delivering 25 envelopes, but it has now been reduced to 9 (sadly some have died, some have moved away, and some been able to return to Sunday worship). The envelopes are collected from the parish office on Friday afternoons before Julie goes home, or picked up from the church porch on Saturday mornings for delivery before Sunday. A copy of the pew sheet is included with the reflection, which is provided by members of the ministry team.

Anne Edwards

CHURCH CLEANING

St John's 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. Because of Covid, the church cleaning for the past year has been very different, as there have been times when the church needed a thorough sanitise and other times when we could do the normal sweeping, dusting and polishing. Hopefully this year will be easier. We are extremely grateful to everyone who has helped coordinate, and take part, in this extra cleaning that has been necessary

so that we could continue to worship at St John's and thank you to all the regular cleaning team who have had to adapt to the changes..

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 you can choose your day and time as the church is now open for most of the day. 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 and you are welcome to bring children with you. They do enjoy using our feather dusters!

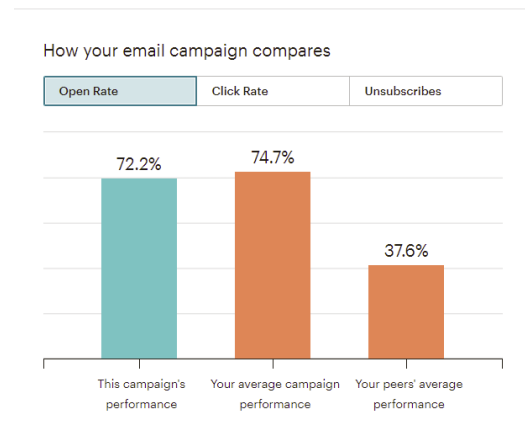
Di Borthwick

COMMUNICATIONS

Email newsletters

Our weekly email subscriber count is currently 213, and around 70 – 75% of recipients at least open the email each week. Mailchimp, our providers suggests that we are twice as successful as our peers, but whether this is fair or not is not clear as we do not have the definition of "peers".

Neil Middleton



Parish Magazine

Despite the challenges of producing and delivering our Parish Magazine to every house in the Parish, we have managed it in 2021! We are now able to provide the magazine in paper and digital format.

Our thanks to Sophie Crowley for all her hard work in editing the Magazine, and for all those involved in distribution and delivery – especially Steve Whiting. As always, help is needed to deliver to every house in the Parish – it really does help make us present to the people we serve.

Sophie Crowley (Revd Tim)

Social Media

The Parish currently uses three social media channels: Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. We use these to communicate what is going on in the church and elements of the Christian faith with our followers.

Facebook: Followers 31st December 2021: 205

Instagram: Followers 31st December 2021: 112

Twitter: Followers 31st December 2021: 92

Revd Tim

Website

The St John's website has continued to be one of our key "shop windows" as St John's seeks to demonstrate how we are Living God's Love. The year has been one of operation, rather than evolution, with very regular updates, but no design or fundamental extension in the purposes or types of page on the website.

In terms of visitor count, this is difficult to discern reliably, as activity is much impacted by the website crawlers used by search engines to catalogue the web.

Some analysis of February 2022:

- Total page impressions: 22,205
- Impressions claiming to use a known web browser: 8,578
- Lowest Daily impressions: 310 – times 28 is 8,680
- Total referrals from mainstream search engines: 322

It is hard to reliably conclude on the numbers above, but it is certainly evident that our website is an important source of information about St John's.

Neil Middleton

ECO CHURCH

We have had another busy year, the following are a few highlights.

Toilet twinning: Following our successful Lent Challenge, we asked the congregation for donations towards 'twinning' the toilets at St Johns, as part of the Tear Fund scheme. The charity provides a vital combination of a basic toilet, clean water and education about hygiene. We raised enough money to not only twin all five toilets, but also some of our taps. We chose Uganda for our 'twins' and now have framed certificates showing photographs and the grid reference of the latrines and taps that have been twinned.

Litter picks: We took part in the St Albans Sustainability Festival on Environment Sunday (June 6th) with our first litter pick. Harpenden Council provided the litter pickers, Debbie organised the routes, and recycled most of the rubbish, and it was very well attended, so we had another in November, and have another organised in March, as part of the church Lent activities. Do come and join us!

Recycling: St Johns is now one of the collection points in Harpenden for empty medicine blister packs. This has been hugely successful, and thanks to Di Borthwick for organising this. She has now passed on six large dustbin bags of empty packs to the Lions Club to be recycled by TerraCycle. There are also boxes to recycle shampoo refill packs and dishwasher tablet packs in the porch, as part of the Terracycle scheme (see full details on the boxes) as well as candles, stamps and old greetings cards. We are also investigating other ways to improve recycling of waste produced in the church and church hall. The local council does not currently collect recycling from churches.

Encouraging wildlife in the church garden: You may have noticed that much of the grass around the church was not cut during May ('No-mow May'). This allowed the wildflowers to bloom, providing food for bees and other pollinators. The 'slope' area between the church and vicarage was not cut until September. We then raked off as much cut grass as we could, and with the advice of Ian

Denholm, a botanist from Rothamsted, sowed a native wildflower mix suitable for grassland. Hopefully next year we will be rewarded with a wider range of flowering plants, to encourage more insects. Steve, who looks after the North flowerbed, installed many 'bee hotels' to provide nest sites for solitary bees. We had a wonderful display of photos he took of some of these bees at the Open Afternoon in November.

Pledge to Net Zero by 2030: The PCC are committed to reducing our energy use, and we are setting up a small working party to look at what this involves. We are also producing some signs to encourage people to turn off lights.

Plastic-free Harpenden: St Johns' has been asked to join this scheme, and we are currently looking into what single use plastic items we already use, and how we could reduce them.

Margaret Charlston, Anne Edwards, Andrew Harbord, Debbie Knight, Martin Myers, Liz Neville and Tim Vickers.

FABRIC

Due to the on-going pandemic over the year the Fabric Group have been unable to meet in person. We have had a number of personnel changes throughout the year and are now looking for new members to serve and maintain our beautiful church.

There have been no major projects undertaken this year. General maintenance of the fabric have been carried out including external decoration, and repairs to various leaks, broken toilets, taps, etc.

The statutory Health & Safety regime has been fully complied with and is up to date for the Church, Hall and Linwood Road.

The grounds have been well maintained and can I extend my heartfelt thanks to Steve and Paul Bedding for all they have done in this regard. This year, in conjunction with Eco Church we have left the vicarage banks for wildflower, and installed bee homes around the church.

Linwood Road has been fully rented for the year and continues to be so.

The Hall is continuing to cause problems with significant roof leaks, despite a continual battle to stop them! We have now had to move the Parish Office into the Committee Room.

We have also been investigating the installation of cabled infrastructure to support our live streaming activities and this has now been installed.

Thank you to all for your support and assistance over the last year and I look forward to reconvening a rejuvenated Fabric Group next year.

Matt Barter
Acting Chair of Fabric

FAITH AND LIGHT

The Covid pandemic has been a challenging time for Faith and Light. Many of our members have underlying health conditions, so were keeping well isolated during times of lockdown. The change to

their usual routines and the absence of familiar gatherings proved particularly difficult for some of the adults with learning disabilities, as well as to the families and staff who care for them.

I kept in touch with many people by phone, and by sending out monthly packs with prayers, suggestions for outdoor activities, an occasional recipe, and colouring sheets and crafts.

We finally met in July 2021 but only for worship in church. It wasn't until September that we held a full meeting again, with activities in the hall, worship in church and a shared tea. Numbers attending are not yet up to what they were in the past, but gradually people are returning to Faith and Light, and are happy to be together again. One of our long time members, Alan Millard, died of Covid, and we feel his absence.

Like many groups, we hope that we will continue to be able to gather in 2022, and that soon everyone will feel comfortable coming back to Faith and Light. As always, we warmly welcome visitors and newcomers. And, as always, we would be very happy to welcome people to the planning group!

Lauryn Awbrey, Chaplain

FLOWER GUILD

We have 20 ladies who provide and arrange flowers in church every week except for Lent, and in Advent we put up items of greenery.

We have had to be more than usually adaptable to the changing circumstances this year but we arranged flowers for one wedding, three funerals and one memorial

We recently had our annual meeting to plan the year ahead and to discuss future finance arrangements. At present our dwindling account is with Barclays whose future on the High St. is uncertain so it was decided to transfer our account to the church account.

We are always on the lookout for people to share in our enjoyment of flowers in the peace and quietness of the church.

Elizabeth Curran

JUNIOR CHURCH REPORT

Junior church has been heavily impacted this year by COVID and we have not been able to run in person. However, earlier on in 2021 we made some videos to help during lockdown.

On 18th December we held a holiday club. It was a great success with the children performing a fantastic nativity during the service on 19th December.

We are planning on what we can do over Easter to keep our children engaged in the life of the church.

We would also value any more thoughts on how we should involve our young people in the life of the church going forward - we have more and more families coming to church which is really positive. Of course, more volunteers are always welcome!

Naomi Burnett

LITTLE ACORNS

We reopened in November after a meeting with Revd. Tim, Sophy, myself and 2 others. It was decided to change the day and time from Thursday afternoon to Tuesday morning. Since this time we have thrived. We have ever increasing numbers - As of 25 /01/ 2022 we had 29 children and 30 adults. We have very positive feedback from our clients. The new coffee maker has made a huge difference and we also try to provide homemade cakes, biscuits etc. for the adults.



Christmas activity in church

- We have needed 3 volunteers to run a session plus Rev Tim and Sophy.
- We always start with free play for children and tea, coffee for adults.
- Around 10.50 we clear up and offer healthy snacks for the children – this includes 2 types of fruit plus other healthy nibbles.
- Following this we have our parachute out, followed by a story and singing.
- One carer told me the singing with the instruments is the highlight of the session.

I would like to emphasise that in my opinion the success of Little Acorns is due to team work. We are a very united team and have a clear goal in mind. I pray that the Lord will guides us on our next steps forward.

Christine Kenyon

LIVE STREAMING

We have continued to routinely live stream our services since first starting this activity in November 2020. As we started to return to an in-Church congregation numbers watching have dropped, but it still remains a noticeable source of engagement.

During the last 12 months we've had 8,043 views, and of more relevance, 1,428 hours of viewing; in the last 28 days 436 views and 78 hours of viewing. We have 152 subscribers.

Some examples performed as follows:

Service	Type	Views	Watch time (hours)
The Parish Eucharist for Easter Day from St John's, Harpenden, including our Service of Light	Online only	295	71
The Parish Eucharist for Palm Sunday from St John's, Harpenden	Online only	195	62
The Institution, Induction & Installation of the Revd Tim Vickers as Vicar of St John's, Harpenden	Online and in-church	221	51
The Parish Eucharist (with our Nativity) for the Fourth Sunday of Advent from St John's, Harpenden	Online and in-church	235	35

We have had quality challenges at times, particularly the interaction with the sound system, but with perseverance, we have much improved the situation.

In tandem with the Sound system update described below, earlier this year the PCC approved a specification for a new system, and we are currently exploring options with potential suppliers.

Finally, I would like to thank my fellow live streaming crew for their, at times, indomitable spirit in delivering our live streams ~ if you are interested in joining us, please do get in contact.

Neil Middleton

MUSIC AT ST JOHN'S

In common with many other aspects of life, the musical part of worship at St John's has been through a number of different phases as the prevailing Covid regulations and guidelines have evolved.

As I was furloughed for quite a while, once services were able to resume Derek and Tom provided organ music as needed and we are very grateful to them for their help in this respect over quite a long period.

We then went through a phase where we were able to have a solo cantor singing during the services and, somewhat later on, were able to increase this to a quartet. Again, we are extremely grateful to Anna, Sophie, Margaret, Derek, Warren and Andrew for contributing significantly to our worship by singing hymns on a regular basis during this time. (This was a stage at which we were also wrestling with the innovation of live-streaming our services and the implications of that for areas such as copyright.) We were also pleased to receive help from Nina Vinther, who sang at several wedding and funeral services when the congregation present was not permitted to sing.

Following some reordering of church furniture to maximise safety for all those participating in our services, it was very good to be able to reintroduce a full choir from early November. This proved to be a busy period, as, apart from singing at the 9.30 eucharists, we only had a few rehearsals to prepare for our Advent and Christmas Carol Services. I was particularly pleased with how well the latter service went, as the choir had only been singing together again for a few weeks at that stage. As I write this, we shall soon be heading towards Lent, Passiontide and Easter, which will again involve additional services.

It was lovely to be able to mark the Feast of the Epiphany with Amici Voices singing music by Byrd and Victoria during the service. It was particularly gratifying to hear the Byrd Mass performed, as the composer envisaged, in a liturgical context.

As we have moved through these transitioning periods, we have all needed to be adaptable and flexible to meet the changing scenarios and I would like to conclude by thanking everyone for their good humour in meeting these varying requirements.

Roger Carter

PASTORAL CARE

During the pandemic and periods of lockdown, many members of St Johns worked hard to keep in touch with all our members. We also know that many people were helping in the wider community by visiting neighbours, shopping for others, working with Harpenden Trust and volunteering at vaccination centres. Doorstep visits and phone calls were made regularly.

Although many of our worship services became available online, we ensured that no one was left out by making prayer resources and reflections available via email as well as in printed form. Paper copies of bible readings, prayers and reflections from the ministry team were hand delivered to anyone we knew of and these are still being delivered.

Funeral ministry was a challenge when numbers were restricted but bereaved families were visited in gardens or online and the ministry team worked closely with local undertakers to try to make funerals happen smoothly.

One emergency baptism happened in a back garden (with the permission of the Archdeacon), which is an example of creative thinking in a challenging time. The attention to detail regarding care for others was sometimes stressful but is an example of parishioners selflessly offering their best, both to people we know well and to complete strangers.

The Ministry Team

PROJECT PHOENIX REPORT 2022

Our new Parish Centre is needed now more than ever. During the past eighteen 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.

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, and we are very grateful to the PCC and members of the congregation who made their pledges and continue to do so throughout this difficult time.

The project has stalled as a result of the pandemic, but at the PCC meeting in January 2022, the PCC reaffirmed the desire and the need for a new Parish Centre to replace the existing church hall. Our existing planning permission expires in September 2022. This offers us a good opportunity to revisit the proposed design of the building, and consider whether our needs have changed in light of the pandemic. The PCC will meet again in June to assess the existing proposal and ensure the design continues to meet our aspirations to serve our local community. It is also recognised that the Project Team needs to be re-invigorated with new members in order to complete the next stage.

Fund raising activities have been on hold during this time, but the launch of the St John's Cookbook, to be published for Christmas 2022, has started the ball rolling again.

As always, we ask for your prayers and support in helping us discern the way forward in the coming months.

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

SACRISTAN'S UPDATE

I took over the job of Sacristan fairly recently and was delighted to do so. I used to help my father carry out the same job when I was a young girl, spending Saturday evenings in church counting wafers and trimming the wicks of candles. Now I am still counting wafers but the candles have oil in them and I do the job during the week in daylight!

So what does it involve? In essence it is a back-room job, making sure the vestry is clean, there are plenty of wafers and bottles of communion wine in the cupboard, preparing them for the services, cleaning the silverware and laundering the clothes that are used during the service.

We have a small and loyal band of volunteers who help with laundering the small items. It would be good to have a couple more volunteers to help on an occasional basis. If you are interested and wish to know more, please do have a word with me.

If you notice during the service that either a candle is no longer alight or there are not enough wafers for communion you know who to blame!

Heather Nye

ST LUKE'S CELL

St Luke's Cell is a prayer group dedicated to praying for people in any kind of need. It has members both at St John's and Southdown Methodist Church. 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. This last year we have continued to pray individually in our own homes, and we have kept in touch by email and phone.

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 from the group.

SERVERS UPDATE

Servers have an important role to play in the life of the Church because they assist the priest at the altar so that the priest can focus on their role in the Eucharist. They play a key part in public worship in ensuring that the service runs smoothly, thus enabling the congregation to focus on the important elements of the Eucharist.

We are rebuilding the serving team following the Covid pandemic during which there were no servers on duty. We are fortunate in that we now have a number of younger servers, although more are welcome. We need to recruit some more adults to the team, particularly for the 8AM service.

Michael Readman
February 2022

SOUND SYSTEM

The present sound system was designed to enhance speech with the building, with the ability to play music from various sources, including CDs. The core infrastructure was designed in 1998, some equipment was updated around 10 years ago but is beginning to fail and we have replaced some components recently. Since then we have started to live stream our services and the present system cannot deliver the audio feed to the live stream that we require as we need a different audio mix for the church loudspeakers and the live stream.

Earlier this year the PCC approved a specification for a new system, and we are currently exploring options with potential suppliers. The new system will be in stereo for the benefit of viewers of the live stream, and the current loudspeaker system will be replaced in order to make speech more easily heard. There will also be a hearing loop provided for the hard of hearing. It is too early to say when the new system will become operational as there are a number of planning issues to be resolved, although it is hoped that it will be available later this year.

Volunteers are sought to operate the sound system at the 9:30 Eucharist, making sure that the levels are correct and that the appropriate microphones are live. There are other services where an operator is required on an occasional basis, such as carol services. It is quite straightforward and training will be given, and there is no need for detailed technical knowledge. It is anticipated that when the new system goes live there will be one operator for both the sound and live stream elements combined.

Michael Readman
February 2022

TEA@3

Tea@3 continues its outreach work to the community, and is greatly appreciated by all who attend, thanks to the sterling work of the volunteers who arrange and run it. The following paragraph sums up beautifully what takes place.

Think of the last Friday in the month then walk into the church hall. There you'll be greeted by tables spread with snow white table cloths with a pretty floral table decoration on each one and the table all laid with bone China cups, saucers and plates. You'll hear the lively chatter of our guests interspersed with laughter. Soon you'll be offered a variety of sandwiches, delicious home-made cakes and as much tea as you can drink. This is Tea@3. Don't just take my word for it come and see for yourself. You'll be very welcome

Dorothea Elliott